
Appropriations Committee

SB 5736

Brief Description: Concerning the expansion of nutrition programs for older adults.

Sponsors: Senators Brown, Palumbo, Keiser, Rossi, Frockt, Braun, Bailey, Hasegawa and Rolfes.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expands the home-delivered meals program for older adults.• Establishes criteria that must be considered for the distribution of expansion funding.
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Hearing Date: 3/13/17

Staff: Mary Mulholland (786-7391).

Background:

The federal Older Americans Act (OAA) was passed in 1965. The OAA created, or improved, programs to help older persons. The programs included, but were not limited to, community planning, research, transportation, homecare, legal aid, family caregiver support, and health promotion. The OAA also established nutrition programs for older adults. Congregate meals provide nutritious food for older adults, while at the same time allowing an opportunity for social contact. Home-delivered meals provide nutritious food for older adults who have difficulty leaving their home environment. In Washington, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) contracts with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to administer the programs authorized by the OAA, including nutrition programs.

Each biennium, the home-delivered meals program in Washington serves approximately 12,000 clients at a cost of \$6 million. Federal funds from the OAA cover roughly 95 percent of the cost for the home-delivered meals program. State funding covers the remaining cost of the program.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The DSHS is directed to expand the home-delivered meals program for older adults. The extent of the expansion will depend on funding specifically appropriated for this purpose. At least 65 percent of the expansion must be distributed to existing providers. Up to 25 percent of the expansion may be distributed through a competitive grant process to expand the program to areas not presently being served. Up to 5 percent of the expansion may be used for department administration, monitoring of grants, and providing technical assistance to new providers.

The DSHS must establish criteria for awarding competitive grants. The criteria must include expanding service into areas with the greatest need to assist low-income homebound older adults, and areas where older adults have limited access to community support services and facilities. The criteria must also consider the need for geographic diversity between rural and urban areas.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.