

Bill: SCR 5 – Concurrent Resolution Directing PEHP Regarding Pain Medication

Sponsor: Senator Weiler

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Support

This Resolution relates to non-opioid pain medication and state employee health coverage.

Discussion: Senator Weiler presented the Resolution, explaining that it would require the Public Employees' Health Program ("PEHP") to offer health insurance recipients an additional option for pain management using non-addictive painkillers. He noted that while the original fiscal note was significant, PEHP worked with the sponsor to reduce the estimated cost. The sponsor explained that non-addictive pain medications are more expensive than opioids and involve a treatment regimen, but are intended to reduce the risk of addiction. Senate Amendment 1, which was adopted by the Committee, modifies language on line 35 to apply beginning in the 2027 plan year.

Chad Duncan, representing the Health Economics and Outcomes Research Team at the University of Utah Medical Center, testified to the effectiveness of the non-addictive opioid alternatives. Kelvin Cullimore, representing BioUtah, also spoke in support. Senator Stratton asked why the proposal was presented as a resolution rather than a Bill. Senator Weiler responded that changes to PEHP policy must be made through a Resolution.

The Utah Medical Association and The Director of Young People in Recovery also spoke in support. A representative from PEHP stated that the agency collaborated on the Resolution's language and identified a fiscal impact of approximately \$150,000. Senator Escamilla questioned the source of the funding, and it was clarified that the cost would be covered by the General Fund. Senator Escamilla expressed her support for the Resolution.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

N/V: 1

Outcome: SCR – 5, as amended, passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.
