

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6494

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As Passed Senate, February 11, 2004

**Title:** An act relating to prohibiting the use of social security numbers by health carriers and state health care programs.

**Brief Description:** Preventing the use of complete social security numbers on health insurance cards.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Parlette, Mulliken, Roach and Kline).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/29/04, 2/4/04 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/11/04, 49-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6494 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

**Background:** A health carrier typically issues to its enrollees a card which the enrollees must present to a treating provider to facilitate claims processing. There is concern that including a person's Social Security number on the card, as some carriers reportedly do, increases the risk of identity theft.

"Identity theft" refers to the unauthorized use of another person's personal identifying information to obtain credit, goods, services, money, or property.

**Summary of Bill:** After December 31, 2005, a health carrier that issues a card identifying a person as an enrollee, and requires the person to present the card to providers for purposes of claims processing, may not display on the card an identification number that includes more than a four-digit portion of the person's complete Social Security number. This also applies to cards issued under the Basic Health Plan or Medical Assistance Administration.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** This bill will help reduce a person's risk of identity theft. Carriers are in the process of phasing out the use of Social Security numbers, but would appreciate some time to

get there. Also appreciated would be the ability to display at least a portion of the Social Security number.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO w/ amendments: Nancee Wildermuth, Regence Blue Shield, PacifiCare, Aetna; Denny Eliason, Washington Dental Service, Rick Wickman, Premera; Davor Gjurasic, Molina.