

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2019

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to nonsubsidized basic health plan coverage.

Brief Description: Revising provisions for nonsubsidized basic health plan coverage.

Sponsors: Representatives Cody, Morrell, Edwards, Santos and Dickerson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 2/26/03, 3/4/03 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires applicants for nonsubsidized Basic Health Plan coverage to be screened using the same instrument used in the individual market for persons applying for insurance coverage.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Campbell, Clibborn, Darneille, Moeller and Schual-Berke.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Benson and Skinner.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

Individuals who apply for Basic Health Plan coverage must meet statutory eligibility standards in order to enroll in the program. Applicants are not required to be screened for health conditions as is the case when an individual applies for health insurance in the individual market.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Individuals who apply for nonsubsidized Basic Health Plan coverage must first be screened using the same instrument used in the individual market for persons applying for insurance coverage. A person who fails the screen is eligible for coverage under the Washington State Health Insurance Pool (WSHIP).

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The requirement that a health carrier offer both the subsidized and the nonsubsidized Basic Health Plan coverage is deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2004.

Testimony For: Screening applicants for nonsubsidized Basic Health Plan coverage will direct high cost individuals to the WSHIP where they are most appropriate.

Testimony Against: This legislation could increase costs to health carriers by increasing the number of individuals enrolled in the WSHIP. It could make it more difficult for employers to purchase affordable health insurance for employees.

Testified: (In support) Nick Federici, American Lung Association of Washington.

(Opposed) Mel Sorensen, Employer Healthcare Coalition; Carolyn Logue, National Federation of Independent Business; Rick Wickman, Premera; and Greg Scully, Group Health.