
SENATE BILL 5606

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Bateman, Hasegawa, and Nobles

Read first time 01/31/25. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing sufficient funding for the
2 Washington state long-term care ombuds program; adding a new section
3 to chapter 43.190 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Residents of licensed long-term care facilities are entitled
7 to a specific set of rights under chapter 70.129 RCW, including the
8 right to be treated with courtesy, the opportunity to exercise
9 reasonable control over life decisions, and the right to receive care
10 in a manner and in an environment that maintains or enhances their
11 dignity and respect in full recognition of their individuality;

12 (2) All residents of licensed long-term care facilities are
13 classified as vulnerable adults under chapter 74.34 RCW;

14 (3) The long-term care ombuds program is mandated under chapter
15 43.190 RCW to promote and protect the rights of residents, including
16 identifying, investigating, and resolving complaints made by or on
17 behalf of residents of long-term care facilities which may adversely
18 affect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of these individuals;

19 (4) All residents of licensed long-term care facilities are
20 entitled to ombuds services under chapter 70.129 RCW and the older
21 Americans act;

1 (5) A 2020 report from the department of commerce found funding
2 was insufficient to meet the ratio of one full-time ombuds for every
3 2,000 residents as recommended by the institute of medicine; and

4 (6) The number of individuals living in licensed long-term care
5 facilities is expected to continue to grow, requiring additional
6 resources for the long-term care ombuds program.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.190
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) By September 1, 2025, and each subsequent September 1st, the
10 long-term care ombuds program shall, in partnership with the
11 department of commerce, and consulting with the office of financial
12 management, develop a funding recommendation that provides adequate
13 and appropriate funding for the long-term care ombuds program to
14 allow it to fulfill its statutory obligations, including any
15 legislation impacting residents of licensed long-term care facilities
16 that will require additional work from the program. The funding
17 recommendation must:

18 (a) Provide sufficient funding to achieve the ratio of one full-
19 time ombuds for every 2,000 residents, as recommended by the
20 institute of medicine;

21 (b) Account for the growth in licensed long-term care beds, as
22 forecast by the caseload forecast council established in RCW
23 43.88C.010;

24 (c) Account for any inflationary factors present in the consumer
25 price index; and

26 (d) Account for any administrative needs for the department of
27 commerce.

28 (2) By September 1, 2025, and each subsequent September 1st, the
29 department of commerce shall submit the funding recommendation
30 developed in subsection (1) of this section for consideration to the
31 office of financial management and the chairs of the fiscal
32 committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over the operating
33 budget.

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