

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SB 6359

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Creating regulation exemptions for rural health clinics providing services in a designated home health shortage area.

**Sponsors:** Senators Short and Randall.

**Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care**  
**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**Background:** The Department of Health (DOH) licenses and regulates healthcare professions and facilities in Washington State. In-home service agencies are licensed to provide home health, home care, hospice services, or hospice care center services directly or through a contract arrangement to individuals in a temporary or permanent residence. DOH exempts a number of persons, activities, and entities providing health care services to people in their homes from the in-home service agencies' licensing requirements.

DOH's Certificate of Need Program (CON) is a regulatory process requiring certain healthcare providers to get state approval before building certain types of facilities, or offering new or expanded services. CON review is required for the establishment of Medicare or Medicaid home health and hospice agencies. In accordance with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) rules, DOH's Rural Health Program reviews county and community data to declare a home health shortage area. DOH and CMS established a process to expand home health services in these shortage areas and currently do not require CON review for rural health clinics providing home health in a home health shortage area.

**Summary:** A rural health clinic providing health services in a home health shortage area declared by DOH, and in accordance with federal rules, is exempt from DOH's in-home services regulations and certificate of need review.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 11, 2020

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*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.*