

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6539

As of February 2, 2010

Title: An act relating to treatment for behavioral health disorders.

Brief Description: Facilitating treatment for behavioral health disorders.

Sponsors: Senator Brandland.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/26/10.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Kevin Black (786-7747)

Background: Some facilities in Washington provide residential treatment to both individuals with substance abuse disorders and individuals with mental health disorders. Current state law and regulation requires approved substance abuse treatment programs to be discrete from other treatment programs. This has been interpreted as requiring patients with substance abuse disorders and patients with mental health disorders to be assigned to separate sleeping rooms.

Summary of Bill: A residential program which serves clients who have substance abuse disorders and clients who have mental health disorders need not divide these clients into separate sleeping rooms if other reasonable strategies are implemented to safeguard patient confidentiality.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Treatment providers want to have another tool in the toolbox which they can use when it is appropriate in order to help more people.

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.

OTHER: We support the intent of this legislation. We are concerned that the way the bill is drafted may create unintended consequences that would undermine the independence of chemical dependency programs. It may be possible to accomplish the intent of the bill through a rule change.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Brandland, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Rashi Gupta, Washington Association of Counties; Linda Grant, Association of Alcohol and Addiction Programs.