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**Health Care & Wellness Committee**

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**SSB 5913**

**Brief Description:** Concerning online access to the University of Washington health sciences library by certain health care providers.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Pflug, Keiser and Shin).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Limits a health care professional's license surcharge for online access to the University of Washington Health Sciences Library to only one annual surcharge, regardless of the number of professional licenses the person holds.
- Requires the University of Washington to provide an annual accounting of the use of the license surcharge.

**Hearing Date:** 3/24/09

**Staff:** Chris Cordes (786-7103)

**Background:**

By law, the Department of Health (DOH) must charge fees to professionals licensed by the DOH. The fees must be based on the cost to the agency for the licensure of the activity or class of activities.

In 2007 several surcharges were added to the license fees of certain health care practitioners and related professions. One of these surcharges was a fee of up to \$25 for transfer to the University of Washington to provide online access to selected clinical resources through the Health Sciences Library. Beginning January 1, 2009, these licensees were given access to vital clinical resources, medical journals, decision support tools, and evidence-based reviews of procedures, drugs, and devices.

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The online access fee is charged to the license fee of physicians and osteopathic physicians, physician assistants, naturopaths, podiatrists, chiropractors, psychologists, registered nurses, optometrists, mental health counselors, clinical social workers, and acupuncturists.

**Summary of Bill:**

Each person subject to the surcharge for online access to the University of Washington Health Sciences Library is required to pay only one surcharge of up to \$25 annually, regardless of the number of professional licenses the person holds.

The University of Washington must provide an annual accounting of the use of the funds transferred for the online access program and which categories of providers are using the materials funded in the program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested 3/23/09.

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