
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1237

Brief Description: Changing the implementation date and benefit design of nonsubsidized state health coverage for children.

Sponsors: Representatives Hinkle and Cody; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Delays the date the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) must offer families with household income over 300% of the federal poverty-level health insurance for their children from January 1, 2009 to January 1, 2010.
- The insurance coverage will not be through existing programs administered by the DSHS.

Hearing Date: 1/27/09

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146)

Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required to provide affordable health coverage for all children living in Washington whose family income is at or below 250% of the federal poverty level (\$53,000 for a family of four). If the Legislature appropriates sufficient funds, the financial eligibility for the program will increase to 300% of the federal poverty level (\$63,600 for a family of four). For children living in families with household income above 300% of the federal poverty level, the Department is required to offer nonsubsidized health coverage for children beginning on January 1, 2009. The Department is also required to offer nonsubsidized health care coverage through the same childrens' health programs available to children living in families with household incomes below 300% of the federal poverty level.

Summary of Bill:

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.

The date by which the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) must offer coverage for children living in families with household income above 300% of the federal poverty level is delayed from January 1, 2009 to January 1, 2010. The requirement that the Department must offer nonsubsidized health care coverage through the same childrens' health programs available to children living in families with household incomes below 300% of the federal poverty level is removed. The health care coverage that the Department will offer for children living in families with household incomes above 300% of the federal poverty level does not need to comply with the provisions of Title 48 RCW, related to private health care coverage, except for provisions related to coordination of benefits with existing health care coverage policies, the Patient Bill of Rights, activities related to agents, brokers, solicitors, and adjusters, and the payment of a 2% tax on health care coverage premiums.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.