

HOUSE BILL 671

O2, J1

6lr2064
CF SB 340

By: **Delegates Shetty and Lopez**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Nursing Facilities – Medicaid Quality Assessment – Funding of Office of the**
3 **Long–Term Care Ombudsman**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill a minimum
5 percentage of the special funds collected from the Medicaid quality assessment
6 imposed on certain nursing facilities to fund the operations of the Office of the
7 Long–Term Care Ombudsman; and generally relating to the quality assessments
8 imposed on nursing facilities.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Health – General
11 Section 19–310.1
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
15 Article – Human Services
16 Section 10–903
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Health – General**

22 19–310.1.

23 (a) (1) This section applies to a nursing facility, as defined in § 19–301 of this
24 subtitle, that:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (i) Has 45 or more beds; and

2 (ii) Operates in the State.

3 (2) This section does not apply to a nursing home bed in a continuing care
4 retirement community that has obtained a certificate of registration to provide continuing
5 care under Title 10, Subtitle 4 of the Human Services Article.

6 (b) (1) The Department may impose a quality assessment on each freestanding
7 nursing facility subject to this section.

8 (2) The amount assessed in the aggregate on all nursing facilities may not
9 exceed 6.0% of the operating revenue for all nursing facilities subject to this section for the
10 previous fiscal quarter.

11 (3) The assessment authorized by this section shall be paid by each nursing
12 facility in accordance with this section.

13 (c) (1) On or before the 60th day after each quarter of the State fiscal year,
14 each nursing facility subject to this section shall pay to the Comptroller an amount
15 determined by the Department based on an amount per non-Medicare day of service for
16 the previous fiscal quarter.

17 (2) The assessment shall be based on an amount per patient day, not
18 including Medicare days.

19 (d) (1) **[All] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED UNDER PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS**
20 **SUBSECTION, ALL** amounts collected by the State Comptroller under this section shall be
21 distributed to a special fund, to be used by the Department only to fund reimbursements to
22 nursing facilities under the Medicaid program.

23 (2) At least 65% of the funds allocated by the Department as
24 reimbursements to nursing facilities under this section shall be in addition to and may not
25 supplant funds already appropriated for this purpose.

26 **(3) (I) IN FISCAL YEAR 2027 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER,**
27 **THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AT LEAST 3% OF THE**
28 **FUNDS COLLECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER THIS SECTION TO FUND THE**
29 **OPERATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN IN THE**
30 **DEPARTMENT OF AGING.**

31 **(II) FUNDS APPROPRIATED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS**
32 **PARAGRAPH SHALL BE IN ADDITION TO AND MAY NOT SUPPLANT FUNDING THAT**
33 **WOULD OTHERWISE BE APPROPRIATED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE**
34 **OMBUDSMAN.**

1 (e) The Department shall adopt regulations to implement this section.

2 (f) On or before September 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, the Department
3 shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government
4 Article, on the implementation of this section, including:

5 (1) The percentage and amount of the assessment charged to each nursing
6 facility subject to this section;

7 (2) The number of nursing facilities subject to this section with a net loss;
8 and

9 (3) A comparison of the total amount provided in the Medicaid budget for
10 nursing home reimbursement in the current fiscal year to the actual amount received in
11 the immediately prior fiscal year.

12 Article – Human Services

13 10-903.

14 (a) There is an Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman in the Department.

15 (b) (1) Unless the Secretary is subject to a conflict of interest that cannot be
16 removed, the Secretary shall select a State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

17 (2) If the Secretary is subject to a conflict of interest that cannot be
18 removed, the Secretary shall designate another individual, who is not subject to a conflict
19 of interest, to select the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

20 (c) The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman:

21 (1) shall personally administer the Office;

22 (2) shall have expertise and experience in the field of long-term care
23 advocacy;

24 (3) may not have any conflict of interest with the position; and

25 (4) shall, on a full-time basis, perform duties related to the Program.

26 (d) The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman shall personally or through
27 designated ombudsmen:

28 (1) identify, investigate, and resolve complaints from any source made by,
29 or on behalf of, a resident relating to any action, inaction, or decision, that may adversely
30 affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of a resident including the welfare and rights of

1 residents with respect to the appointment and activities of guardians and representative
2 payees, of:

3 (i) a provider, or a representative of a provider, of long-term care
4 services;

5 (ii) a public agency; or

6 (iii) a health or social service agency;

7 (2) represent the interests of residents before governmental agencies and
8 seek administrative, legal, and other remedies to protect the health, safety, welfare, and
9 rights of residents;

10 (3) provide information as appropriate to other agencies and the public
11 regarding the problems and concerns of residents;

12 (4) inform residents, family members, and others acting on behalf of
13 residents about how to access the assistance and services of the Office and the services and
14 assistance of other providers or agencies, including legal services;

15 (5) ensure regular and timely access to and response from the Office;

16 (6) comment on, facilitate public comment on, and recommend changes to
17 existing or proposed laws, rules, regulations, and other governmental policies and actions
18 that affect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents;

19 (7) provide technical support for the development of resident and family
20 councils to protect the well-being and rights of residents;

21 (8) provide for the education and training of ombudsmen;

22 (9) educate facilities, agencies, and staff members concerning the rights
23 and welfare of residents;

24 (10) promote the development of citizen organizations to advocate for the
25 well-being and rights of residents;

26 (11) provide services to assist residents in protecting the health, safety,
27 welfare, and rights of residents; and

28 (12) carry out any other activities that the Secretary determines to be
29 appropriate or that are required by the federal Older Americans Act.

30 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
31 1, 2026.