

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 2572

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Establishing the small employer health insurance partnership program.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Morrell, Clibborn, Green, Flannigan, Eickmeyer, Conway, Dickerson, Blake, Cody, Wallace, Roberts, Appleton, Hasegawa, McCoy, Linville, Simpson, Chase, Darneille, O'Brien, Murray, B. Sullivan, Ormsby, Springer, Moeller and Kagi).

**House Committee on Health Care**

**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care**

**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Background:**

Recent rapid increases in the cost of health care have made it difficult for small employers to afford to provide coverage for their employees' health care coverage. The percentage of small employers providing health care coverage for their employees has declined over the past several years. The Health Care Authority provides subsidized health coverage for low-income individuals who meet income eligibility standards through the Basic Health Plan.

**Summary:**

A Small Employer Health Insurance Partnership Program is established in the Health Care Authority. It will provide premium subsidies to eligible employees who are employed by an employer who offers health coverage that has an actuarial value equivalent to that of the Basic Health Plan benefit, and the small employer agrees to pay at least 40 percent of the monthly premium cost for their employees.

The Department of Social and Health Services is directed to submit a request to the federal Department of Health and Human Services for a state Children's Health Insurance Program section 1115 demonstration waiver to seek authorization to draw down Washington's unspent state Children's Health Insurance Program allotment to finance Basic Health Plan coverage for parents of children enrolled in Medicaid or the state Children's Health Insurance Program. Authority is also sought to use the state savings to finance an expansion of the Basic Health Plan or subsidies under the Small Employer Health Insurance Partnership Program.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	57	41	
Senate	42	5	(Senate amended)

House Refuses to Concur

Senate Recedes

Senate 25 23

**Effective:** June 7, 2006