

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1534

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 21, 2005

Title: An act relating to identifying health care providers covered by the retired health care provider liability malpractice insurance program.

Brief Description: Identifying health care providers covered by the retired health care provider liability malpractice insurance program.

Sponsors: Representatives Green, Hinkle, Cody, Morrell, Schual-Berke, Skinner, Curtis, Clibborn, Campbell and Kagi; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/08/05, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/17/05, 3/21/05 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: The Department of Health (Department) administers a program to purchase malpractice insurance for certain retired primary health care providers who volunteer their services to serve low-income patients.

In order to qualify, the provider must be a physician, osteopathic physician, naturopath, physician assistant, osteopathic physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, dentist, or other health care provider whose profession is determined to be in short supply. Providers may only perform primary health care services which are limited to noninvasive procedures. Providers may not perform any obstetrical care or specialized care and procedures. Providers may only practice at clinics that are public or private nonprofit organizations or other practice settings as defined by the Department.

Summary of Bill: The Department program that provides liability insurance to retired primary health care providers is expanded to include retired specialty care providers. The specialists that may be included in the program are limited to those who practice in specialties where the malpractice insurance premiums are comparable to primary care providers.

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: There are already 87 providers in 31 sites whose volunteer providers are insured through this program. There are at least 11 clinics who have already expressed interest in having specialty physicians covered under this type of program. One provider specifically discussed his clinic's need for a psychiatrist. This is a good bill to expand access to services in different parts of the state.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Tami Green, prime sponsor; Laurie Jenkins, Department of Health; Dr. Isaacs Pope, Pope's Kids Place.