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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **SB 1280**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNITY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill expands the scope of the community ombudsman program in the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. It does so by extending the ombudsman's authority under a number of provisions to a broader category of services.

Under current law, these provisions apply to home care services which are long-term services and supports for adults in a home or community-based Department of Social Services (DSS)-administered program. Under the bill, these provisions apply to "home and community-based long-term services and supports," which the bill broadly defines as a comprehensive array of health, personal care, and supportive services. It specifically includes:

1. DSS community-based programs; and
2. Providers of home care to people with physical, cognitive, or mental health conditions to enhance quality of life, facilitate optimal functioning, and support independent living. (The bill also expands who is considered a home care provider by adding individuals who formally or informally offer direct long-term services. Currently, only home health or hospice agencies and homemaker-companion agencies are considered home care providers.)

Specifically, the bill applies this broader category of services to provisions that allow the ombudsman to:

1. identify, investigate, refer, and resolve complaints;

2. raise public awareness;
3. promote access; and
4. provide referrals to clients for legal, housing, and social services.

The bill also expands the ombudsman's access to data, subject to certain existing consent requirements, to include data about home- and community-based long-term services and supports, rather than data about long-term services and supports from home care providers.

The bill makes conforming changes to the ombudsman's annual reporting and data protection requirements to reflect the expanded scope of the program.

Finally, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Aging Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/04/2025)