

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1083

AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH

Title: STATUTES.

Vote Date: 3/31/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/29/2021

File No.: 540

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This legislation implements assorted recommendations regarding revisions to the public health statutes.

Section 1 requires the Chief Medical Examiner to complete at least one hour of training in sudden unexpected death in epilepsy as part of CME requirements.

Sections 2 and 3 requires health clubs to have at least one AED in a readily accessible location and one employee trained in its use and CPR during staffed business hours; exempts health clubs from liability for acts or omissions involving an AED's non-use.

Section 4 requires hospitals to (1) ask admitted patients if they want a family member to be notified of the admission and if so, (2) make reasonable efforts to do so within 24 hours.

Section 5 allows a 16-year-old, with a parent's or guardian's written authorization, to (1) donate blood and (2) consent to blood withdrawal at a voluntary blood donation program.

Section 6 extends, from one to two years, the maximum length of an art therapist temporary permit to practice before full licensure.

Section 7 requires hospitals to provide written notification to the mother of a stillborn child of burial and cremation options either (1) upon admission to the hospital, when practicable or the stillbirth is expected or (2) within 12 hours after delivery; provides the mother 24 hours after receiving the notice to inform the hospital in writing of her decision on such

arrangements.

Section 8 requires the DPH commissioner, by January 1, 2022, to revise the marriage license application to replace references to “bride” and “groom” with “spouse 1” and spouse 2,” respectively.

Sections 9 to 87 allows physician assistants to certify, sign, or otherwise document medical information in several situations that previously required a physician’s or APRN’s signature, certification, or documentation.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Senator Matthew Lesser, 9th District:

Senator Lesser supports Section 1 of this bill, also known as "Halyn's Law" in honor of Halyn Murtha who died from SUDEP just before her 10th birthday in 2019. This section requires the Chief Medical Examiner (CME) to earn at least one hour of training in sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) as part of their continued required medical education. SUDEP is a leading cause of death for people with epilepsy. CMEs trained in detecting SUDEP will help the state collect critical data needed to learn about this problem and possibly help us prevent more deaths in the future.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Emma Borys:

Ms. Borys supports Section 1 of this bill because she lives with epilepsy and the threat of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP). She wants to raise awareness of SUDEP and work with medical professionals in Connecticut so that no other family experiences the death of their child like the Murtha family.

Michael Finley, Government Relations Advocate, Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut:

Mr. Finley and the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut support Section 1 of this bill, also known as Halyn's Law. They feel that educating medical examiners and collecting crucial data, including accurate and uniform reporting of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), will lead to identification of the causes and risk factors leading to SUDEP.

Mr. Finley compared this effort to the work done by sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) advocates. They successfully lowered the SIDS death rate from 130.3 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 38 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1996 after a campaign to put babies to sleep on their backs. They were only successful in that endeavor because they had data that identified SIDS risk factors. Mr. Finley and the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut would like to see a similar outcome for SUDEP.

Chris Murtha, Father:

Mr. Murtha supports Section 1 of this bill because he lost his 9-year-old daughter, Halyn Murtha, to sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) on May 25, 2019. Halyn was diagnosed with epilepsy at 1 years old and endured significant health challenges along with subsequent medical treatments and hospital visits. Mr. Murtha and the rest of Halyn's family want medical examiners in Connecticut to be trained on SUDEP and to collect data to be

shared with the North American SUDEP Registry (NASR). In turn the research done by the NASR will help lower the risk of the 36,000 Connecticut residents with epilepsy and possibly prevent another family from experiencing the pain of losing a loved one.

Kathy Flaherty, Executive Director, Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP):

Ms. Flaherty and the CLRP support Section 4 of this bill regarding notification of a family member if someone is admitted to the hospital for treatment with the patient's consent. They request to include "any other person of the patient's choosing" given that many people consider their chosen people as family and not their family of origin.

Hartford HealthCare (HHC):

HHC supports Section 4 of this bill and request a language change from "any family member" to "a designated family member, caregiver or support person". This gives patients more options and does not limit them to a relative. Additionally, the addition of "support person" is in alignment with the language used by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the State Department of Health (DPH).

Robert Purvis, Executive Vice President, New York Blood Center Enterprises (NYDCe):

Mr. Purvis and the NYDCe support Section 5 of this bill to allow 16-year-olds to donate blood with their parent or guardian's written authorization. The pandemic has increased the demand for blood donations while also decreasing the ways for people to donate blood. Allowing younger people to donate blood increases the pool of donors and is already permitted in several surrounding states.

Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA):

CHA supports Section 7 of this bill with a change on language from when notifying a mother of a stillborn child of the burial and cremation options from 12 hours to 24 hours.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None

Reported by: Kate Hamilton

Date: May 6, 2021