

**SB 1556 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery**

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**Action Date:** 02/10/22

**Action:** Do pass and be referred to Rules and to Ways and Means by prior reference.

**Vote:** 3-0-2-0

**Yeas:** 3 - Gelser Blouin, Lieber, Sollman

**Exc:** 2 - Kennemer, Robinson

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** C. Ross, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/1, 2/3, 2/10

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Requires individuals who provide direct care for persons receiving home- or community-based services, to be certified by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and to be included in a publicly available online database maintained by DHS, operative December 31, 2023. Specifies minimum requirements for certification and minimum content of database, with an exception to display less information. Requires employers to initiate certification of employees. Authorizes DHS to collect fee from private employers. Requires completion of rulemaking by January 1, 2023. Expands applicability to direct care providers in residential care facilities operative December 31, 2024. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Workforce crisis across the board; severe shortage of providers exacerbated by pandemic, with demand continuing to increase
- Commitment and compassion on the part of direct care providers
- Underestimating the difficulty of the work and undervaluing the profession
- Equity issues: workforce is primarily female, with a large percentage being women of color
- Need to improve supports and respect for the profession overall, and to build career ladders for long-term retention and to increase capacity

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

Direct care professionals assist a variety of individuals across a range of care settings. They help individuals of all ages and capacities, in assisted-living facilities, memory care facilities, hospitals, and private homes. They assist with activities of daily living, which can include personal hygiene, dressing and eating, as well as with recreational activities, light household chores, and organizational tasks. They offer companionship and compassion. In many states direct care professionals complete standardized training and meet other certification requirements. Training may include basic and specialty training in first aid, safety protocols, infection control, how to work with individuals in pain, or who are confused, or who have mobility issues. It is critical work that impacts the personal dignity of the individual receiving care and it can be demanding on the caregiver, but it does not pay well and turnover is high. Demand is expected to increase significantly over time.

Senate Bill 1556 requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to certify individuals who provide direct care for persons receiving home- or community-based services and to maintain a corresponding database operative December 31, 2023. It also expands the certification requirement to include direct care professionals in residential care facilities operative December 31, 2024.