

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5144

As Passed House:
April 8, 2015

Title: An act relating to making the Bree collaborative more accessible to the public and promoting transparency.

Brief Description: Requiring all meetings of the Robert Bree collaborative to be subject to the open public meetings act.

Sponsors: Senators Dammeier, Becker, Bailey, Rivers, Brown, Parlette and O'Ban.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 3/24/15, 4/1/15 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/8/15, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes the Robert Bree Collaborative subject to the Open Public Meetings Act.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives S. Hunt, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Minority Member; Van Werven, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregory and Hawkins.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

Robert Bree Collaborative.

The Legislature established the Robert Bree Collaborative (Collaborative) in 2011 to identify health care services that have substantial variations in practice patterns or high utilization trends within the state, which do not produce better outcomes for patients and are indicators of poor quality and potential waste within the health care system.

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.

Each year, the Collaborative must identify up to three services to address. For each health care service identified, the Collaborative must analyze evidence-based practice approaches to improve quality and reduce variations in service; identify data collection and reporting necessary to develop baseline health service utilization rates and measure the impact of adopted strategies; and identify strategies to increase the use of evidence-based best practice approaches in both state and private health care plans. The Collaborative must report annually to the administrator of the Health Care Authority, the Legislature, and the Governor, regarding the health service areas it has identified to review and its recommended strategies.

The Collaborative consists of 20 members, appointed by the Governor, including representatives or health carriers, third-party administrators, health maintenance organizations, physicians who represent certain practice areas, self-funded purchasers of health care services, state purchased health care programs, and the Puget Sound Health Alliance. The Collaborative is authorized to include additional members to acquire expertise in the service areas identified for review.

The proceedings of the Collaborative must be open to the public. Notice must be provided at least 20 days prior to a meeting.

Open Public Meetings Act.

The Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) requires all meetings of the governing body of a public agency must be open to the public. Any ordinance, resolution, rule, regulation, order, or directive of the governing body of an agency must be adopted in a meeting that is open to the public. The OPMA creates personal liability for a public official who knowingly attends a meeting that is not open to the public.

The OPMA applies to all public agencies, including state bodies created by statute, local governments, school districts, special purpose districts, municipal corporations, political subdivisions, other sub-agencies created by statute, and specific policy groups involving public utilities formed under state law.

Summary of Bill:

All meetings of the Collaborative, including subcommittee meetings, are subject to the OPMA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a simple bill. The Collaborative is addressing public policies about health care, and their deliberations should be open to the public. Guidelines recommended by the Collaborative have been adopted by the Health Care Authority. The meetings previously have been closed to the public, and the bill ensures that the Collaborative operates within the OPMA. There is broad support for this bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Dammeier, prime sponsor; and Bill Struyk, Advanced Medical Technology Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.