

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5391

As Reported by House Committee On:

Health Care
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the public employees' benefits board offering a tricare supplemental insurance policy to employees who are eligible for this policy, but not eligible for medicare parts A and B.

Brief Description: Offering a tricare supplemental insurance policy to certain public employees.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Franklin, Brandland, Kastama, Johnson, Kohl-Welles and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 3/22/05, 3/24/05 [DP];

Appropriations: 3/28/05, 3/29/05 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Public Employees Benefit Board to offer supplemental insurance coverage for employees who qualify for the Department of Defense's TRICARE program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Clibborn, Condotta, Green, Hinkle, Lantz, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Bailey, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

TRICARE is the U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) worldwide health care program for uniformed service members and their families. The Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB) provides health coverage for state and other public employees.

TRICARE coverage is available to service members upon their retirement, even if they subsequently become employed. However, many of those who are subsequently employed by the state or other public employers choose PEBB coverage instead.

Current law does not allow PEBB to offer other than a comprehensive health benefit plan. If PEBB were allowed to offer a TRICARE supplement, retired military personnel employed by the state might retain their DOD-funded TRICARE coverage, leaving the state to pay only for the less costly supplemental benefits.

Summary of Bill:

The Health Care Authority may make available a TRICARE supplemental insurance policy to employees who are eligible.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: If state employed retired military personnel were able to maintain their TRICARE coverage with a state supplemental policy, it would provide better coverage to the retiree at a lower cost to the state.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Keiser, prime sponsor; and Josh Benton, American Benefits Services.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Buri, Clements, Cody, Darneille, Dunshee, Grant, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDermott, McIntire, Miloscia, Pearson, Priest, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Walsh.

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Health Care:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.