

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill No: \*SB 503**

**48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008**

**Short Title: Post-Secondary Student Health Care**

**Sponsor(s): Senator Sue Wilson Beffort and Others**

**Analyst: James Ball**

**Date: February 3, 2008**

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**Bill Summary:**

SB 503 makes an appropriation to study postsecondary student health care coverage and needs, including determining:

- the number of students with and without health care coverage;
- the sources of health care coverage for those students who have coverage;
- the cost of coverage for all students and the cost of coverage for those not currently covered;
- the current role of student health care services and which expanded services might be offered through student health care programs;
- the cost of expanding student health care services;
- the effect that mandatory assessment of health care coverage fees would have on student enrollment or attendance; and
- possible funding mechanisms for coverage for student health care.

SB 503 requires the Higher Education Department (HED) to report to the Legislative Finance Committee, the Legislative Education Study Committee, and any other appropriate interim committees on the findings by October 30, 2008.

\* The bill contains an emergency clause.

**Fiscal Impact:**

SB 503 appropriates \$35,000 to HED for expenditure in FY 08 and FY 09. The bill contains a reversion clause for the end of FY 09.

**Issues:**

According to the Department of Health (DOH) analysis of SB 503, Medicaid provides coverage for eligible youth up to age 18 and furnishes extended coverage to recipients over 18 years of age but under 21 who are receiving Chafee independent living assistance. A nationwide study, however, found that 30 percent of college students don't have any type of health insurance at all. The same study also discovered that those students without health insurance were also less likely to finish college than those who had insurance coverage, with many of these students having to drop out of school and work to pay off their medical bills. In fact, young adults between the ages of 19 and 29 represent one of the largest and fastest-growing segments of the population without health insurance in the United States with those from low-income households being most at risk.

**Related Bills:**

SB 37 *Require College Student Health Insurance*

SB 38 *Non-Resident College Student Health Insurance*

SJM 10 *Study College Health Clinic Operating Hours*