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## Health Care & Wellness Committee

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### SSB 5169

**Brief Description:** Concerning provider reimbursement for personal protective equipment during the state of emergency related to COVID-19.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Holy, Carlyle, Das, Hunt, Kuderer, Lias, Randall, Robinson and Wilson, C.).

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires health plans to reimburse health care providers who bill for incurred personal protective equipment expenses at a rate of \$6.57 for each patient encounter for the duration of the federal public health emergency related to COVID-19.

**Hearing Date:** 3/15/21

**Staff:** Christopher Blake (786-7392).

#### Background:

On January 31, 2020, the Secretary of Health and Human Services declared a federal public health emergency exists due to COVID-19. The declaration has been renewed several times and the most recent declaration expires on April 21, 2021, unless further renewed.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends several controls in health care settings to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 infections, including engineering, modified work practices, and the use of personal protective equipment. The CDC has issued guidance on the use of personal protective equipment in health care delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance includes implementing the universal use of personal protective equipment, including gloves, masks, gowns, and eye protection.

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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 part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Health benefit plans must reimburse health care providers who bill for incurred personal protective equipment expenses as a separate expense. The amount of the payment is established at \$6.57 for each patient encounter and only applies to in-person services. Cost sharing only applies to the covered service pursuant to the terms of the health plan and does not apply to expenses for personal protective equipment.

The reimbursement requirement only applies prospectively and lasts through the duration of the federal public health emergency related to COVID-19. The act expires upon the termination of the emergency.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.