
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 477

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PUBLIC HEALTH OF RESIDENTS OF THE STATE.

SUMMARY

This bill makes the following unrelated changes in the public health statutes:

1. establishes a nine-member task force to study the regulation and staffing levels of assisted living services agencies (ALSAs) that provide services as dementia special care units or programs and requires the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the Public Health Committee by January 1, 2023 (§ 1);
2. requires the Department of Public Health's (DPH's) Maternal Mortality Review Committee to develop educational materials on intimate partner violence and pregnant and postpartum persons with mental health disorders, which DPH must distribute to specified hospitals and health care providers (§ 2);
3. requires birthing hospitals (a) starting October 1, 2022, to provide caesarean section patients with written information on the importance of mobility following the procedure and (b) starting January 1, 2023, to provide postpartum patients certain educational materials and establish a patient portal for them to virtually access any educational materials and information provided to the patients during their stay or discharge (§ 3);
4. designates the month of May as "Maternal Mental Health Month" and each May 5 as "Maternal Health Day," and allows suitable exercises to be held at the Capitol and other locations the governor designates (§ 4);

5. establishes a 21-member Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention within the Legislative Department to coordinate strategies and programs to reduce gun violence in the state and requires the commission to annually report to the Public Health Committee on its activities (§ 5); and
6. appropriates \$250,000 to DPH in FY 23 to promote the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “Hear Her” campaign to prevent pregnancy-related deaths to birthing hospitals, emergency departments, and obstetricians and other providers who practice obstetrics (§ 6).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provisions (1) requiring birthing hospitals to provide patients with certain educational materials and establish a patient portal and (2) appropriating funds to DPH in FY 23 take effect July 1, 2022.

§ 1 — ALSA TASK FORCE

Duties

The bill establishes a nine-member task force to study ALSAs that provide services as a dementia special care units or programs. The study must examine (1) DPH regulation of these agencies and whether additional department oversight is required, (2) whether minimum staffing levels should be required, and (3) agencies’ maintenance of records on meals served to, bathing of, medication administration to, and overall health of residents.

Membership

Under the bill, the task force consists of the following nine members:

1. two each appointed by the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker;
2. one each appointed by the Senate and House majority and minority leaders; and
3. the DPH commissioner or her designee.

Under the bill, appointing authorities must make their initial appointments within 30 days after the bill's passage and fill any vacancies. Appointed members may be legislators.

The bill requires the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker to select the task force chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule the first meeting to be held within 60 days after the bill's passage.

Under the bill, the Public Health Committee's administrative staff serve as the task force's administrative staff.

Report

The bill requires the task force, by January 1, 2023, to report its findings and recommendations to the Public Health Committee. The task force terminates on the date it submits the report or January 1, 2023, whichever is later.

§ 2 — MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

By law, a Maternal Mortality Review Committee within DPH conducts multidisciplinary reviews of maternal deaths to identify associated factors and make recommendations to reduce these deaths. The bill requires the committee, by January 1, 2023, to develop educational materials on the following topics:

1. the health and safety of pregnant and postpartum persons with mental health disorders, including perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, for DPH to distribute to each birthing hospital in the state;
2. evidence-based screening tools for screening patients for intimate partner violence, peripartum mood disorders, and substance use disorder, for DPH to distribute to obstetricians and other health care providers who practice obstetrics; and
3. indicators of intimate partner violence for DPH to distribute to
 - (a) hospitals for emergency department health care providers to

use and (b) obstetricians and other health care providers who practice obstetrics.

Under the bill, “birthing hospital” means a facility wholly or partially operated to care for patients during child delivery and postpartum persons and their newborns following birth.

§ 3 — BIRTHING HOSPITALS

The bill requires birthing hospitals, starting October 1, 2022, to provide each patient who has undergone a caesarean section written information on the importance of mobility and the associated risks of immobility following the procedure.

By January 1, 2023, the bill requires birthing hospitals to establish a patient portal where a postpartum patient can virtually access, through the internet or an application, any educational materials and information that the hospital provided the patient during his or her hospital stay and discharge.

Also starting by this date, the bill requires birth hospitals to provide each postpartum patient the Maternal Mortality Review Committee’s educational materials on the health and safety of pregnant and postpartum persons with mental health disorders, as described above.

§ 5 — COMMISSION ON GUN VIOLENCE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

Duties

The bill establishes a Commission on Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention to do the following:

1. coordinate the funding and implementation of evidence-based, evidence-informed, community-centric programs and strategies to reduce community gun violence in the state;
2. secure state, federal, and other funds to reduce community gun violence;
3. determine community-level needs by engaging communities

- impacted by gun violence;
4. establish and implement a grant program, including awarding grants and offering guidance to organizations working on similar goals;
 5. obtain any necessary and available assistance from any legislative or executive department, board, or commission; other state agency; or any organization or entity to carry out its duties;
 6. accept any gift, donation, or bequest to perform its duties;
 7. establish bylaws to govern its procedures; and
 8. perform other necessary and appropriate acts to carry out its duties.

Membership

Under the bill, the commission consists of the following 21 members:

1. one representative each from the Connecticut Hospital Association and Compass Youth Collaborative, appointed by the House speaker;
2. one representative each from the Connecticut Violence Intervention Program and Regional Youth Adult Social Action Partnership, appointed by the Senate president pro tempore;
3. one representative each from Hartford Communities That Care, Inc. and CT Against Gun Violence, appointed by the House majority leader;
4. one representative each from Project Longevity and the Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, appointed by the Senate majority leader;
5. one representative each from Yale New Haven Hospital and the Greater Bridgeport Adolescence Program, appointed by the House minority leader;

6. one representative of Hartford Hospital and one youth representative of the Connecticut Justice Alliance, appointed by the Senate minority leader;
7. one representative of the Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program and one parent member of the Two Generation Initiative, appointed by the Public Health Committee House chairperson;
8. one representative each from Mothers United Against Violence and Violent Crime Survivors, appointed by the Public Health Committee Senate chairperson;
9. one representative of the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, appointed by the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity's (CWCSEO) executive director;
10. two representatives of DPH's Injury and Violence Surveillance Unit, appointed by the DPH commissioner; and
11. the education commissioner and CWCSEO executive director or their designees.

The bill requires appointing authorities to make initial appointments within 60 days after the bill's passage. If an appointment is not made, the commission chairperson may designate a person with the required qualifications to serve on the commission until an appointment is made.

Under the bill, members appointed by the legislative leaders and Public Health Committee chairpersons may be legislators. Appointed members serve a term that is coterminous with the appointing authority's and may serve more than one term.

Leadership and Meetings

The bill requires the CWCSEO executive director to schedule the commission's first meeting, which must be held within 60 days after the bill's passage. At this meeting, the chairperson must be elected from the

commission members.

Under the bill, a majority of commission members constitutes a quorum for transacting business. Any decision must be made by a majority of members present at the meeting, except that the commission may establish subcommissions, advisory groups, or other entities it deems necessary to further its purposes. It also requires the commission to adopt procedural rules.

Commission members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed within available funds for necessary expenses in performing their duties.

Executive Director

The bill requires the commission, by majority vote, to hire an executive director to serve as its administrative staff and carry out its duties. It may request assistance from the Joint Commission on Legislative Management in doing so.

Under the bill, the executive director serves at the pleasure of the commission and may hire up to two executive assistants. The CWCSEO's administrative staff must serve in that capacity for the commission until the executive director is hired.

Report

The bill requires the commission, starting by January 1, 2023, to annually report to the Public Health Committee on its activities during the prior 12 months.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 27 Nay 3 (03/30/2022)