

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6196

As of January 18, 2006

Title: An act relating to including a member of the American Indian health commission for Washington state on the state board of health.

Brief Description: Including a member of the American Indian health commission for Washington state on the state board of health.

Sponsors: Senator Franklin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/12/06, 1/16/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6196 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: The State Board of Health (Board) was created to provide a forum for the development of public health policy in Washington State. The Board is authorized to recommend to the Secretary of Health means for obtaining appropriate citizen and professional involvement in all public health policy formulation.

The Board is composed of ten members: the Secretary of the Department of Health (or his or her designee); four persons experienced in matters of health and sanitation; an elected city official and county official who are members of their local health boards; a local health officer; and two persons representing the consumers of health care.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 8419 was introduced and passed by the Legislature in 2004 creating the Joint Select Committee on Health Disparities (Committee). The Committee issued a report on health disparities in Washington on November 1, 2005. The report contained several recommendations and findings to be considered by the Legislature. The Committee identified the need for Native Americans to have a larger role in the development of public health policy in our state.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The policy creates a requirement that one of the existing ten members of the State Board of Health is a member of a federally recognized tribe.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill require that board member to be a member of a federally recognized tribe rather than a member of the American Indian Health Commission.

Identifies the act as the Sue Crystal Memorial Act.

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: Health disparities is a very important issue. It is gratifying that our Legislature is taking such a strong lead on this issue. Washington cannot become the healthiest state in the nation without first addressing the issue of health disparities. Putting a Native American from a federally recognized tribe on the Board of Health is an important first step.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Rebecca Johnston, American Indian Health Commission; Alton McDonald, National Action Network; Frankie Manning, Washington State Board of Health.