

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6439

---

As Amended by House, March 4, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to radiologist assistants.

**Brief Description:** Concerning radiologist assistants.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Spanel and Berkey).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/30/08, 2/06/08 [DPS-WM].  
Passed Senate: 2/15/08, 42-6.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6439 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

**Staff:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

**Background:** Radiology assistants are not regulated in Washington State. Currently, three categories of professionals working in the field of radiologic technology are certified: diagnostic, therapeutic, and nuclear medicine radiologic technologists. Radiology assistants have become valuable in a rapidly growing field. They perform many time-consuming but simple radiology-related procedures.

In 2004, legislation to credential radiology assistants was referred to the Department of Health (DOH) for a sunrise review. Credentialing was proposed because of a workforce shortage in the profession of radiology and concerns about training, supervision, and scope of practice for these practitioners. The sunrise review recommended certifying radiology assistants.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Certification is provided for radiology assistants, described as an advanced level diagnostic radiologic technologist. Diagnostic procedures are described and permission granted to perform additional procedures under the direction and supervision of a radiologist. Education requirements are described including completion of a preceptorship and examination. The examination process is outlined.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 20, 2008.

---

*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.*

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill:** PRO: The field of radiology has grown significantly in the past decade and now depends on the work of radiology assistants. A DOH sunrise review process recommended credentialing radiology assistants. This will improve patient safety and the quality of health care.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Brad Boswell, Washington State Radiology Association; Scott Harrison, M.D.; Jeffery K. Chappel, Washington State Radiological Society.

**House Amendment(s):** The requirement that radiologist assistant programs be recognized by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists is removed and replaced with authority for the Secretary of DOH to recognize other organizations that establish standards for radiologist assistant programs.