

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5549

As of February 5, 2015

Title: An act relating to the registration and disciplining of pharmacy assistants.

Brief Description: Concerning the registration and disciplining of pharmacy assistants.

Sponsors: Senators Jayapal, Angel, Keiser and Cleveland; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health Care: 2/05/15, 2/12/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Staff: Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

Background: Pharmacy assistants may perform certain duties under the supervision of a pharmacist. These duties include typing of prescription labels, filing, bookkeeping, pricing, stocking, delivery, nonprofessional phone inquiries, and documentation of third-party reimbursements. Pharmacy assistants must be registered with the Department of Health (DOH). DOH does not charge a fee for that registration, although all health professions must be fully self-supporting with the collection of fees to cover expenditures for that profession. Currently other pharmacy professions cover the cost of regulating pharmacy assistants.

The Uniform Disciplinary Act regulates the health professions, including pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants.

Summary of Bill: DOH may establish registration fees for pharmacy assistants. Pharmacy assistants are subject to disciplinary action of the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission and the Uniform Disciplinary Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Other pharmacy professions absorb the cost of regulating pharmacy assistants. Fees create self-sustaining programs. With nearly 9700 pharmacy assistants registered in this state, the costs of regulation has increased to the point where additional revenue is needed. Rather than raise fees for the other pharmacy professions, this bill will require pharmacy assistants to pay for their own regulation.

CON: Currently, pharmacies must file a utilization plan with DOH and it costs a fee to file this plan. With the additional fee charged to pharmacy assistants, DOH will receive an approximate \$1.5 million windfall.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jayapal, prime sponsor; Martin Mueller, DOH.

CON: Lis Houchen, National Assn. of Chain Drug Stores.