

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1621

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to creating programs to encourage sexual assault nurse examiner training.

Brief Description: Creating programs to encourage sexual assault nurse examiner training.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker, Orwall, Duerr, Chase, Graham, Wicks, Johnson, J., Bateman, Walen, Valdez, Bronoske, Callan, Cody, Davis, Goodman, Ramos, Simmons, Slatter, Kloba, Pollet, Griffey, Riccelli, Ormsby, Macri, Chambers, Frame and Taylor.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 1/10/22, 1/19/22 [DP];
Appropriations: 2/1/22, 2/4/22 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Health (DOH) to establish a stipend program for licensed nurses training to become certified sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs).
- Requires the DOH to establish a hospital grant program to increase access to certified SANEs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Bateman, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, Davis, Harris, Macri, Maycumber, Riccelli, Rude, Simmons, Stonier, Tharinger and Ybarra.

Staff: Emily Poole (786-7106).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

A sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) is a registered nurse who has been formally trained to provide comprehensive health care to survivors of sexual assault, including forensic examinations. There is no state-issued license or endorsement for a SANE. The International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) grants SANE certification to registered nurses who complete training that meets the IAFN SANE Education Guidelines, meet clinical practice requirements, pass an examination, and comply with ongoing training requirements.

Legislation passed in 2018 required the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) within the Department of Commerce to develop strategies to make SANE training available to nurses in all regions of the state without requiring unreasonable travel or expense. In 2019 the Department of Commerce subsequently published the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Report, which recommended best practices that communities may use to increase access to SANEs. The report also recommended that the Legislature create a training program and a scholarship fund to assist nurses with the costs related to attending training.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Health (DOH) must establish a stipend program to defray the out-of-pocket expenses incurred by licensed nurses completing the training necessary to become certified sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs). A nurse may receive a stipend of up to \$2,500 to cover eligible expenses, including training fees, transportation expenses and lodging costs, and wages lost as a result of the time spent completing the training.

The DOH is required to establish a hospital grant program to increase access to certified SANEs for hospitals without sufficient access. The DOH must provide grant funding to any hospital that sufficiently demonstrates that grant funding will be used effectively to address the hospital's needs for certified SANEs. A hospital receiving grant funds must submit reports to the DOH at regular intervals regarding the use and effectiveness of the funds.

Appropriation: None.**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 4, 2022.**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) There is a lack of access to certified sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs) in the state. Because of the shortage of trained SANEs, victims of sexual assault that visit hospitals are often told to go home and come back at a later time, which can be traumatizing to the victims and compromises the ability to collect forensic evidence. Trained SANEs are necessary in order to successfully prosecute perpetrators of sexual assault. This bill will help nurses afford SANE training, because nurses currently have to pay their own expenses relating to training. Training currently offered by hospitals to nurses that work with victims of sexual assault is often insufficient. By establishing funding, more nurses can be trained. This bill will also help small hospitals that may have reduced staffing if nurses have to travel to attend SANE training.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Gina Mosbrucker, prime sponsor; Jacqueline Barton True, Washington State Hospital Association; and Erica Hallock and Shawn Reed, Washington State Nurses Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: Linda Merelle (786-7092).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Health Care & Wellness:

The Appropriations Committee recommended the following:

- clarifying that the stipend program and the hospital grant program were available to licensed nurses completing the training necessary to become adult/adolescent certified sexual assault nurses and pediatric certified sexual assault nurses; and
- adding a null and void clause, making the Act null and void if specific funding is not provided by June 30, 2022, in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) provide trauma-informed care. They are trained in evidence collection. Hospitals do not cover the costs for SANE certification, and most nurses must pay costs out-of-pocket. The stipend and grant Programs will provide critical support to hospitals that wish to access these services. The bill is strong and could potentially be made stronger if pediatric SANE training was allowed to be part of the stipend and grant programs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Melissa Johnson, Washington State Nurses Association; Jacqueline Barton True, Washington State Hospital Association; and Paula Reed, Children's Advocacy Centers of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.