

# Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5240

AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR INFERTILITY

**Title:** TREATMENT.

**Vote Date:** 3/20/2024

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Change of Reference to Appropriations

**PH Date:** 3/7/2024

**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:**

Human Services Committee

## **CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Sen. Saud Anwar, 3<sup>rd</sup> Dist.

Rep. Kate Farrar, 20<sup>th</sup> Dist.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

Individuals, regardless of health insurance coverage type, should be able to have access to quality, affordable, and compassionate health care including reproductive healthcare, regardless of income, employment, and geographic location. Becoming a parent or not, is a personal choice made by the individual and family based on multiple factors, including access to treatment for infertility. Of all live births in Connecticut from 2020-2022, an average of 53.5% of live births were to White women, while 26.2% were to Hispanic women and 12.2% were to Black women. This bill seeks to expand HUSKY coverage to include access to infertility treatments to the extent that it is covered under private health insurance, using the current definitions of “medically necessary” and “infertility” as provided in the general statutes. By expanding Medicaid coverage to include infertility treatments, Connecticut will be taking significant steps to ensure equity in reproductive healthcare.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Department of Social Services (DSS), Commissioner, Andrea Barton Reeves:** opposes this bill citing the fiscal impact to the department for the addition of fertility treatment services and subsequent services. It is stated that adding coverage of fertility treatments could result in increasing costs of approximately \$12.1 million in SFY 2025 (with a state share of \$2.8

million). It is also stated there is a lack of funding for fertility coverage in the Governor's budget.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Connecticut General Assembly, Reproductive Rights Caucus, Representative Matt Blumenthal;** supports this bill stating that access to fertility treatments is vital to making the right to have a family accessible to individuals of all backgrounds. It is stated that there are broad services available to individuals on Medicaid that prevent pregnancy but do not assist in getting pregnant. It is stated that the State of New York expanded Medicaid coverage to fertility treatments and has seen an increase in individuals seeking fertility diagnoses and getting infertility treatment.

**American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Connecticut, Policy Counsel, Jess Zaccagnino;** supports this bill stating that it is a significant step in reducing barriers to accessing fertility care for people of color, working people, and LGBTQ+ people.

**Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV), President & CEO Meghan Scanlon;** supports this bill as it will expand coverage of infertility treatments to individuals on HUSKY insurance and could begin to address racial disparities in fertility treatment. It is stated that due to the high out-of-pocket cost of infertility treatments, this type of healthcare can be out of reach for low-income, Black, and Hispanic residents in Connecticut.

**GLAD, Director of Family Advocacy, Patience Crozier, and Constitutional Law Fellow Benjamin Marcus;** support this bill stating it is an important step in ensuring that access to reproductive healthcare is equitable for all Connecticut residents. It is stated that individuals have been paying out of pocket at the expense of other commitments such as paying down student loan debt or buying a home.

**Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Vice President of Public Policy, Advocacy and Organizing, Gretchen Raffa;** supports this bill stating that it will eliminate barriers to fertility coverage for low-income women of reproductive age. It is stated that Medicaid covers three in ten Black women of reproductive age as well as one in four Hispanic women, disproportionately excluding these individuals from accessing fertility care. It is also noted that Medicaid insurance funds maternity and family planning services, including pregnancy prevention, but does not fund access to pregnancy achievement for low-income people.

**Reproductive Equity Now, Connecticut State Director, Liz Gustafson;** supports this bill stating it will ensure access to fertility care so that low-income residents can have equitable access to reproductive health care. It is stated the lack of coverage for fertility treatments under HUSKY Health disproportionately impacts Black and Hispanic women, with Black women being twice as likely to suffer from infertility compared to White women.

**Resolve New England, Executive Director, Kate Weldon LeBlanc;** supports this bill stating it will provide fertility access to those who are traditionally excluded from fertility coverage due to being on HUSKY. It is stated that Connecticut has been a national leader in reproductive rights and fertility access, and this is another place where Connecticut can lead.

**YWCA Hartford Region, Manager of Advocacy and Outreach Terry Fitzgerald;** supports this bill stating it will ensure that individuals under HSUKY insurance will have the same access to fertility care as individuals on private insurance.

**The following individuals submitted written testimony in support of this bill:**

Breast Cancer Oncologist, Dr. Kristina Fanucci MD

University of Connecticut, MSW Student, Diana Dupuy-Faustin

University of Connecticut, Medical Student, Samhita Gurrala

University of Connecticut, Medical Student, Claire Surkis

Yale Cancer Center, Director, Dr. Eric Winer MD

Yale College Democrats, New Haven Resident, Riley Elliott

Yale College Democrats, New Haven Resident, Paola Milbank

Yale College Democrats, New Haven Resident, Ada Meighan-Thiel

Yale University, Clinical Fellow, Dr. Curtis Perry MD, PhD

Yale University, Program Manager, Early Onset Cancer Program, Jamie Reedy

Yale New Haven Hospital, Oncology Fellow, Thejal Srikumar MD

Yale University, Hematology and Medical Oncology Fellow, Dr. Xiao Wang MD

Wesleyan University, Professor of Biology Emeritus, Laura Gabel

Connecticut Resident, New Haven, Riley Getchell

Connecticut Resident, New Haven Stephen King

Connecticut Resident, New Haven, Maia Roothaan

Connecticut Resident, New Haven, Zavian Valedón

Connecticut Resident, New Haven, David Vita

Linda Rinaldi

Ray Rinaldi

**Two individuals have submitted written testimony anonymously in support of this bill.**

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Angela Rossi**

**Date: April 4, 2024**