

HB 2069 - DIGEST

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Finds that many small employers struggle with the cost of providing employer-sponsored health insurance coverage to their employees and their employees' families, while others are unable to offer employer-sponsored health insurance due to its high cost. Low-wage workers also struggle with the burden of paying their share of the costs of employer-sponsored health insurance, while others turn down their employer's offer of coverage due to its costs.

Finds that limitations on access to health care services for enrollees in the state, such as in rural and underserved areas, are particularly challenging.

Declares an intent to authorize the administrator to develop alternative purchasing strategies to ensure access to enrollees of the programs administered under this chapter in all areas of the state, including but not limited to: (1) The use of differential rating for managed health care systems based on geographic differences in costs; and

(2) Self-insurance in areas where adequate access cannot be ensured through other options.

Creates the small business assist program under the Washington state health care authority.

Declares an intent that the small business assist program offer affordable health care coverage to small employers, their employees, and dependents if the employer has not provided health care coverage for at least six months as of the time of application. Prior employer-sponsored coverage as a subsidized enrollee in the basic health plan shall not be considered employer group coverage.