

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5941

As of February 15, 2007

Title: An act relating to certification and recertification of health care facilities.

Brief Description: Regarding the certification and recertification of health care facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Jacobsen, Brandland, Keiser, Shin and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/14/07.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Elaine Deschamps (786-7441)

Background: Federal certification allows health care providers to participate in Medicare/Medicaid programs and receive reimbursement for services rendered. The Department of Health (DOH) conducts certification work for these health facilities under an agreement with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS issues grants to DOH for certification activities, including complaint investigations, surveys for re-certification of existing facilities, and initial certification of new facilities. Facilities covered by this grant include hospitals, home health agencies, rehabilitation services, rural health clinics, ambulatory surgery centers, and kidney dialysis centers.

CMS prioritizes the workload, with re-certification and complaint investigation ranking higher in priority than certification of new facilities. If federal grant funding is not sufficient, the department must conduct certification work according to the CMS priority ranking. Four of the six facilities covered by this grant may obtain federal certification through independent accrediting organizations; however, rural health clinics and kidney dialysis centers cannot because there is no independent accrediting organization for these facilities.

Summary of Bill: When the federal government does not provide sufficient funding to cover all health facility certifications and re-certifications, DOH may assess fees on certification and re-certification applicants or receive state appropriations to pay for these fees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Department is working with CMS to find a solution to this funding gap, but we cannot rely on this so we are willing to cover the cost of certification. This bill would allow the Department to assess fees so we can get certified and open our doors to patients in need of service.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jean Stevens, Fresenius Medical Care; Monica Demitor, DaVita Inc.