
Health Care Committee

SSB 5708

Brief Description: Regarding the administration of epinephrine by emergency medical technicians.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Finkbeiner, Thibaudeau, Keiser, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes restrictions on the authority of emergency medical technicians to administer epinephrine.

Hearing Date: 3/22/05

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Anaphylaxis is an allergic hypersensitivity reaction of the body to a foreign protein or drug. Anaphylaxis can be caused by drugs, insect stings, foods, plants, and inhalants. Anaphylaxis causes the patient's blood pressure to drop and many tissues to swell, potentially obstructing the airway and resulting in respiratory failure. An injection of epinephrine may be used to treat anaphylactic reactions by raising the blood pressure and opening the airways.

Paramedics and intermediate life support technicians may administer epinephrine. While emergency medical technicians generally may not perform injections, they are authorized to administer epinephrine to any patient with evidence of a prescription for the drug or a patient under 18 years old at the request of the patient or his or her parent or guardian or another person with written authorization to request the administration of epinephrine on the minor's behalf.

Summary of Bill:

Emergency medical technicians are authorized to administer epinephrine to patients without the limitation of only administering it upon evidence of a prescription or to patients that are under 18 years old. Immunity provisions for emergency medical technicians, emergency medical services, and medical program directors related to the administration of epinephrine are removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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