

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6124

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Health & Long-Term Care, January 23, 1996  
Ways & Means, February 6, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to optional basic health plan services.

**Brief Description:** Including physical therapy, occupational therapy, chiropractic, and midwifery as optional basic health plan services.

**Sponsors:** Senators Quigley, Fairley, Kohl, Franklin, McAuliffe, Sheldon, Loveland, Drew, Smith, Bauer, Thibaudeau, Snyder, Spanel, Pelz, Roach and Schow.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/12/96, 1/23/96 [DPS-WM, DNP].  
Ways & Means: 2/6/96 [DP2S, DNP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6124 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Quigley, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Fairley, Franklin, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Wood.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio and Moyer.

**Staff:** Don Sloma (786-7319)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6124 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; Bauer, Drew, Fraser, Hargrove, Kohl, Long, Pelz, Quigley, Roach, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel and Sutherland.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Cantu, Finkbeiner, Hochstatter, Johnson, McDonald, Moyer, Strannigan and West.

**Staff:** Tim Yowell (786-7435)

**Background:** The Basic Health Plan is a state-administered program which allows state residents to enroll in one of several privately administered managed care health plans, all offering the same schedule of basic medical insurance. Insured services include hospital

care, outpatient treatment, prescription drugs, preventive care and emergency medical services. Those whose family incomes are less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive enrollment subsidies.

The Basic Health Plan (BHP) is administered by the Health Care Authority (HCA) whose administrator has statutory authority to establish and revise the schedule of covered services within certain statutory guidelines. At present, these statutory guidelines make no mention of physical therapy, occupational therapy, chiropractic services or midwifery services.

**Summary of Second Substitute Bill:** Effective January 1998, the list of health services enumerated in statute as discretionary are made mandatory, and medical rehabilitation, chiropractic and midwifery are added to the list.

**Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** The additional services are mandatory in January 1998, rather than immediately.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For (Health & Long-Term Care):** The bill is needed to add these needed services and their cost will be minimal.

**Testimony Against (Health & Long-Term Care):** The services may be needed, but the additional cost may not be absorbable by the state or by those in the private sector who may purchase the BHP model plan. This will mean that access may suffer.

**Testified (Health & Long-Term Care):** Sarah Huntington, Midwives Assoc. of WA State (pro); Gail McGaffick, ARNPs United (pro); Steve Wehrly, Chiropractors (pro/amd); Dottie Nelson, WA State Phys. Ther. Assn. (pro); Sylvie Kautman, WOTA (pro); Gayle Burditt, WA Speech & Hearing Assn. (pro); Karl Entenmann, WA Orthotic & Prosthetic Assn. (pro); Kris Leander, Biofeedback Society (pro/amd); Missy Armstrong, Medical Rehabilitation (pro); Carol Monohon, AWB (con); Gary Smith, Ind. Bus. Assn. (con); Jim Halstrom, Health Care Purchasers Assn. (con).

**Testimony For (Ways & Means):** Including chiropractic could actually decrease costs over time.

**Testimony Against (Ways & Means):** The Basic Health Plan is getting further away from being basic. Adding this benefit to the BHP can also drive the cost of private policies, since it is the designated benchmark to which others are to be applied.

**Testified (Ways & Means):** Steve Wehrly, Chiropractors Assn. (pro) Carol Monohon, Assn. of Washington Business (con); Gary Smith, Independent Business Assn. (con); Jim Halstrom, Health Care Purchasers Assn. (con).