

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1270

As of March 13, 2009

Title: An act relating to permitting electronic signatures on applications for public assistance and for benefits administered by the health care authority.

Brief Description: Permitting electronic signatures on applications for public assistance and for benefits administered by the health care authority.

Sponsors: Representatives Green, Cody, Dickerson, Ericksen, Upthegrove, Springer, Roberts and Nelson; by request of Department of Social and Health Services and Health Care Authority.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/23/09, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/18/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: Legislation passed in 2007 directed the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to develop an online medical benefits application. The initial implementation of the online application is underway. While the initial application for health coverage can be completed electronically, full authentication and verification are completed with a hard copy written signature because the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requires specific state law to allow an electronic signature on medical assistance applications.

The Health Care Authority (HCA) administers benefits for the Public Employees Benefits Board programs and the Basic Health program. Many forms documenting eligibility can now be submitted via electronic means, but the agency requires written signatures for authentication and verification on many forms.

Summary of Bill: DSHS and HCA health coverage programs may accept electronic applications and electronic signatures for verification. All applications must have either a physical signature or an electronic signature. Electronic signature means a signature in electronic form attached to or logically associated with an electronic record to allow a paperless way of signing a document. This may include a sound, symbol, or process attached

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to or logically associated with the record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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