

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1341

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 28, 2001

Title: An act relating to increasing community residential options for nursing facility eligible clients.

Brief Description: Developing a home and community-based waiver for persons in community residential settings.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Campbell, Conway, Boldt, Ruderman and Van Luven; by request of Department of Social and Health Services).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/22/01, 3/28/01 [DPA-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Costa, Deccio, Fraser, Parlette and Winsley.

Staff: Rhoda Donkin (786-7198)

Background: The Community Options Program Entry System (COPES) is a federally matched long-term care waiver program providing people with incomes under \$1,590 per month the opportunity to have the services they need delivered at adult family homes, boarding homes or in their own home. Individuals with incomes in excess of this are not able to participate in COPES. Their options are to pay privately for services if possible; to receive unpaid help from family or friends; to enter a nursing facility where Medicaid will cover the difference between their income and the nursing home rate; or to go without services.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Department of Social and Health Services is authorized to provide Medicaid coverage of home- and community-based long-term care services for persons whose incomes exceed 300 percent of the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit rate (currently \$1,590 per month for a single person). The number of persons and the services to be covered are to be as specified in the waiver agreement or agreements with the federal government and subject to conditions or appropriated funds. No current residents of a nursing home facility who require nursing facility level of care will be forced to move into the community against their wishes.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: Language was added stating that a nursing facility resident who does not wish to leave, should not have to, even if they are eligible for an alternative placement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This will allow people whose income has slightly surpassed the limit for community care, to choose an alternative to nursing facility care. No one should be coerced into leaving a nursing home even if they are eligible.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Kathy Leitch, DSHS-AASA; Jerry Reilly, WHCA (with concerns).