

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1194

C 355 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Extending the due date for a report to the legislature concerning accreditation of licensed boarding homes.

Sponsors: Representatives Pflug, Schual-Berke, Parlette and Cody.

House Committee on Health Care
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

Boarding homes are care facilities usually ranging in size from over 6 to 160 residents. Smaller boarding homes are often called group homes and larger ones might be marketed to the public as assisted living facilities. Boarding homes offer room, board, and personal care or nursing services. Boarding homes are licensed, regulated and inspected by the DSHS. There are over 400 boarding homes in the state, with approximately 16,000 residents. Of this total, 13 percent of the residents have their care paid by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The remainder of boarding home residents pay for their care from their own resources.

The DSHS conducts its comprehensive licensing inspection approximately every 12 months and also responds to individual complaints concerning residents' care or the facility. If a violation is found to have occurred, the Department of Health (DOH) has the authority to take actions such as consultations, placing conditions on a license, more staff training, stopping admissions, fines, and closing a facility.

Both 1995 and 1996 legislative reports on residents' rights, quality of care, and regulatory enforcement conducted by the Washington State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program found serious concerns with the way in which the DOH conducted investigations under its regulatory oversight. Further concerns have been raised in the ombudsman's 1998 follow-up investigation of the enforcement of safety and care standards in boarding homes. In that follow-up study, the ombudsman again found "widespread problems in the regulatory oversight provided by the state's Department of Health." This 1998 ombudsman report recommended that the Legislature eliminate the dual regulation of boarding homes and transfer jurisdiction of boarding homes to the DSHS. The regulation of boarding homes was transferred from the Department of Health to the Department of Social and Health Services in 1998 (2SSB 6544).

The DSHS is responsible for the development of quality of care standards in boarding homes and the regulatory enforcement of these standards.

Private third party accreditation refers to the quality of care reviews conducted by a private accreditation organization outside of government. Private third party accreditation is conducted for hospitals and in some other health care settings such as home care organizations, ambulatory care providers, and clinical laboratories. Third party accreditation of boarding homes is not currently conducted in Washington or in any other state.

Summary:

The expiration date for the Assisted Living Third-Party Accreditation Pilot Project Coalition is extended from 1999 until 2001 and the funding for the pilot plan must come from the Northwest Assisted Living Facilities Association, as opposed to the Assisted Living Federation of America. The coalition may also receive funds from other individuals and organizations to conduct its business. The dates that the study must be submitted to the Legislature are also extended accordingly. Clarification is provided to insure that changes and new boarding home standards can be implemented prior to the implementation of the boarding home third party accreditation project.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 96 0
Senate 45 0 (Senate amended)
House 96 1 (House concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999