

2154-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Wood, Conway, Anderson, Tom, Ericksen and McCoy)

Brief Description: Making spinal cord stimulators and drug infusion pumps available to injured workers.

HB 2154-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that: (1) Spinal cord stimulators are effective sources of pain relief for patients with chronic pain conditions and are covered by forty-nine of fifty state industrial insurance programs as well as medicare, medicaid, and all major private insurers in the state of Washington. Many Washington self-insurers cover the machines under their industrial insurance as well.

(2) Patients cannot be expected to return to a productive life or carry out the activities of daily living if they are in severe chronic pain. Pain control is an essential feature of any muscular-skeletal rehabilitation regimen. Spinal cord stimulators are often preferable to the administration of oral narcotics because they dramatically reduce the adverse side effects of narcotics.

(3) Recent advances in medical technology have substantially improved the life and performance of the implanted devices.

Directs the department to develop treatment guidelines for spinal cord stimulators at least in accordance with relevant standards adopted by national payors and most state industrial insurance programs. Nothing in this act prevents the department from making informed decisions about the appropriateness of the device in a specific case in accordance with the standards referred to in this act.