
SENATE BILL 5751

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By Senators Brown, Swecker, Fraser, Kohl-Welles and Franklin

Read first time 02/04/2005. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to developing a worksite health promotion program
2 among state agencies; adding a new section to chapter 41.05 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds:

6 (1) As an employer, the state incurs significant costs due to the
7 poor health of some of its employees. Costs come in the form of
8 increased health care premiums, lower productivity of employees, and
9 higher absenteeism.

10 (2) Lifestyle choices contribute to health status and health care
11 costs, and employees have control over their level of physical
12 activity, diet, alcohol and drug use, and whether they smoke.

13 (3) Employer promotion of self-care and consumer engagement in
14 health care decision making, by providing appropriate information and
15 motivation, can improve consumer utilization of services, encourage
16 employees to seek preventive care and health interventions with
17 demonstrated efficacy, and discourage the use of high-cost alternatives
18 when equally effective low-cost alternatives are available.

1 (4) Employers cannot rely on health plans alone to address the
2 lifestyle and consumer demand issues of the health care consumer.
3 Employers have a unique opportunity with direct and frequent access to
4 employees to structure environments and policies that are more
5 compelling with regard to behavior change.

6 (5) The health benefits of worksite health promotion programs can
7 include increased physical activity, improved nutrition and eating
8 habits, reduced rates of obesity, lower stress and associated
9 conditions, decreased rates of smoking, reductions in other health
10 risks, increased self-management of chronic conditions and compliance
11 with care regimens, improved health outcomes, and decreased costs for
12 family members of employees.

13 (6) The financial benefits of worksite health promotion programs
14 can include decreased absenteeism, reduction in medical costs, improved
15 productivity, and improved employee satisfaction and loyalty leading to
16 increased retention and short-term disability savings.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 41.05 RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 The health care authority shall create a worksite health promotion
20 program to develop and implement initiatives designed to promote
21 improved self-care and engagement in health care decision making among
22 state employees at state agency worksites. The program shall:

23 (1) Identify, in coordination with the department of personnel, the
24 department of health, and the University of Washington's center for
25 health promotion, worksite health promotion programs and activities
26 that are known to be effective. The coordination shall take advantage
27 of available knowledge and expertise and ensure a strong link between
28 this program and the department of health's nutrition and physical
29 activity program;

30 (2) Determine the health promotion strategies that would be most
31 effective for state employees and compatible with existing health
32 promotion efforts of health plans participating in the public
33 employees' benefits board programs;

34 (3) Implement strategies identified in subsection (1) of this
35 section and provide support to individual agencies as they develop
36 agency specific programming targeting the particularities of that
37 agency's work force and environment;

1 (4) Establish performance measurements and facilitate data
2 collection to enable an assessment of the impact of health management
3 and promotion programming at state agencies;

4 (5) Report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the
5 legislature and the governor by December 1, 2006, on progress in
6 implementing strategies and evaluating the results of the worksite
7 health promotion programs.

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