

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6470

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, February 06, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to training medical students, nurses, and medical technicians and assistants to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

**Brief Description:** Training medical students, nurses, and medical technicians and assistants to work with patients with developmental disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kauffman, Schoesler, Marr, Prentice, Tom, Rasmussen, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Kilmer and Roach.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/30/08, 2/06/08 [DPS].

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

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6470 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:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

**Background:** Medical literature suggests the most frequently unrecognized and poorly managed health conditions are often those afflicting persons with developmental disabilities. These conditions include vision and hearing impairment, dental disease, drug reactions from multiple prescriptions, epilepsy, constipation and bowel obstruction, heart disease and infectious disease.

Successful treatment is considered more likely when clinicians are familiar with the predictable course of health conditions in persons with developmental disabilities.

There is interest in having medical and nursing students better trained in diagnosing and treating health issues of persons with developmental disabilities.

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute):** Faculty and medical students at the University of Washington, nursing students in nursing schools in the state, and students in technical schools may apply for incentive grants to support research and training projects focused on improving services to persons with disabilities. The Department of Social and Health Services will report to the Legislature by December 1, 2008, with information regarding

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incentive grants, and any efforts to improve training for students treating individuals with developmental disabilities.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute):** The Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences was added to the list of schools able to apply for incentive grants.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**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: It takes training to understand how to manage the health conditions of people who may have great difficulty expressing themselves. Emergency situations can result in tragedies when physicians and nurses have no idea how to communicate with people with developmental disabilities. Training in medical and nursing programs should address the special needs of people, especially adults, with developmental disabilities.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Kauffman, prime sponsor; Ed Holen, Developmental Disabilities Council; Maureen Durkin, Rick Jensen, Action for Developmental Disabilities; Melanie Stewart, Washington Osteopathic Medical Association.