

Appropriations Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5742

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, MENTAL HEALTH, SUICIDE PREVENTION AND

Title: SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Vote Date: 4/21/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/26/2021

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Appropriations Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill directs undisbursed federal COVID-19 relief funds to private providers in recognition of increased demand for services during the pandemic in the areas of domestic violence, mental health, suicide prevention and substance abuse services.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE: (LCO 7072) The substitute language specifies an amount of ten million dollars to be granted to private providers by the Office of Policy and Management from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act monies.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#), outlined how DMHAS had supported, and continued to support, clients and providers using relief funding in conjunction with the Office of Policy and Management to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that the agency's needs would be reflected in the Governor's spending plan and that additional funds were not necessary in light of current and planned federal dollars.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Liza Andrews, Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), Director of Public Policy and Communication supported the bill. She detailed the increased costs to the 18 state domestic

violence agencies due to the pandemic. She noted that, in addition to increased demand for services, services such as housing in hotels and providing laptops for distance education have compounded their costs. CCADV requested an additional \$1.35 million for staffing and services.

[Cale Bradford, Elara Caring](#), Government Relations Officer, supported the bill. Elara Caring, formerly known as New England Home Care, is a provider of home and community health services. He highlighted the costs and the services these types of organizations realize and the impact of the pandemic. He urged the legislators to consider opportunities in the American Rescue Plan to expedite disbursement based on Medicaid claims.

[Antonia Edwards](#) supported the bill. She recounted her personal experiences as an individual, mother and community activist as they related to issues of racial equity.

[House Republican Caucus](#) supported the bill and cited examples of the impact of the pandemic in the areas cited in the bill. Further, they called for additional resources beyond the two sources listed in the bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed

Reported by: Elizabeth Gillette

Date: April 27, 2021