

**WHEELCHAIR SERVICE
AND REPAIR
LEGISLATION**

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TIMELINE



February 16	HB6702 Referred to Human Services Committee
February 21	Public Hearing
February 28	Second Public Hearing – rescheduled due to CGA-wide internet outage
March 21	Joint Favorable Substitute/Change of Reference JUD Passes 14-7 out of Committee
March 23-24	Change of Reference – Senate and House to JUD – never progressed
April 25-May 22	Informal Working Group Meetings of Key Stakeholders
June 5	House Amendment A passed unanimously as HB6855 AA Establishing the Task Force
June 6	Senate Adopted House Amdmt A – Passed on consent
June 21	Special Act 23-22
June 28	Signed by Governor

RAISED BILL 6702 AAC A CONSUMER'S RIGHT TO TIMELY WHEELCHAIR REPAIRS.

Wheelchair users have experienced a series of delays when it comes to repairing their devices in a timely manner. Not having their wheelchairs repaired in a timely manner has caused great stress amongst wheelchair users as it comprises their independence, getting to work, or moving within their homes. This bill will require manufacturers of powered wheelchairs to provide documentation, tools, hardware, or software to allow a consumer to repair or hire an independent contractor to repair a powered wheelchair. *

*From the HS Joint Favorable Report

JOINT FAVORABLE SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE – HB6702

- a. Requires CRT service provider to make a service call within 3 days of notice of repair that renders the chair inoperable or unsafe to use regardless of warranty status.
- b. Establishes new warranty and repair requirements for chairs sold or leased including three-day service calls and loaners within four days if the chair can't be operated safely and isn't from misuse.
- c. Requires the Aging and Disability Services Commissioner to set up a working group of industry reps and consumers to propose regulations by 3/1/2024.
- d. Establishes a 24-hour call response system for consumers.
- e. Makes violations automatic violation of consumer protection law, after to share data to allow a nonauthorized dealer to repair a chair.
- f. Strikes the underlying right-to-repair bill requiring manufacturers to share data to allow a non-authorized dealer to repair a chair.

INFORMAL MEETINGS

Meetings were held informally with key stakeholders from the complex rehabilitation industry, disability advocates and consumers, disability legal experts, state agencies and service providers on the following dates:

April 25, May 2, May 15, May 16, May 22

These meetings concluded with a bill establishing a Task Force (HB6855), some areas of agreement between consumers and industry, and a list of consumer priorities and recommendations that had been presented but not yet discussed.

HB6855 Becomes Law – Special Act 23-22

AA Establishing A Task Force to Study
Minimum Standards for Timely Repair of
Complex Rehabilitation Technology

HB 6855 TASK FORCE

Study minimum standards for the timely repair of complex rehabilitation technology, including, but not limited to, improving timelines for assessment and repair of such technology by a manufacturer or authorized service provider upon notification from a consumer about the need for repairs.

TASK FORCE CHARGED WITH...

1. Examine and make recommendations for policy, regulations and legislation necessary to improve the independence of motion and quality of life of consumers using complex rehabilitation technology in the state;
2. Assess barriers to timely repair of complex rehabilitation technology, including, but not limited to, recruitment and retention of staff, travel time to complete repairs, geographical locations of authorized service providers, supply chain and parts availability issues;
3. Review how repairs for complex rehabilitation technology are paid for and by whom;
4. Survey consumers state-wide to determine scope and breadth of problems associated with timeliness and cost of complex rehabilitation technology repair and other barriers to timely repair; and
5. Study successes and challenges experienced by other states that have policies, statutes or regulations associated with complex rehabilitation technology service and repair and make recommendations concerning adoption of similar policies, statutes and regulations in the state.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

- ▶ HS Committee Chairs – Senator Lesser and Rep. Gilchrest or designees
 - ▶ HS Committee Ranking Members – Senator Seminara and Rep. Case or designees
 - ▶ Departments of ADS, Insurance, DPH, DSS, DCP
 - ▶ Four Consumers
 - ▶ Disability Rights Advocate
 - ▶ Disability Legal Representative
 - ▶ Independent Living Center Representative
 - ▶ Service Provider Network Representative
 - ▶ Two Manufacturers
 - ▶ Two Service Providers
 - ▶ Health Insurance Industry Representative
 - ▶ Assistive Technology Professional
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Chairperson, Deadlines, Logistics

- ▶ HS Chairs select Chairpersons of the Task Force
- ▶ Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than July 15, 2023.
- ▶ The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.
- ▶ Not later than February 1, 2024, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging, consumer protection, human services, insurance and public health, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.
- ▶ The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or February 1, 2024, whichever is later.