

**SB 5547-S - DIGEST**

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Creates an office of the ombudsman for persons with developmental disabilities for the purpose of promoting public awareness and understanding of developmental disabilities, identifying system issues, and monitoring and ensuring compliance with administrative acts, relevant statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to services for persons with developmental disabilities and to ensure that services and supports are of good quality and improve a person's quality of life.

Requires the ombudsman to collaborate and have memoranda of agreement with the long-term care ombudsman, the family and children ombudsman, the Washington protection and advocacy system, the mental health ombudsmen, and the special education ombudsman to clarify authority in those situations where their mandates overlap. The ombudsman shall report to the legislature on the content of the memoranda of agreement and how overlapping authority has been clarified by January 1, 2008.

Declares that the ombudsman shall be an independent function within state government and shall exercise his or her powers and duties without interference from either public or private agencies or organizations.