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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 1415

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING MINIMUM WAGES FOR NURSING HOME WORKERS PROVIDING DIRECT CARE AND CERTAIN GROUP HOME WORKERS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires nursing homes and state-contracted nonprofit group homes to implement a schedule to increase the minimum hourly wage for certain employees to \$22.50 by January 1, 2026, and \$25.00 by January 1, 2027.

The bill generally requires nursing homes to implement the wage increases under this schedule for registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and nurse's aides that provide residents with direct care (i.e. hands-on care, including help with feeding, bathing, toileting, dressing, lifting and moving, administering medication, promoting socialization, and personal care). Under existing law, someone seeking a license to establish, conduct, operate, or maintain a nursing home must give the Department of Public Health (DPH) certain information. The bill expands this by also requiring the submission of data demonstrating compliance with the bill's minimum hourly wage increases.

The bill exempts Medicaid-funded nursing homes with rates set according to Connecticut's long-term care statutes from its wage increase requirements, unless the rates are sufficient to fund the specified wages. If a nursing home receives a rate adjustment from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to increase its employees' wages but fails to do so, the bill authorizes the DSS commissioner to decrease the home's rate in the same amount it was increased.

Correspondingly, under the bill, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary must require any state-contracted nonprofit group home to increase wages under the same schedule for employees providing services to people with intellectual or

developmental disabilities. However, for employees who already earn more than the minimum hourly wage, but not more than \$30.00 an hour, the secretary must require these group homes to increase wages by up to 5% in both fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

Additionally, the bill requires the OPM secretary to, within available appropriations, transfer sufficient money each fiscal year to (1) the Department of Developmental Services's behavioral services program and employment opportunities and day services accounts and (2) DSS's community residential services account to give qualifying employers state funds to implement wage increases. Under the bill, beginning January 1, 2026, any employer that receives funds to increase wages must provide the OPM secretary documentation that the funds were used for that purpose.

Lastly, the bill requires the OPM secretary to report to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees, by December 31, 2026, on the (1) total state funding provided to implement these wage increases and (2) effect of wage increases on attracting and retaining employees and improving supports and services for group home residents.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the provision requiring wage data reporting to DPH is effective January 1, 2026.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 6 (03/13/2025)