

# Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-82

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW VOLUNTARISM NEEDS

**Title:** OF THE STATE OMBUDSMAN.

**Vote Date:** 3/3/2020

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/18/2020

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Aging Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

The bill is intended to create a task force to review and assist the state Ombudsman's need for volunteers to perform outreach to nursing home residents and address complaints about their care as well as extend resources to residents receiving services from community-based programs. The current number of volunteers is too low to support the nature of the work required to cover nursing homes and meet nursing home resident needs.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Mairead Painter, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Department of Aging & Disability Services**

The Ombudsman expressed her opposition to this bill. She mentioned that there is need for more volunteers but due to the nature of the position it is difficult to retain long-term staff. In her position, she believes that she can report to legislature annually on the steps taken to recruit new volunteers and has been working to increase the number of Resident Advocates (RA's).

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Senator Cathy Osten, 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District**

Volunteers are needed in order to reach nursing home residents and relay their needs to the State Ombudsman. In recent years the number of volunteers has decreased. One constituent

with 15 years of experience as a volunteer noted that there were 156 volunteers in 2003, then 20 in 2016, and at present only 12. This volunteer group covers about 229 nursing homes and approximately 24,000 residents.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None Expressed.

**Reported by: Shelby Michelle Williams  
Clerk: Gaia McDermott**

**Date: 03/02/2020**