

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 2239

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Health & Long-Term Care, March 25, 1997

Title: An act relating to enhanced adult residential care services.

Brief Description: Providing for conversion of nursing home bed capacity to enhanced residential care services.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representative Sherstad).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 3/19/97, 3/25/97 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Benton, Fairley, Franklin, Strannigan and Wojahn.

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: In 1995, the Legislature authorized the development of several new types of long-term care services for residents in community settings. One of these types of services, enhanced residential care, provides limited nursing services in boarding homes in apartment-like units. The legislation which authorized this type of care (ESSHB 1908), stated specifically that the Department of Social and Health Services could not require nursing facilities to undergo structural changes to convert part of their institution to enhanced residential care.

However, the legislation did not address building and licensure requirements set by the Department of Health (DOH) for boarding home construction and life safety requirements. As a result, few nursing homes have converted to enhanced residential care because of these regulations which remain in place by the Department of Health.

Summary of Bill: Certain restrictions are removed that discourage nursing homes from providing enhanced adult residential care. Licensed nursing homes that choose to be licensed as boarding homes for the purpose of providing enhanced residential care can be deemed in compliance with the boarding home building code and life safety requirements. DOH is directed to allow outside health care services to be provided in semi-private rooms.

Specific boarding home licensure requirements pertaining to bathrooms, communication systems, doors and windows may require modification unless determined to be functionally equivalent based on a prelicensure survey inspection.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill corrects inadvertent results from previous legislation. It will encourage more nursing facilities to convert to the less expensive type of care for the appropriate clients.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jerry Reilly, Washington Health Care Association (pro).