

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1743

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 25, 1997

Title: An act relating to the long-term care ombudsman program.

Brief Description: Allowing the department of community, trade, and economic development to adopt rules to carry out the long-term care ombudsman program.

Sponsors: Representatives Dyer, Cody, Kenney, Cooke and Blalock.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/19/97, 3/25/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin and Wojahn.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Federal law requires all states to establish a long-term care ombudsman program. The program in Washington is administered by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED). Currently, the ombudsman program functions as a nongovernmental, citizen-based group which advocates for the rights of people living in nursing homes, adult family homes and boarding homes by monitoring complaints, educating staff, and other advocacy activities. The specific services of the long-term care ombudsman are contracted out to a private nonprofit agency.

Current state law does not specifically direct CTED to develop rules for guiding the state long-term care ombudsman program.

Summary of Bill: The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development is required to adopt rules for the state long-term care ombudsman program. An emergency is declared.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: This bill gives CTED the tools it needs to provide direction to the ombudsman program.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Bruce W. Reeves, Senior Citizens' lobby (pro); Dan G. Bilson, Washington Alliance for Mentally Ill (pro).