

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESSCR 8401

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Health Care & Wellness

**Brief Description:** Creating a joint select committee on health care oversight.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Keiser, Becker, Frockt, Dammeier and Schlicher).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Health Care & Wellness: 3/14/13, 3/26/13 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill  
(As Amended by Committee)**

- Establishes the Joint Select Committee on Health Care Oversight.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Jinkins, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Clibborn, Green, Harris, Manweller, Moeller, Morrell, Riccelli, Rodne, Ross, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

**Background:**

Several entities and state agencies have a role in implementing health care policy in Washington, including:

- the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC), which regulates health insurance;
- the Department of Health (DOH), which performs a variety of health-related functions, including licensing health professions and facilities, maintaining health statistics, and coordinating public health activities;
- the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), which performs functions relating to mental health and long-term care;

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- the Health Care Authority (HCA), which performs functions relating to Medicaid and health plans for government employees; and
- the Health Benefit Exchange (HBE), which is a public-private partnership through which consumers may compare and purchase small group and individual health insurance policies.

In 2011 the Legislature created the Joint Select Committee on Health Reform Implementation (JSCHRI) to oversee the state's implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The JSCHRI expires on or before June 30, 2014.

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**Summary of Amended Bill:**

The Joint Select Committee on Health Care Oversight (JSCHCO) is established. The JSCHCO consists of the chairs of the Health Care committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, who will serve as co-chairs, and four members of the Senate and four members of the House of Representatives, two of each appointed by each of the largest political parties in each body. The Governor may appoint a nonvoting member as a liaison to the JSCHCO.

The JSCHCO must provide oversight between the HCA, the HBE, the OIC, the DOH, and the DSHS. This oversight must include monitoring of each agency's activities to ensure they are not duplicating their efforts and are working towards a goal of increased quality of service, which will then lead to reduced costs to the health care consumer. The JSCHCO must coordinate with the Research and Analysis Division of the DSHS to monitor health care cost trends. The JSCHCO must also, as necessary, propose legislation and budget recommendations to the Legislature.

The JSCHRI is abolished.

**Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill:**

The amended bill abolishes the JSCHRI.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The state is on its way to implementing the PPACA; the OIC, other agencies in the executive branch, and the HBE all have a role to play in this. The JSCHRI needs to transition into an oversight role. Health care reform needs to be overseen by people who are

directly elected by the people. The agencies all need to be working together to avoid redundancy. The Legislature is the only body that has oversight over all of these entities.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Keiser, prime sponsor; and Sydney Smith Zvara, Association of Washington Healthcare Plans.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.