

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5967

As Passed Senate, April 21, 1999

Title: An act relating to human services.

Brief Description: Determining nursing home bed capacity.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Loveland and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 4/19/99, 4/20/99 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 4/21/99, 44-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5967 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Loveland, Chair; Brown, Vice Chair; Fairley, Fraser, Honeyford, Rasmussen, B. Sheldon, Spanel, Thibaudeau, West, Wojahn and Zarelli.

Staff: Tim Yowell (786-7435)

Background: A nursing facility that wishes to construct new beds or to replace existing beds must obtain a certificate of need from the Department of Health. In 1989, the Department of Health adopted rules which set the nursing home bed need standard at 45 beds per thousand residents aged 65 and older. No additional nursing home beds may be opened in counties which exceed this standard. Additional beds may be opened in other counties but, until the statewide bed total is below 45 per thousand, these generally must be beds which are being transferred from counties which are over the need standard. Statewide, the 45 per thousand standard was reached in late 1998.

Summary of Bill: Through June 30, 2004, the nursing home bed need standard is set at 40 beds per thousand residents aged 65 and older. No additional nursing home beds may be constructed unless the Department of Health determines that additional beds are needed in a particular area in order to be closer to the persons served. Nursing home beds may be redistributed from areas which are over the 40 per thousand standard to those which are below it.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: DSHS supports the reduction in the bed need ratio.

Testimony Against: Reducing the bed need ratio is a step in the right direction, but DSHS believes an even lower ratio would be appropriate.

Testified: Nancy Holderman, DSHS Aging and Adult Services.