
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5231

AN ACT CONCERNING DATA COLLECTION TO PREVENT MALNUTRITION AMONG SENIOR CITIZENS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the state's five area agencies on aging (AAAs, see BACKGROUND) to distribute and collect nutritional risk assessment surveys to older persons and report individual and average scores for their service areas to the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS, which distributes both federal and state matching funds to the AAAs for elderly nutrition programs).

Under current law, ADS must evaluate its allocation of federal funds received under Title III B (home and community-based services) and III C (nutrition services) of the Older Americans Act, which must be allocated equitably to the AAAs and in accordance with federal law. The bill requires ADS to additionally evaluate the allocation of state funding to AAAs for elderly nutrition and social services. It requires the department to evaluate both federal and state funding allocations for elderly nutrition services based on factors including: (1) elderly population data from the most recent U.S. census and (2) the average and individual assessment scores. ADS must also solicit and consider information and recommendations from Elderly Nutrition Program (see BACKGROUND) providers.

Current law requires ADS, in consultation with the AAAs, to report its findings or recommendations on the allocation evaluation, as well as service level and cost data, to the Appropriations and Human Services committees. The bill instead requires ADS to report to the Aging, Appropriations, and Human Services committees by July 1, 2023, on:

1. the collected survey data;
2. for each Meals on Wheels provider (i.e., delivering ready-to-eat

meals to home-bound clients), (a) the reimbursement rates compared to their cost to provide these meals, (b) their administrative expenses, and (c) the number of providers that have reduced or eliminated deliveries based on inadequate state reimbursement; and

3. any recommended changes in how the funds are allocated.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

BACKGROUND

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)

The state's five AAAs are private, nonprofit planning and service agencies for older adults that receive state and federal funds to carry out the federal Older Americans Act's (i.e., Title III) requirements. Generally, they plan, coordinate, evaluate, and act as brokers for older adult services. They award funds to local agencies, which in turn provide meals and related social services at local sites.

Elderly Nutrition Program

The Elderly Nutrition Program is open to individuals age 60 or older, their spouse (regardless of age) and some individuals with disabilities under the age of 60. It provides congregate meals and home-delivered meals.

Three streams of federal funding support the Elderly Nutrition Program: (1) Title III C-1, which funds congregate meals at community sites; (2) Title III C-2, which funds home-delivered meals; and (3) the Nutrition Services Incentive Program, which provides incentive funding for meals to states. In addition, state funds support meals, nutrition services, and provide the required federal match. Since it is not a means tested program or an entitlement, services may be reduced and waiting lists established when demand exceeds resources.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/24/2022)