

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6360

As Passed Senate, February 19, 2008

Title: An act relating to establishing a work group on primary care medical practice.

Brief Description: Establishing a work group on primary care medical practice.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Pflug, Keiser, Swecker, Fairley, Hewitt, Schoesler and Kohl-Welles).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/23/08, 2/06/08 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/19/08, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6360 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: Recent reports indicate the number of United States medical school graduates entering family practice residencies dropped by 50 percent between 1997 and 2005. In 2006 the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) reported primary care provider shortages throughout 16 of the state's 39 counties, and within specific areas or populations of 38 counties.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: The work group on Primary Care Medical Practice (work group) is established. Membership includes one Senator and one Representative from each caucus of the House and Senate, and appointments by the Director of the Health Care Authority (HCA) that include representatives of primary care physicians, community clinics, and health plans, and the HCA. The HCA representative must chair the work group.

The work group must examine ways to recruit and retain primary care physicians, and options for providing greater reimbursement for physicians who exhibit best practices, such as: ensuring all patients have access to nurse consultants; encourage mammograms; implement strategies to reduce patients' use of non-emergent emergency-room care; communicate with patients electronically; and effectively manage blood sugar levels of patients with diabetes.

The work group will be supported by staff of the Senate and House of Representatives. Findings must be reported by December 1, 2008. The work group will also submit

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recommendations to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) in relation to the primary care study assigned in Senate Bill 6282.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: This task force is focused on fixes for the reimbursement system and moving to a system that reimburses for outcomes. Consider adding nurse practitioners. Consider including the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board that convenes the health care personnel shortage task force.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Pflug, prime sponsor; Jeanne Boudrieau, Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners, United; Maddy Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.