



# HB216 - WASHINGTON COUNTY NURSING HOMES AND ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAMS

Health and Government Operations Committee

February 2022

Sponsor: Delegate Parrott





*Lori Spencer talks to mom Judi Shape on the phone through the window of care center in Seattle, WA*

Source: Thompson Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-nursing-homes-insi/insight-inside-one-familys-coronavirus-nightmare-at-seattle-area-nursing-home-idUKKBN21331T>

# Problem

- Social isolation has started to be listed as a cause or contributing factor of death certificates<sup>1</sup>
- Many individuals in nursing homes and care facilities had gone 300+ days in isolation or strict quarantine, with extremely limited interactions with other residents, family members, or friends



Helen, 99 year old Santa Cruz resident, before and 120+ days of isolation  
Source: AARP

1. Emily Paulin, AARP, September 3, 2020 <https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/health/info-2020/covid-isolation-killing-nursing-home-residents.html>

- After pandemic, several states introduced policies to allow designated caregivers the ability to resume regular care with loved ones during the COVID-19 lockdowns<sup>1</sup>
  - *States with designated caregiver policies: Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Washington*
- Ontario, Canada, also announced policy in September of 2020 that allowed designated caregivers to help provide essential care for long-term care residents<sup>2</sup>
- This bill is modeled after the Minnesota law which allows individual facilities to set specific guidelines for designated caregivers.
- This bill is a local bill that only applies to Washington County

1. , Leading Age , March 2021, <https://www.leadingage.org/sites/default/files/Essential%20Caregivers%20paper%20Final.pdf>

2. Elizabeth Payne, Ottawa Citizen, September 3, 2020, <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/family-caregivers-will-no-longer-be-locked-out-of-long-term-care-during-covid-outbreaks>

# What this bill does:

- Provides that Washington County nursing homes and assisted living facilities will create guidelines for a designated essential caregiver
  - *This essential caregiver will be family member/close friend*
  - *They will be able to enter the facility to help care for and advocate for their loved one.*
- Nursing homes will be able to set their own guidelines for designated caregivers' protocols required by the facility (could include items such as face masks, gloves, hand washing, social distancing, quarantining, etc.)

# Local Bill, Local Support

- This bill was unanimously supported by the Washington County Delegation in 2021
- The Washington County Board of Commissioners also voted unanimously to support this bill in 2021
- This bill will have limited effect; there are less than 25 nursing homes in Washington County
- All of the nursing homes we have talked with in the county supported this policy and this bill in 2021 and 2022



**Please vote for Grandma:  
Please support local courtesy  
Please vote for HB 216**

**Questions?**