
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6183

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senator Kastama)

READ FIRST TIME 01/23/06.

1 AN ACT Relating to hepatitis C; adding new sections to chapter
2 70.54 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) Hepatitis C is the most common blood-borne infection in the
6 United States, infecting an estimated 3.9 million people. It is the
7 leading cause for liver transplantation, and accounts for ten to twelve
8 thousand deaths per year.

9 (2) National data suggests that as many as one hundred thousand
10 people in Washington may be infected with hepatitis C.

11 (3) There is no vaccine for hepatitis C, and no known cure.
12 However, its transmission may be lessened, and those who carry the
13 virus can take steps to improve their well-being and reduce their risk
14 of liver and other associated chronic diseases. Education and outreach
15 are key to these prevention efforts.

16 Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to establish a
17 system to accurately monitor the incidence of hepatitis C in the state
18 of Washington for the purposes of understanding, controlling, and
19 reducing its occurrence, and directing appropriate resources to its

1 management. To accomplish this, the legislature has determined that
2 hepatitis C cases shall be reported to the department of health, and
3 that a statewide population-based hepatitis C data base shall be
4 established. In addition, it is the intent of the legislature to
5 establish a comprehensive hepatitis C awareness and education campaign.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 70.54 RCW
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The department of health shall establish and maintain an up-to-
9 date data base which shall include a record of all reported cases of
10 hepatitis C in Washington state, and deaths attributed to hepatitis C
11 as a primary or secondary cause.

12 (2) Every health care facility and independent clinical laboratory,
13 and those physicians or others providing health care who diagnose or
14 treat any patient with the hepatitis C virus shall provide the
15 department of health with the information required under subsection (1)
16 of this section.

17 (3) Data obtained under this section shall be used for statistical,
18 scientific, medical research, and public health purposes only. The
19 department of health shall ensure that access to data contained in the
20 registry is consistent with federal law for the protection of human
21 subjects and consistent with chapter 42.48 RCW.

22 (4) Providing information under this section shall not create any
23 liability on the part of the provider, nor shall it constitute a breach
24 of confidentiality.

25 (5) The board of health shall adopt rules to implement this
26 section.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 70.54 RCW
28 to read as follows:

29 A comprehensive hepatitis C public awareness and education campaign
30 shall be implemented by the department of health. The campaign shall
31 include at a minimum:

- 32 (1) Information on risk factors;
- 33 (2) Primary prevention activities;
- 34 (3) The value of early detection;
- 35 (4) Methods to prevent chronic liver disease;
- 36 (5) The avoidance of further transmission; and

1 (6) Available treatment options.

2 The campaign shall not place special emphasis on educating those
3 groups at greatest risk for hepatitis C, such as low-income groups,
4 veterans, injection drug users, prisoners, and racial and ethnic groups
5 known to have higher rates of infection, rather, emphasis shall be
6 placed upon educating health care providers and the general public.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of this
8 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
9 June 30, 2006, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
10 void.

--- END ---