



April 13, 2021

Dear Washington State Representative,

The businesses and organizations representing industry and local governments across the state listed below, urge you to concur in the senate amendments made to SHB 1323, concerning the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust (LTSST). Additionally, we appreciate and respect that there are parts of this bill that are very important for some constituencies such as allowing individuals who were disabled before the age of 18 to be eligible for the LTSST program and authorizing federally recognized tribes to elect for its employees to participate in the LTSST program.

In 2019, the Legislature established the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Program (LTSS Trust Program), which provides up to \$36,500 in lifetime benefits for eligible beneficiaries to apply to the cost of their long-term care. The LTSS Trust Program is funded through a 0.58 percent premium assessment on an employee's wages. The premium assessment begins January 1, 2022, and eligible beneficiaries may begin receiving benefits on January 1, 2025. An individual who is a Washington resident, at least 18 years old, not disabled before the age of 18, assessed as needing assistance with at least three activities of daily living, and paid into the program for either three of the last six years or a total for ten years with no more than a five- year interruption, is eligible to receive benefits.

The original intent of the bill was to allow employees to opt-out as they acquire long term care service products. The business community supported the original bill in 2019, with the understanding that the program would support those who need services and who did not have long term care coverage for a short period of time until they became eligible for other long-established programs such as Medicaid. The original bill, as written, would save the state money because it would encourage more people to purchase private long term care products that provide richer benefits than the long-term care trusts limited \$36,500 lifetime maximum, support those most in need of long-term care services for a short period of time and stimulate the private market for long term care products.

While the original intent of the bill was to provide an opt out provision that could be used at any time, the fact is there is now an opt out limitation established in 2020. Extending the date by which a person can acquire a long-term care plan to November 1, 2021, provides more time for employers and employees to review and acquire plans. We urge you to concur in the following amendments:

1323-S AMS MUZZ S2920.1- Extends the date a person must purchase long-term care insurance to opt out of the program from the bill's effective date to November 1, 2021.

1323-S AMS CLEV S2745.2- Requires the long-term services and supports (LTSS) Trust Commission to work with insurers to develop long-term care insurance products that supplement the LTSS Trust program's benefit. Requires ESD and DSHS to jointly develop and implement an outreach program to provide employers with educational materials to ensure employees are aware of the program and that the premium assessments will begin on January 1, 2022. Requires the outreach be implemented by October 1, 2021, information to be posted on a public website and made available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Chinese.

The below listed businesses and organizations representing industry and local governments across the state support the goal of giving citizens of the State of Washington options to provide for long-term care. We urge you to concur in the senate amendments made to SHB 1323 so that Washington state employers and employees can utilize the next 6 months to review and acquire long term care plans.

Washington Association of School

Administrators

Wagstaff Manufacturing

**Washington Association of School Business
Officials**

Stephen B. Kern DMD, PS

WA Forest Protection Association

**WA State Association of the United
Association of the Plumbing and Pipefitting
Industry of the US and Canada**

PacificSource

Washington Council of Police & Sheriffs

**Washington State Council of County and
City Employees Council 2, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
state Council**

**South Sound Chamber of Commerce
Legislative Coalition**

Associated General Contractors

Greater Spokane Incorporated

**Iron Workers District Council of the Pacific
Northwest**

**International Union of Operating Engineers
Local 302**

**Joseph Y. de Jesus, DDS, PS de Jesus
Orthodontics**

**WA Air Conditioning Contractors
Association**

Washington state Council of Firefighters

Washington Denturist Association

BIAW

NW Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

WA and Northern Idaho District Council of Laborers

Washington Retail Association

Association of Washington Cities

Google

Premiera

Microsoft

Weyerhaeuser

Olympia Multi-specialty Clinic

Washington Food Industry Association

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc

Washington Aggregates and Concrete Association

MultiCare Health System

Northwest Insurance Agencies

Washington State Dental Association

AHT Insurance

Gundersen Dental Care

Washington Roundtable

PEMCO Insurance

American Council of Engineering Companies of Washington

Association of Washington School Principals

Washington Hospitality Association

Olympic Crest Insurance

Washington Farm Bureau

Identity Clark County

Tacoma Pierce County Chamber