

5834

Sponsor(s): Senators Thibaudeau, Costa, Fairley, Gardner, Eide, T. Sheldon, Prentice, Kline, Rasmussen and Kohl-Welles

Brief Description: Modifying provisions related to long-term care of adults.

**SB 5834 - DIGEST**

Finds that the quality of in-home care service is being jeopardized by many factors, including low wages and benefits paid to home care workers, high costs borne by agencies contracting with the state to provide these services, vast increases in the severity of need of eligible elderly and disabled people, and the rapidly increasing elderly population.

Provides that the vendor rate for licensed home care agencies that provide state-funded long-term care and in-home services through contract with the department of social and health services for the medicaid personal care program, COPES, chore, and respite care, shall be equalized for all agencies to an hourly rate of eleven dollars and seventy-one cents. Beginning in fiscal year 1999, and annually each year thereafter, the vendor rate shall be increased according to the inflation rate identified by the annual consumer price index as established by the office of financial management.

Directs the Washington state health care authority to make the Washington basic health plan available to all home care agency employees who provide state-funded in-home medicaid personal care, COPES, chore, or respite care for twenty hours or more per week.

Declares that the designated health, safety, and quality of care standards apply to all persons receiving in-home care services through the state medicaid individual provider program administered by the department of social and health services.