

5313

Sponsor(s): Senators Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Thibaudeau, Rasmussen and Poulsen

Brief Description: Enacting the Washington health care recovery act.

SB 5313 - DIGEST

Finds that: (1) Despite numerous efforts to improve health care in the state, the crisis continues to worsen;

(2) While this crisis is caused, to a great degree, by rising costs associated with changing demographics and the increasing availability of costly drugs and treatments, it is equally due to the lack of effective public policy governing the purpose of a health care system, its governance and financing, and related individual and/or organizational responsibilities;

(3) Employer-based coverage has been on the decline for some time because the cost of providing adequate worker coverage can significantly affect the viability of a business, while minimal employer contributions can place an undue burden upon the worker; and

(4) While consumer choice is important, the growing demand on existing resources requires that funding be focused on services identified to improve health status in the most economical manner.

Provides that, by January 1, 2005, a carrier offering any individual health benefit plan shall offer to all individuals a health benefit plan providing benefits identical to those included in the basic health plan under chapter 70.47 RCW. Such a plan is not required to include any benefits other than those in the basic health plan and is to be known as the Washington standard plan.