

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action: Do Pass
Vote: 5 - 0 - 0
Yeas: Bates, Kruse, Morse, Shields, Monnes Anderson
Nays: 0
Exc.: 0
Prepared By: Brian Nieuburt, Administrator
Meeting Dates: 3/16, 3/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Extends whistleblower protection for hospital nursing staff to additional hospital staff members. Defines “staff member” to include: (a) nursing staff; (b) individuals employed by or contracted with the hospital to provide health services; and, (c) licensed or certified health professionals employed by or affiliated with the hospital.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Purpose of whistleblower protection laws
- Potential for administrative retaliation

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Current law prohibits hospitals from retaliating against nursing staff that report or provide information regarding violations of law, rule or professional standards that the staff member believes poses a risk to the health, safety or welfare of a patient or the public. Protected activities include disclosure to a manager, accreditation organization or public body. SB 237 would extend these protections to other hospital staff.

State whistleblower laws offer additional protections to those offered by numerous federal laws, including the False Claims Act and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Twenty other states currently have some form of whistleblower protection laws.