

Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6626

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING LONG-TERM CARE.

Vote Date: 3/23/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

PH Date: 2/16/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) provides wide-ranging medical and social services to certain elderly individuals living in the community. Adding PACE to the state's Medicaid program would be very beneficial to elderly people and elderly people with mental disabilities as it allows them to stay within their community instead of transferring to a nursing home. The PACE program allows for a more dynamic and individualized approach to caring for elderly people. Additionally, adding a sex offender background check would allow communities to know who is staying near their children as often nursing homes can be found near adolescent schools. This bill would require the PACE program to be administered by the Department of Social Services and adds an all-inclusive sex offender background check and registration by the Commissioner of Correction on any former inmate transferred to a nursing home facility.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language amends Section 2 to clarify the mandate regarding sex offender registry check applies to inmates or parolees accepted by a nursing home for admission from outside the state. Inmates accepted for admission from inside the state already have to be certified by the Commissioner of Correction as not posing a danger and remain under the Commissioner's supervision when released to nursing homes contracting with the state to provide such care.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Department of Social Services (DSS), Commissioner, Andrea Barton Reeves; opposes this bill stating the Department supports the concept and intent of the bill, but the bill remains

unclear of fiscal and operational implications. It is stated if PACE is added, then additional staff would be needed along with a model of the fiscal impact towards Medicaid. It is suggested that they are available to work with the committee to establish the costs and benefits of incorporating the PACE program would be.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

The Arc of Connecticut, Inc., Director of Advocacy, Carol Scully; supports this bill stating this would benefit elderly people with intellectual developmental disabilities. It is stated that transitions can be especially taxing on this group and staying in their current living environment is best for not only them but their community also.

Church Home of Harford, Inc, d/b/a Seabury, President & CEO, Renee J. Bernasconi; supports this bill and the expansion of the continuum-of-care model to individuals. It is stated this bill adds an affordable alternative to Connecticut residents and the autonomy to live in their homes and receive coordinated health care services.

Communities 4 Action, Amy Badini; supports this bill stating the most vulnerable must be protected.

Edenbridge Health, Chief Medical Officer, Alan Abrams, MD, MPH; supports this bill stating the PACE program should be added as an option to the CT Medicaid program given the successful outcomes the program has had when improving the quality of life for senior citizens.

Edenbridge Health, Founder & CEO, Stephen Gordon; supports this bill stating the PACE program is effective and improves not only the quality of life but the overall health costs for elderly participants.

Edenbridge Health, SVP Program Launches, Brian McKaig; supports this bill stating the need for higher standards that PACE brings to elderly individuals in need.

Fallon Health, President & CEO, Richard Burke; supports this bill stating how successful the PACE has been and how it reduces the burdens on nursing homes and hospitals which then frees up resources for the community.

JM Care Management, Geriatric Care Manager & RN, Joan Merrill; supports this bill stating these measures will protect residents in nursing homes.

Kinship Health, CEO, John Enderle; supports this bill stating they have an estimated 15,545 residents that would qualify for this program. It is stated the PACE program should be a model of how senior care should be practiced as it prioritizes the dignity that every senior deserves.

LeadingAge Connecticut, President, Mag Morelli; supports this bill stating the PACE program will allow those to remain in the community rather than transition into a nursing home.

Rocky Hill Town Council, Member, Miriam Theroux; supports this bill stating sex offenders should be reported when in the care of a nursing home.

CT Resident, Jaclyn Farnham; supports this bill stating that nursing homes should be required to report all sex offenders that are in their care to the state's registry.

CT Resident, Canton, John Interlandi; supports this bill and includes a [personal anecdote](#) regarding nursing home facilities.

CT Resident, Seymour, Frederic Kaeser; supports this bill stating it will increase the quality of life for residents in nursing homes.

CT Resident, Mary Alice Schulte, RN; supports this bill stating it will provide acceptable care for residents in nursing homes.

Two people submitted testimony anonymously in support of this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

ACLU Connecticut, Policy Counsel, Jess Zaccagnino; opposes this bill stating this legislation continues to add to the consequences for people who live every day with a criminal record. It is suggested there be a balance as seen in PA 22-88 which follows an individualized approach and considers evidence of rehabilitation and time since conviction. It is stated the ACLU recognizes and acknowledges the different dynamic factors one must endure when residing in a long-term care facility.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF GENERAL COMMENTS:

CT Resident, Registered Nurse, JoAnn Adami; took no position on this bill and suggested ideas for improvement in care, including smaller units, full-time recreation positions on dementia units, improved pay for nursing assistants, volunteer programs, and increasing the number and availability of nursing supervisors.

Reported by: Christian Talarski

Date: March 30, 2023