

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1652

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 31, 2005

Title: An act relating to authorizing fire protection districts to establish or participate in health clinic services.

Brief Description: Authorizing fire protection districts to establish or participate in health clinic services.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Ericks, Appleton, Simpson, Kilmer, Eickmeyer, Woods, Lovick, Santos and Linville).

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

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/30/05, 3/31/05 [DP, w/oRec].

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, Kastama, Kline and Poulsen.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Parlette.

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: Point Roberts, Washington is bounded on three sides by water and shares a common border with Canada. While it is part of Whatcom County, its residents nevertheless must drive through two international borders to seek medical attention in the county's largest city, Bellingham. In 2002, a group of local citizens attempted to open a health clinic in conjunction with the local fire protection district to serve some of the health needs of area residents. The State Auditor's Office indicated at the time that the fire protection district did not have the statutory authority to assist with the operation of a health clinic.

In 2003, the Legislature specifically authorized the fire protection district at Point Roberts, Washington to participate in the operation and maintenance of a health clinic. It is the only fire protection district in Washington authorized to do so.

Summary of Bill: One additional fire protection district, bounded on the north by Bremerton, the west by Mason County, the south by Pierce County, and the east by the Puget Sound is authorized to participate in the operation and maintenance of health clinics.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill solves a specific problem in South Kitsap County. There is a health clinic that is already functioning out of a fire station in a rural area that provides access to care at a reasonable cost. It is currently under a temporary permit and this bill would allow it to continue functioning on a permanent basis.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Ericks, prime sponsor; Mike Brown, Washington Fire Chiefs.