

State of Illinois
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Springfield, Illinois 62706

George H. Ryan
GOVERNOR

August 10, 2001

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois State Senate
92nd General Assembly

Pursuant to Article IV, section 9(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby veto Senate Bill 161, entitled "AN ACT in relation to public aid."

Senate Bill 161 creates the Long Term Care Funding Task Force to study new Medicaid reimbursement formulas for geriatric, intermediate, developmentally disabled pediatric and shelter care facilities. The bill requires the task force to issue a report to the Director of the Department of Public Aid, the Secretary of the Department of Human Services, and the General Assembly by April 1, 2002.

There are several factors regarding Senate Bill 161 that concern me. First, there is no direct long-term care consumer representation called for in the bill. The proposed task force is heavily weighted with those groups who have a financial stake in any recommendations issued by the committee.

Second, the proposed task force does not include representation from groups that favor deinstitutionalization. As a matter of public policy, and with regards to the Olmstead decision, I believe we should be assessing options for encouraging Illinois citizens to remain out of institutional settings and in their own homes for as long as possible. Further, Senate Bill 161 does not require opportunities for comment by interested groups and members of the general public not afforded membership on the task force.

Finally, Senate Bill 161 does not specifically charge the task force with developing ways for the state to finance any of its forthcoming rate methodology recommendations. The State has formed similar long-term care rate methodology study groups in the past, only to not be able to afford their recommendations.

If the honorable members of the General Assembly wish to create a committee to study the issues raised in Senate Bill 161, I would suggest a more inclusive group that studies the whole issue of aging, public health care finance, and initiatives designed to allow citizens to live independently for as long as possible.

For these reasons, I hereby veto and return Senate Bill 161.

Sincerely,
George H. Ryan
GOVERNOR