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SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1441

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

**By** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, Morrell, Campbell, Cody, Tom, Moeller, Schual-Berke, Wallace, Grant, Williams, Lovick, Ormsby, Chase, Kessler, Kagi, Hunt, Appleton, Darneille, Upthegrove, Sells, Roberts, Conway, Miloscia, Fromhold, P. Sullivan, Santos, Takko, Green, Wood, Simpson, Hasegawa and Dickerson)

READ FIRST TIME 03/07/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to health insurance coverage for children; and  
2 adding a new section to chapter 74.09 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.09 RCW  
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) The legislature finds that:

7 (a) The health of the children of Washington state is critical to  
8 their success in school and throughout their lives. Children with  
9 health insurance coverage have better health outcomes than those who  
10 lack coverage. Children without health insurance coverage are more  
11 likely to be in poor health and more likely to delay receiving, or go  
12 without, needed health care services;

13 (b) Access to preventive and well-child health services for  
14 children is a cost-effective investment of both public and private  
15 dollars that improves the health of children and of our communities at  
16 large; and

17 (c) Health care coverage for children in Washington state is the  
18 product of critical efforts in both the private and public sectors to  
19 help children succeed. Employers are an integral part of children's

1 health insurance coverage. In 2004, almost sixty percent of children  
2 in Washington had employer-sponsored or other private coverage. This  
3 coverage is complemented by public programs that meet needs of low-  
4 income children whose parents are not offered health insurance coverage  
5 through their employer or who cannot otherwise afford the costs of  
6 coverage. In 2004, thirty-five percent of children in Washington state  
7 had some form of public health coverage. Yet, even with the efforts of  
8 both the private and public sectors, too many children in Washington  
9 state lack health insurance coverage. In 2004, almost one hundred  
10 thousand children were uninsured. Two-thirds of these children are low  
11 income.

12 (2) It is therefore the intent of the legislature that all  
13 children, including immigrant children, in the state of Washington have  
14 health care coverage by 2011. This should be accomplished by building  
15 upon and strengthening the successes of employer-sponsored health  
16 insurance coverage, other sources of private coverage, and publicly  
17 supported children's health insurance programs in Washington state.  
18 Access to coverage should be streamlined and efficient, with reductions  
19 in unnecessary administrative costs and mechanisms to expeditiously  
20 link children with a medical home.

21 (3) Beginning in the 2005-07 biennium, the appropriate policy and  
22 fiscal committees of the legislature shall work together to meet the  
23 goals of this section. Any plan developed by the committees shall make  
24 incremental progress towards expanding coverage to all children by  
25 2011.

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