

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5152

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, February 10, 2011

Title: An act relating to naturopathic physicians.

Brief Description: Regarding naturopathic physicians.

Sponsors: Senators Pflug, Keiser and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/24/11, 1/27/11, 2/10/11 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5152 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Conway, Vice Chair; Becker, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Kline, Murray, Parlette, Pflug and Pridemore.

Staff: Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

Background: Naturopathic medicine practice involves diagnosing, treating, and preventing physical disorders by stimulating or supporting the natural processes of the human body. This practice can include manual manipulation, the use of nutrition and food science, physical modalities, homeopathy, naturopathic medicines, nondrug contraceptive devices, and common diagnostic procedures.

A naturopath using physical modalities uses physical, chemical, electrical, and other noninvasive modalities, including heat, cold, air, light, water, sound, massage, and therapeutic exercises.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The definition of physical modalities is modified by removing the limitation to noninvasive modalities. The practice of naturopathic medicine is expanded by removing the limitation to nondrug contraceptive devices.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Use of modalities are limited to those currently used in minor office procedures and common diagnostic procedures.

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.

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 on Original Bill: PRO: Naturopaths are primary care providers and this bill clarifies their role as primary care providers. The language being removed is inconsistent with other areas of the statute and the current scope of practice does allow naturopaths to perform invasive procedures. Physical modalities are invasive and are used to stimulate healing.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Stacy Bowker, Terry Kohl, Washington Association of Naturopathic Physicians.