

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5352

As Passed House:
April 6, 2011

Title: An act relating to providing eyeglasses for medicaid enrollees.

Brief Description: Regarding providing eyeglasses to medicaid enrollees.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Honeyford, Regala and Swecker).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness: 3/15/11, 3/22/11 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/6/11, 93-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Corrections' class II Correctional Industry program to sell eyeglasses to health professionals for the sole purpose of providing those eyeglasses to enrollees of the state medical program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Hurst, Chair; Ladenburg, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Klippert, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Armstrong, Goodman, Hope, Kirby, Moscoso and Ross.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) provides inmate work programs through the Correctional Industries Board (Board). The Board develops and implements programs that offer inmates employment, work experience, and training, and that reduce the cost of housing inmates. To achieve these goals, the Board operates five classes of correctional industry work programs. All inmates working in class I-IV employment receive financial

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compensation for their work. Class V jobs are court ordered community work that is performed for the benefit of the community without financial compensation.

Class II Industries. Class II ("tax reduction") industries are state-owned and operated industries designed to reduce the costs for goods and services for public agencies and nonprofit organizations. Industries in this class must be closely patterned after private sector industries but with the objective of reducing public support costs rather than making a profit. The products and services of this industry, including purchased products and services necessary for a complete product line, may only be sold to: (1) public agencies; (2) nonprofit organizations; (3) private contractors when the goods purchased will ultimately be used by a public agency or a nonprofit organization; (4) an employee and immediate family members of an employee of the DOC; and (5) a person under the supervision of the DOC and his or her immediate family members. However, to avoid waste or spoilage, by-products and surpluses of timber, agricultural, and animal husbandry enterprises may be sold at private sale or donated to nonprofit organizations when there is no public sector market for such goods.

Inmates working in tax reduction industries do so at their own choice and are paid a gratuity which cannot exceed the wage paid for work of a similar nature in the locality in which the industry is located. Class II gratuities range from 55 cents to \$1.55 per hour and includes such jobs as: producing aluminum signs, license plates and tabs, mattresses, asbestos abatement, meat processing, "optical lab," engraving, furniture manufacturing, screen printing and embroidery, industrial sewing, and laundry. Security and custody services are provided without charge by the DOC.

Summary of Bill:

Eyeglasses produced through a class II Correctional Industry program may be sold to a licensed health professional for the sole purpose of providing the products to enrollees of the state medical program. The health professional cannot sell the eyeglasses for more than his or her cost of acquisition.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The idea for this bill came from an optometrist. He was concerned that, with the Medicaid budget cuts, he could still give exams but could no longer provide glasses to his patients. He thought that it would be a good idea to make use of the DOC's prison industries program that manufactures glasses by purchasing the glasses from them but at no profit.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Honeyford, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.