

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5240

As Passed Senate, February 12, 1999

Title: An act relating to birth defects surveillance.

Brief Description: Repealing the requirement to maintain a registry for handicapped children.

Sponsors: Senators Costa, Deccio and Winsley; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/18/99, 2/1/99 [DP].
Passed Senate, 2/12/99, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Wojahn, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Franklin, Johnson and Winsley.

Staff: Christopher Blake (786-7446)

Background: Existing law directs the Department of Health to maintain records of children with birth defects in the Registry for Handicapped Children. In addition to this database, the department has a system under its notifiable conditions regulations for collecting information about incidences of communicable diseases and other specified medical conditions. The Registry for Handicapped Children had operated an active program with the assistance of a grant from the Centers for Disease Control. That grant, however, was recently discontinued and the Registry has not been able to operate at its prior level. The department believes that it could track the occurrence of birth defects more effectively if it were able to consolidate the information in the Registry for Handicapped Children under the existing notifiable conditions programs.

Summary of Bill: The law establishing the Registry for Handicapped Children is repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This repeal is part of the Department of Health's regulation reform activities and birth defects will still be managed under the notifiable conditions reporting statutes. The Registry for Handicapped Children is outdated and by repealing it and moving to a birth defects surveillance system, the occurrence of birth defects can be tracked more effectively.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Elizabeth Ward, Department of Health (pro); Elaine Noonan, March of Dimes (pro).