

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5421

As of February 10, 2003

Title: An act relating to newborn hearing screening.

Brief Description: Requiring newborn hearing screening.

Sponsors: Senators B. Sheldon, Fraser, Thibaudeau, Kline, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/11/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Tanya Karwaki (786-7447)

Background: Statistics indicate that hearing loss is the number one birth disorder in the United States. A local survey suggests that approximately 75 percent of Washington children with hearing loss under the age of three are either not identified and/or are not receiving services.

Currently, Washington law requires newborns to be screened for: phenylketonuria; congenital hypothyroidism; congenital adrenal hyperplasia; and sickle cell disease.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Health must require a hearing screening of all newborn infants before they are discharged from the hospital. No screening, however, shall be provided to a newborn infant whose parent objects on religious grounds. Persons performing the screening must report the results to the Department of Health.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.