

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1098

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 28, 2007

Title: An act relating to the availability of vaccines during outbreaks.

Brief Description: Authorizing suspension of restriction on the availability of vaccines during outbreaks.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody, Hinkle, Schual-Berke, Campbell, Morrell, Green, Darneille, Ormsby, B. Sullivan, Dickerson, Kenney, Moeller and Wallace).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/05/07, 94-1.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/27/07, 3/28/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Fairley, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Marr and Parlette.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

Background: By state law, after July 1, 2007, it is illegal to vaccinate anyone under age three or anyone who is pregnant with a product that contains more than a specified trace amount of mercury. The law excepts certain influenza vaccines and also authorizes the Secretary of Department of Health (DOH) to suspend the prohibition during a declared public health emergency.

An "emergency" is an event that demands immediate action to preserve public health, protect life or public property, provide relief to stricken communities, or is an event of such size or destruction that it warrants the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency.

Among DOH's duties is the duty to investigate outbreaks and epidemics of disease that may occur and to advise local health officers about measures to be taken to prevent and control such outbreaks. DOH defines "outbreak" as the occurrence of cases of a disease or condition in any area over a given period of time in excess of the expected number of cases.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The authority to suspend the prohibition against the use of mercury-containing vaccines and products is revised. Instead of the suspension applying

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during a declared public health emergency, the suspension applies when there is a shortage of vaccines that comply with statutory levels of mercury.

The authority to declare the outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease or a vaccine shortage is expressly given to the Secretary of DOH, and to local health officers.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Health & Long-Term Care): Requires certain persons to be notified that they are being vaccinated or injected with a mercury containing vaccine that exceeds the legal limits.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This will help ensure that if widespread use of a vaccine is needed, it will be available.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Edward Steinweg; Olympia Pediatrics.