

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-265

AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE OF STAFF-TO-PATIENT RATIOS, ROOM
TELEPHONE ACCESS AND ASBESTOS MITIGATION MEASURES AT

Title: NURSING HOME FACILITIES.

Vote Date: 3/10/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/8/2022

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:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was raised to provide individuals looking at nursing homes with pertinent information regarding such facilities, such as the staff-to-patient ratio and asbestos mitigation measures, and to provide landline installation and use to nursing home residents free of charge. These measures were deemed necessary and useful for the information of both residents and family of those in nursing homes.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Mairead Painter, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Department of Aging and Disability Services stated that she supports this bill for increasing the transparency and access of staff-to-patient ratios and requested that staff involved in oversight and one-to-one work not be included in the count. She emphasized that any access or information that provides a resident with greater ability to decide where they receive their care and services is supported by her office.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Marc Anthony Gallucci, Esq., Chief Advocate, Center for Disability Rights, offered testimony in support of this bill, stating that some nursing facilities had been inhospitable to the requests of individuals for in-room phones. He further stated that common area phones alone were insufficient, and that the bill should be expanded to guarantee a right to private room phones, the expenses for which could be deducted from their monthly applied income.

Finally, he stated that this bill will both reduce social isolation, and increase the ability of residents to report to the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman confidentially, if necessary.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Tina Yeitz, President, Connecticut Association of Residential Care Homes, offered testimony in opposition to this bill, stating that she was concerned about the fact that charges could not be instituted for the installation of phones in private rooms. She also stated that this bill may be too broad, as a number of nursing home residents use personal devices – not necessarily landlines – to communicate with family. She recommended an amendment that would only prohibit charges for the installation of a common room phone.

Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut, testified in opposition to this bill, stating that the daily internet posting of staffing ratios would be an unnecessary administrative burden. She also opposed the prohibition on charges for in-room phones, as such phones are not presently recognized by Medicaid, and that such a requirement would require an increase in the Medicaid rate reimbursement.

Matthew Barrett, President/CEO, Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities and Connecticut Center for Assisted Living, opposed Section 1 of the bill, on the grounds that maintaining a daily internet tally of staffing ratios would be an excessive administrative burden. He also testified in opposition to Section 2, on the grounds that the cost of installation and maintenance of in-room phones should be reimbursed by Medicaid. He offered further testimony in opposition to Section 3, on the grounds that it was too ambiguous in scope, and offered language in written testimony that the information on asbestos should be required only if requested, and this information should be conveyed from previous reports regarding asbestos.

David Godbout, Constituent, he expressed opposition to all bills put forward by the committee, under the claim of nullification

Reported by:

Date: 3/15/2022

Cameron Clarke, Committee Clerk
Richard Ferrari, Assistant Clerk