

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/SB 7018 — State Ombudsman Program

by Appropriations Committee and Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee

The bill revises the operating structure and internal procedures of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program housed in the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), to reflect current practices, maximize operational and program efficiencies, and conform to the federal Older Americans Act.

The application, background screening, and training requirements necessary to become a certified ombudsman are clarified. The bill adds electronic communication as a way for a resident to file a complaint with the ombudsman program and clarifies notification requirements between facilities, residents and residents' families.

The bill revises the appointment process for three at-large positions to the State Long-Term Care Council whereby the appointments are no longer made by the Governor but by the Secretary of the DOEA. This change conforms Florida law to the requirements under the Older Americans Act.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2015.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 117-0