

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5203

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE,
FEBRUARY 14, 1991**

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to nursing home administration.

SPONSORS: Senators West and Niemi; by request of Department of Health.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5203 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chairman; L. Smith, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Niemi, and Wojahn.

Staff: Scott Plack (786-7409)

Hearing Dates: February 6, 1991; February 14, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Nursing home administrators are licensed by the state under the Nursing Home Administrator Practice Act (Chapter 18.52 RCW). The regulatory authority for the profession is the State Board of Examiners for Licensing Nursing Home Administrators which is appointed by the Governor. The practice act specifies that there shall be eight members on the board and it provides specific requirements for board membership. Board members may be removed from office by the Governor for cause.

Current state statutes provide that nursing homes in Washington must be under the overall administrative charge and supervision of a licensed administrator. There is no statutory requirement that the administrator be located on site at the nursing home. The board establishes minimum educational requirements of nursing home administrators, including classroom hours of approved educational programs. Inactive administrators may be relicensed upon meeting board requirements for continued dependency.

All fees collected from licensure of nursing home administrators are deposited in the state general fund.

SUMMARY:

The State Board of Examiners for the Licensing of Nursing Home Administrators is renamed as the State Board of Nursing Home Administrators. A nursing home administrator is required to

be on site at the nursing home, except that a reasonable person may substitute for the administrator while on leave if such responsibility is delegated in writing. Beginning on July 1, 1992, nursing home administrators are required to have a baccalaureate degree or meet any educational requirements the federal government may subsequently require. The administrator must also complete a practical experience requirement, pass the board's examination, be at least 21 years of age and must not have been charged with a violation of the Uniform Disciplinary Act (Chapter 18.130 RCW). Relicensure requires fulfilling a continuing education requirement. A limited license is available for administrators demonstrating membership in a church or religious denomination, teaching religious or spiritual means for healing through prayer.

Membership requirements on the State Board of Nursing Home Administrators are made less restrictive than current requirements. Four members are required to have actual experience as nursing home administrators prior to appointment. Four members shall be health care professionals who provide services in nursing homes, or individuals specializing in health care administration or long-term care who are employed at educational institutions. One member shall be a citizen eligible for Medicare. Board members may serve no more than two consecutive terms and shall serve until a successor is appointed.

Parts of the chapter pertaining to duties of the board and qualifications for licensure are rewritten using uniform credentialing boiler plate language. Fees collected from licensure will be deposited in the state's health professional account.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

A baccalaureate degree will be a minimum educational requirement for those who apply for licensure after July 1, 1992. The board shall establish rules defining parameters for on-site administrators in nursing homes with small populations, in rural areas and when nursing homes are temporarily without administrators.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Nursing homes will be better managed by requiring nursing home administrators to have a baccalaureate degree and by requiring that administrators be located on site.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Ted Day, Russell Akiyama, Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators; Cathy Wiggins, DSHS; Carrie Bashaw, WA Health Care Assoc.; Karen Tynes, WA Assoc. of Homes for the Aging