

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2458

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long Term Care, February 20, 2018

**Title:** An act relating to developing a short form for death certificates.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the department of health to adopt rules establishing an abbreviated death certificate.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Hayes and Goodman).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/08/18, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long Term Care: 2/20/18 [DP, w/oRec].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Health (DOH) to establish rules regarding the content and release of an abbreviated death certificate.
- Allows abbreviated death certificates to be used in any instance in which a government agency requires the submission of a death certificate, but the cause of death is not material to the filing.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Rivers, Ranking Member; Bailey, Conway, Fain, Mullet and Van De Wege.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Becker and Keiser.

**Staff:** Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

**Background:** DOH operates the state vital records system for registering births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, divorce decrees, annulments, and separations. The vital records system must collect items recommended for collection by the federal government. Death certificates must include identifying information about the deceased person, the time and place of death,

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the circumstances and cause of death, and information about the person certifying the death. DOH and local registrars may issue certified copies of death certificates for deaths that occurred in Washington.

**Summary of Bill:** DOH must establish rules regarding the content and release of an abbreviated death certificate that includes identifying information about the decedent, but excludes information related to the cause of death, the Social Security number, and the names of the decedent's parents. In cases in which a government agency requires the submission of a death certificate, the agency must recognize the use of the abbreviated death certificate if the cause of a person's death is not material to the filing.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Long form death certificates contain a lot of information that can lead to identity theft. An abbreviated certificate would reduce the risk of identity theft and keep private information private. A long form certificate would still be available if needed.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Dave Hayes, Prime Sponsor; Greg Gilday, citizen.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.