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## Health Care & Wellness Committee

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### SSB 5870

**Brief Description:** Protecting youth from aversive mental health therapies.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Lias, Litzow, Pedersen, Fain, Ranker, Rivers, Frockt, Cleveland, Mullet, Kohl-Welles, Keiser, Chase, Billig, Hasegawa, Darneille and Habib).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes performance of aversion therapy on a patient under the age of 18 as unprofessional conduct under the Uniform Disciplinary Act.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 3/24/15

**Staff:** Alexa Silver (786-7190).

**Background:**

Credentialed health care providers are subject to professional discipline under the Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA). Depending on the profession, the disciplining authority may be the Secretary of Health or one of 16 different boards and commissions.

Under the UDA, the disciplining authority may take action against a provider for unprofessional conduct. Unprofessional conduct is defined to include a variety of acts, such as practice beyond the scope of practice, violation of a statute or rule regulating the profession (including a statute or rule defining or establishing standards of care), conviction of a felony or gross misdemeanor related to the person's profession, and abuse of a client or patient.

The disciplining authority is required to investigate whether there has been unprofessional conduct if a complaint merits investigation or if the disciplining authority has reason to believe that a license holder or applicant may have engaged in unprofessional conduct. Sanctions available to the disciplining authority include revocation or suspension of the license, restriction

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of the practice, compelled completion of a program or treatment, monitoring, reprimand, probationary conditions, fines, corrective action, and a surrender of the license.

**Summary of Bill:**

It is unprofessional conduct under the Uniform Disciplinary Act for a licensed health care provider to perform prohibited aversion therapy on a patient under the age of 18.

"Prohibited aversion therapy" means a practice, treatment, or therapy involving electrical shock, extreme temperatures, prolonged isolation, chemically induced nausea or vomiting, criminal assault, or other procedures intended to cause pain, discomfort, or unpleasant sensations to the client or patient. It does not include practices, treatments, or therapies that are within the standards of practice for a license holder, as provided by Department of Health rules.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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