

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1869

As of March 13, 2009

Title: An act relating to transparency of health care cost information.

Brief Description: Concerning the transparency of health care cost information.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Bailey, Hinkle, Anderson, Ericksen and Kelley).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/04/09, 95-0.

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Mich'l Needham (786-7442)

Background: Currently, there is little transparency in the cost of health care services for consumers. Most health care delivered currently is paid primarily by a third party, either a health insurance carrier or a public program that purchases health care for covered individuals. Transparency and better public information on the cost and quality of health care can help providers improve by benchmarking their performance against others, encouraging private insurers and public programs to reward quality and efficiency, and helping patients make informed choices about their care.

Summary of Bill: Health care providers and health care facilities must disclose an estimate of all fees and charges related to a specific service, visit or stay, at the request of the patient. Providers may refer the patient to their insurer for additional information on negotiated charges and fees and any applicable cost-sharing responsibilities of the patient.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

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