

As posted on [THE STAND](#) website (follow link – 3<sup>rd</sup> story on page):

## School health plan consolidation opposed

Last Thursday, the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee heard [SB 6442](#), a bipartisan bill sponsored by Sen. Steve Hobbs (D-Everett), which aims to consolidate health care purchasing among the 295 school districts in the state. The goals are to get equity between individual and family plans, greater transparency of financial data, and administrative efficiencies through economies of scale purchasing.

Although those are admirable goals, a coalition of unions says SB 6442 will have the opposite effect: driving up health costs for schools at the worst possible time. They said that some districts have purchased better coverage at lower costs than other plans in state government and such districts would not be allowed to opt out. Plus, questions have been raised about the negative effect of SB 6442 on collective bargaining rights and compelling parties to accept binding rates when they aren't at the table to bargain such rates.

The WSLC is strongly opposed to SB 6442. We feel that HB 2666, sponsored by Rep. Pat Sullivan (D-Covington) and Rep. Bill Hinkle (R-Cle Elum), and SB 6553, sponsored by Sen. Margarita Prentice (D-Renton), deal with the underlying issues that need to be addressed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Click this link: [Full length 26 January 2012 Hearing Video](#) to watch the hearing in its entirety.