

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5183

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care

Title: An act relating to the licensing of adult family homes.

Brief Description: Licensing adult family homes.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Winsley and Kohl-Welles; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 3/22/01, 3/23/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- After September 1, 2001, all applicants for an adult family home license are required to have a high school diploma or GED and must have had at least 320 hours of experience. The department gives priority to adult family home license applications that involve a license transfer due to the sale of a home. Adult family home licensees and resident managers are required to be literate in English or have someone on staff able to communicate in English.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Campbell, Republican Co-Chair; Cody, Democratic Co-Chair; Schual-Berke, Democratic Vice Chair; Skinner, Republican Vice Chair; Alexander, Ballasiotes, Darneille, Edmonds, Edwards, Marine, McMorris, Pennington and Ruderman.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services is responsible for licensing adult family homes, which provide community-based residential care for elderly and disabled individuals. The minimum qualifications for getting an adult family home license include

being at least age 21, literate, able to demonstrate management ability, and complete some basic training. Background checks are also required to rule out any criminal convictions. The department may refuse to license an applicant who has a history of significant noncompliance with federal or state regulations, or laws in providing care or services to vulnerable adults or children. The department does not have statutory authority to deny an adult family home license based on the applicant's lack of ability or experience to provide care to vulnerable adults.

Summary of Bill:

The legislative intent of the bill specifies that the health, safety and well-being of vulnerable adults are the paramount concern in determining whether to issue a license to an applicant, and whether to take licensing actions against an existing one. Anyone applying for an adult family home license or who wants to be a resident manager after September 1, 2001, is required to have a high school diploma, GED or any equivalent diploma, and must have had at least 320 hours of successful caregiving experience to vulnerable adults or children in licensed settings prior to operating or managing an adult family home.

The department gives priority to adult family home license applications that involve a license transfer from a current owner with residents to an applicant taking over the license.

Adult family home licensees and resident managers are required to be literate in English or have someone on staff able to communicate or make provisions for communicating with a resident who does not speak English. They must also be capable of understanding and speaking English enough to respond appropriately to emergency situations and deal with care plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: Higher standards for adult family home operators will increase the quality of services and the quality of care.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Senator Thibaudeau, prime sponsor; Pat Lashway, Department of Social and Health Services; Bruce Reeves, Senior Citizens' Lobby; Kary Hyre, Long-

term

Care Ombudsman; and Bill Day, Adult Family Home Association.

(Concerns) Jeff Larsen, Washington State Residential Care Council.