

Legislative Analysis



PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAMS: ESTABLISH TOLL-FREE NUMBER AND WEBSITE

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House Bill 4037 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. Paul Condino

House Bill 4559 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. Roger Kahn

Committee: Health Policy
Complete to 5-2-05

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4037 AND 4559 AS SUBSTITUTED

The bills would establish a toll-free hotline and a website to provide information to consumers regarding prescription drug programs, prices of prescription drugs, and other information. The bills are tie-barred to each other, meaning neither could take effect unless both did. Specifically, the bills would do the following:

House Bill 4037 would add a new section to the Public Health Code (MCL 333.9723) to require the Department of Community Health to establish and maintain a toll-free telephone number that consumers could call for information on prescription drug programs available in the state. This would have to include, but not be limited to, free and discounted prescription drug programs. An existing toll-free telephone line could be used. The department would have sole discretion to determine the information to be made available to the public through the toll-free telephone line. Further, the department would have to include on its website a link to the prescription drug website created and operated by the Department of Attorney General under provisions of House Bill 4559.

House Bill 4559 would add a new section to the Public Health Code (MCL 333.9721) to require the Department of Attorney General to create and operate a prescription drug website to educate consumers about the price of prescription drugs. A link to other websites that could assist and educate consumers on how to find safe, effective, and cost-efficient prescription drugs would also have to be included on the site. The links would have to include links to public and private programs offering discounted or free prescription drugs.

The website would also have to include:

- A list of the 25 most commonly prescribed medications as reported by the state's medical assistance program.
- The usual and customary price of these medications. This would be the price that was comparable to what a pharmacy would charge a cash-paying customer without insurance but would not include discounts, special promotions, or other

reduced-price programs available to the general public or special populations. The Department of Community Health would have to compile this information as specified in the bill at least monthly and then supply the Department of Attorney General with a copy of the information.

- Links to at least five other websites that fit the criteria in the bill.
- The toll-free phone number created under House Bill 4037.

The Department of Attorney General would have sole discretion to determine which information should be made available to the public through the website.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A fiscal analysis is in process.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.