

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1170

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 23, 2005

Title: An act relating to basic health plan eligibility of persons studying in the United States under temporary visas.

Brief Description: Eliminating basic health plan eligibility of persons holding student visas.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Cody, Sommers, Darneille, Schual-Berke, Kenney and Clibborn.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/03/05, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/21/05, 3/23/05 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Deccio, Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Brandland, Johnson, Kastama, Kline, Parlette and Poulsen.

Staff: Jonathan Seib (786-7427)

Background: The Basic Health Plan (BHP) is the state program administered by the Health Care Authority which provides subsidized health insurance coverage to low income individuals. Currently, enrollment in the BHP is limited to people who are ineligible for Medicare, not confined in government-operated facilities, live in an area of the state served by a participating managed care program, have a family income no more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and agree to make periodic payments to the plan. An enrollee is not required to be a United States citizen.

Summary of Bill: Full-time students on a temporary visa to study in the United States are not eligible to enroll in the Basic Health Plan.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill is about fairness. Students here on temporary visas should not be on the Basic Health Plan. They promise as part of the visa application process that they have sufficient means to take care of themselves, including their health care expenses. As such, they should not be on a state subsidized insurance program when there are others more in need.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Dickerson, Prime Sponsor.