

ESB 5241 - H AMD TO APP COMM AMD (H-3433.2/24) **1191**

By Representative Walsh

NOT CONSIDERED 03/07/2024

1 On page 1, beginning on line 11 of the striking amendment,
2 beginning with "(3)" strike all material through "affected." on page
3 23, line 14 and insert the following:

4 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The department of health and the
5 Washington state health care authority shall jointly convene and
6 staff a blue-ribbon task force to study the causes and effects of
7 health care provider consolidation within the state of Washington.
8 The task force shall provide for the broad representation of
9 providers and consumers of health care services, including but not
10 limited to hospitals, insurers, independent practice groups,
11 individual providers and community based clinics, and shall at a
12 minimum, evaluate the following:

13 (a) Factors contributing to the high rate of consolidation in
14 Washington compared with other states;

15 (b) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had,
16 upon the availability of various medical practice areas and services
17 in various markets across the state;

18 (c) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had,
19 upon the pricing of health care services in various markets across
20 the state;

21 (d) The impact that such consolidation has had, or not had,
22 upon the availability of abortion, gender affirming care, and end-
23 of-life care services provided in accordance with chapter 70.245 RCW
24 in various markets across the state; and

25 (e) The impact that Washington's medicaid reimbursement rates
26 over the past ten years, compared to states with less consolidation,
27 may, or may not, have affected the need for small providers or

1 provider networks to merge with bigger systems, in order to survive
2 or remain in certain markets across the state.

3 (2) By July 1, 2025, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the
4 blue-ribbon task force established by this section shall submit a
5 report to the legislature that details all findings and
6 recommendations regarding the causes and effects of health care
7 provider consolidation within the state of Washington.

8 (3) This section expires July 1, 2025."
9

EFFECT: Strikes all content from the bill following subsections (1) and (2) of legislative findings. Adds a new section requiring the Department of Health and the Washington State Health Care Authority to jointly convene a task force to study the causes and effects of health care provider consolidation within the State of Washington. Requires broad representation of providers and consumers on the task force and provides subjects the task force must evaluate. Requires the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than July 1, 2025. Adds an expiration date of July 1, 2025.

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