
HOUSE BILL 2956

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Cody, Campbell, Darneille, Schual-Berke, Skinner, Conway, Santos, Lysen, Ogden, Kenney and Linville

Read first time 02/13/2002. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving the funding and quality of care in the
2 state's long-term care system; amending RCW 74.39A.005; creating a new
3 section; and making an appropriation.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.39A.005 and 2000 c 121 s 9 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The legislature finds that the aging of the population and advanced
8 medical technology have resulted in a growing number of persons who
9 require assistance. The primary resource for long-term care continues
10 to be family and friends. However, these traditional caregivers are
11 increasingly employed outside the home. There is a growing demand for
12 improvement and expansion of home and community-based long-term care
13 services to support and complement the services provided by these
14 informal caregivers.

15 The legislature further finds that the public interest would best
16 be served by a broad array of long-term care services that support
17 persons who need such services at home or in the community whenever
18 practicable and that promote individual autonomy, dignity, and choice.

1 The legislature finds that as other long-term care options become
2 more available, the relative need for nursing home beds is likely to
3 decline. The legislature recognizes, however, that nursing home care
4 will continue to be a critical part of the state's long-term care
5 options, and that such services should promote individual dignity,
6 autonomy, and a homelike environment.

7 The legislature finds that many recipients of in-home services are
8 vulnerable and their health and well-being are dependent on their
9 caregivers. The quality, skills, and knowledge of their caregivers are
10 often the key to good care. The legislature finds that the need for
11 well-trained caregivers is growing as the state's population ages and
12 clients' needs increase. The legislature intends that current training
13 standards be enhanced.

14 The demands on the state's long-term care system are projected to
15 increase dramatically over the next several years. Unless the
16 legislature takes immediate steps to address the increasing demand for
17 services and the financing of such services, it will be impossible to
18 meet the long-term care needs of older persons and adults with
19 disabilities in the future. It is extremely important that all
20 Washingtonians in need of long-term care services have access to a
21 quality service system that provides users of the system and their
22 families with viable options for a variety of needed services that
23 provides the most dignity and independence possible. Solutions for
24 addressing this issue must first prioritize the needs of consumers of
25 long-term care, their families, and their caregivers.

26 All Washingtonians receiving long-term care should receive quality
27 care regardless of care setting, and the state's policy should not
28 reflect a bias toward any particular care setting. Rather, consumer
29 choice should shape the options available to seniors and adults with
30 disabilities because support of an array of long-term care options in
31 the continuum of care is the best way to meet consumer expectations and
32 provide services most cost effectively.

33 Adults needing long-term care services should receive the same
34 quality of care regardless of their age, ability to pay, or source of
35 payment. For clients whose services are paid for by the state,
36 reimbursement to providers of service must reflect the cost of
37 providing quality care to those in need of service. Regardless of the
38 care setting, providers of long-term care services should be reimbursed
39 at a rate proportional to the level of client care needs, and

1 caregivers in all long-term care settings should be adequately
2 compensated for their work.

3 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. (1) The long-term care steering committee is
4 created to study options for providing a stable and consistent funding
5 stream to meet the growing needs of long-term care consumers and make
6 recommendations to the legislature on the study findings. The study
7 shall examine all options for continuing to fund a long-term care
8 system that will meet consumer need for choice, access, quality,
9 dignity, and independence, reimburse service providers for the actual
10 and necessary costs of providing care, and provide adequate
11 compensation to caregivers in the system. Among the topics to be
12 studied are increased incentives for consumers to purchase long-term
13 care insurance, ways to increase federal funding for long-term care
14 services, and ways to increase state revenues to adequately fund long-
15 term care services.

16 (2) The steering committee shall be made up of the following
17 thirteen members:

18 (a) Four legislators, one appointed by each caucus in the
19 legislature;

20 (b) One person appointed by the governor to represent the
21 governor's office;

22 (c) Four individuals from organizations who represent the interests
23 of consumers of long-term care services, to be appointed by the
24 governor;

25 (d) Three persons from organizations that represent the interests
26 of providers of long-term care services, to be appointed by the
27 governor; and

28 (e) One person from an organization representing the interests of
29 caregivers of long-term care services, to be appointed by the governor.

30 (3) The office of financial management shall contract under chapter
31 39.29 RCW to provide staff to conduct the study under the direction of
32 the steering committee.

33 (4) The steering committee shall submit a report on the study
34 findings and its recommendations to the chairs of the house health care
35 committee, house appropriations committee, senate health and long-term
36 care committee, and senate ways and means committee by December 1,
37 2002.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars, or
2 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal
3 year ending June 30, 2003, from the general fund to the office of
4 financial management for the purposes of section 2 of this act.

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