

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2105

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 18, 2009

Title: An act relating to diagnostic imaging services.

Brief Description: Concerning diagnostic imaging services.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Cody and Morrell).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/10/09, 83-13.

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Pflug, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Fairley and Parlette.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

Background: Advanced diagnostic imaging includes a variety of technologies used to examine internal organs, bone, and soft tissue structures in the human body. These include, for example, advanced computer tomography, or CAT scans, that combine many x-ray images with the aid of a computer to generate cross-sectional views and three dimensional images of internal body structures. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) uses a strong magnetic field, radio waves, and a powerful computer to examine soft tissue detail. Ultrasound uses sound waves to bounce off internal organ structures to create two-dimensional real time photo and video images.

According to recent data, use of MRI and CAT scans have tripled in the last decade. The study found that the average imaging cost per patient doubled during the study period. In July 2008 the General Accounting Office (GAO) reported that Medicare spending on medical imaging doubled to about \$14 billion a year between 2000-2006, driven largely by high-tech imaging.

Summary of Bill: A work group is convened by the state Health Care Authority to identify nationally-accepted best practice guidelines or protocols applicable to advanced diagnostic

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imaging services. The work group will include a member of each of the following organizations: the Health Care Authority's health technology clinical committee; Washington State Medical Association; Washington State Radiological Society; Puget sound Health Alliance; and Washington Health Care Forum.

The work group will identify best practice guidelines by November 15, 2009, and explore the feasibility of mandating the use of them for all payers in the state by January 1, 2011. The work group will report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature no later than November 15, 2009.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: With better standards and protocols, the use of diagnostic imaging will provide services that are necessary and useful. This will probably slow down the rate of unnecessary advanced diagnostic imaging.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Keiser; Tim Layton, Washington State Medical Association.