

The Connecticut General Assembly

Legislative Commissioners' Office

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ABOUT BILLS

Prepared by the
Legislative Commissioners' Office

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INTRODUCTION

Many requests for legislation are made informally – a letter, a phone call or a meeting with a legislator addressing the problem or an idea for improvement. To have the idea written up more formally and started in the legislative system, the legislator will generally turn to the Legislative Commissioners' Office (more commonly known as LCO), the General Assembly's legislative drafting office. All official legislation is drafted by and processed through the Legislative Commissioners' Office.

WHO CAN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION

Only legislators and committees can introduce legislation. (Members of the public may ask their state senator or state representative to introduce legislation, as discussed in the Introduction above.)

Connecticut alternates between a short session that runs from early February to early May in even-numbered years, and a long session that runs from early January to early June in odd-numbered years. During a short session, individual legislators may only introduce proposed bills that relate to budgetary, revenue or financial matters (see section following for Types of Bills).

There are many other resources for information about bills, the General Assembly, and the political process.

Check the General Assembly web site (www.cga.ct.gov), e.g., "How a Bill Becomes a Law" flowchart at www.cga.ct.gov/html/bill.pdf, "Abbreviations and Acronyms" and "Terms and Definitions" under the Legislative References section, or under the Publications sections on the Office of Legislative Management web site or the Legislative Commissioners' Office web page:

www.cga.ct.gov/olm/

www.cga.ct.gov/lco/

Specific bills can be tracked during the legislative session through the General Assembly web site:

www.cga.ct.gov

TYPES OF BILLS

All legislation starts out as a bill but, depending on where the bill is in the process, there are different kinds of bills. They are explained briefly here.

Proposed Bills and Committee Bills

A *proposed bill* is introduced by an individual legislator and is submitted to a committee that has responsibility for the proposed bill's subject matter (this is called referring the bill to the committee of cognizance). A proposed bill is not a fully drafted bill but rather a short statement in non-statutory language expressing what the legislator would like the committee to consider in the way of legislation on a particular subject. In even-numbered year sessions, the state constitution and the legislative rules limit the introduction of proposed bills to budgetary, revenue and financial matters.

Each proposed bill is sent to a committee, based on the bill's subject matter. The committee then screens the proposed bills it receives. This screening is usually done by the committee chairpersons with input from other committee members. Those proposed bills that survive the screening process are brought before the full committee for consideration and for a vote to have the concept in the proposed bill fully drafted in formal statutory language. Once in this form it becomes a *committee bill*.

If a proposed bill does not survive the screening process to become a committee bill, it may die (i.e., the legislature never takes it up and nothing becomes of it) or the concept in the bill may get resurrected elsewhere as a *raised bill* (discussed below), as part of a raised bill on a related subject, or as an amendment to a related bill later in the session.

Governor's Bills

A *Governor's bill* is a bill, usually budget-related, that is submitted by the governor to the General Assembly. The sponsors listed on this type of bill are the respective leaders of both chambers of the governor's party.

Raised Bills

A *raised bill* is a fully drafted bill in formal statutory language that a committee has voted to have drafted. Unlike a committee bill, a raised bill originates from a concept that is not based on any proposed bill; rather, the committee votes on its own initiative to have the bill drafted on a subject within the committee's cognizance (the subject matter areas assigned to that committee).

Favorables or JF'ed Bills

If a committee believes a raised or committee bill should be taken up by the full General Assembly, it votes to give the bill a favorable report. Since the committee is a joint committee (with members from both the House and the Senate), the vote is called a *Joint Favorable Report*. The common expression for such a bill is that it is "JF'ed".

If the vote is for a favorable report but with substitute language, as discussed below, the vote is for a *Joint Favorable Substitute*.

A bill can be JF'ed straight to the floor (sent to the House if a House bill, to the Senate if a Senate bill), or it can be JF'ed to another committee (referred to as a "change of reference"). A bill before the Public Health Committee that created a criminal penalty for contaminating drinking water, for example, may be JF'ed to the Judiciary Committee because it is the Judiciary Committee that deals with criminal matters. In the Judiciary Committee, it could be considered and sent on to the floor as is, sent on with changes, sent to the Environment Committee (which also has cognizance over clean water issues), voted against, or have no action taken on it.

A bill that has been JF'ed to the floor can also be referred from the floor to other committees.

Substitute Bills

A *substitute bill* (either a substitute House bill (sHB) or substitute Senate bill (sSB)) is a bill that the committee votes to favorably report out of committee with changes in the bill's language. Substitute language is sometimes merely a minor, technical change, and at other times is a complete rewriting of the bill. The common expression for such a bill is that it is "JFS'ed".

PARTS OF A BILL (see last page for a sample document)

Bill Number

A bill gets assigned a bill number by the House or Senate clerk after the committee clerk submits it for filing. That number stays with the bill throughout the process and no other bill will have that number during the legislative session. If the bill started in the House, it will be a House Bill, indicated by "HB" before the bill number. If the bill started in the Senate, it will be a Senate Bill, indicated by "SB" before the bill number. If the bill later becomes a substitute bill, it will be designated "sHB" or "sSB". Senate bills are numbered from 1 to 5000, House bills from 5001 to 9999.

LCO Number

LCO numbers are unique, computer-generated numbers that appear on legislative documents that the LCO produces except for Joint Favorable Substitute bills. LCO numbers are used as a way of distinguishing different versions of the same or related bills and, more importantly, as a way of keeping track of various amendments to the same bill.

Title

The title is a concise statement that puts the reader on notice as to the bill's subject. It should not proselytize, mislead the reader, or conceal the bill's content.

Connecticut does not have a one-bill one-subject rule. Consequently, the title might be long in an attempt to cover all the bill's subjects, or it might be short but very general.

As the content of a bill changes as it works its way through the process, the title may change as well. The bill number, however, will remain the same (unless the bill becomes an amendment to another related bill).

Statement Of Purpose

Each type of bill, while still in committee, is accompanied by a Statement of Purpose, a statement of 150 words or fewer that explains what the bill does. The Statement of Purpose appears at the bottom of the bill but is often the first thing people look at after the title. Readers should not rely excessively on a Statement of Purpose; the language of the bill controls the meaning. Neither the Statement of Purpose nor the title of a bill has statutory effect. Further, if the bill is changed in committee, the Statement of Purpose may or may not continue to reflect the bill's purpose. The Statement of Purpose is removed if the bill gets JFS'ed out of committee, and is not included in the file copy of JF'ed bills that legislators vote on in the House and Senate.

Enacting Clause

An enacting clause is the traditional way of announcing the authority under which a law is enacted. It appears immediately after the bill's title. The specific wording is required by the state constitution: "*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:*"

Short Titles And Preambles

With rare exceptions, the Connecticut statutes do not use short titles or preambles. One exception is when either is a part of a uniform law, e.g., "This title shall be known and may be cited as the "Uniform Commercial Code." "

CODIFICATION

A bill becomes a public act when it passes both chambers of the General Assembly. The act is then assigned a public act number, with the first number indicating the year of enactment (e.g., PA 09-250 was enacted in 2009). Note that a public act does not actually become law until the governor has signed it, or it can become law if the governor takes no action (i.e., does not veto the public act).

Most public acts passed over the years have been codified. This means they have been compiled, incorporated into the existing General Statutes and published. The official version of the General Statutes is published by the state in blue paperback volumes and is available in most public libraries.

A special act is an act passed by both chambers of the General Assembly that is of limited application, either as to time or the persons or entities it affects. Examples of special acts are acts to establish task forces or study committees, to validate actions of boards and commissions of towns, to convey state property, to establish a pilot program and to amend the charter of specially chartered corporations. A special act is not codified.

The printed statute books are revised once every two years to incorporate the changes made by the public acts. The binder of each volume states the date up to which the volumes were revised ("REVISED TO ____"); note that this date does *not* include that year. Thus, "REVISED TO JANUARY 1, 2009" means the statutes contain all the legislative changes made up to the end of 2008 but do not contain changes made during the 2009 legislative session. For those changes, one must reference the 2009 public acts or the 2010 supplement to the General Statutes.

In addition to the printed books, the General Statutes and the even-numbered year supplement (when applicable) are available on the General Assembly web site:

www.cga.ct.gov



General Assembly
January Session, 2009

Proposed Bill No. 38

LCO No. 598

Bill number

LCO number

Referred to Committee on Human Services

Introduced by:
SEN. DOYLE, 9th Dist.
REP. NAFIS, 27th Dist.

Title

AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENT FOR SPECIALTY CARE TRANSPORTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

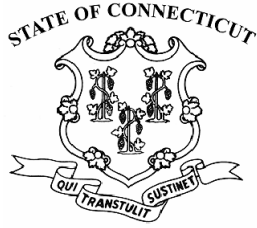
Enacting clause

- 1 That chapter 319v of the general statutes be amended to require the
- 2 Department of Social Services to recognize and pay for specialty care
- 3 transports, as defined in subparagraph (C) of subdivision (9) of section
- 4 19a-177 of the general statutes, for recipients of medical assistance.

Statement of Purpose

Statement of Purpose:

To have the Department of Social Services recognize and pay for specialty care transports.



General Assembly

January Session, 2009

Committee Bill No. 38

LCO No. 4280

04280SB00038HS_

Referred to Committee on Human Services

Introduced by:
(HS)

AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENT FOR SPECIALTY CARE TRANSPORTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 17b-276 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
3 *1, 2009*):

4 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, for
5 purposes of administering medical assistance programs, including, but
6 not limited to, the state-administered general assistance program and
7 programs administered pursuant to Title XIX or Title XXI of the Social
8 Security Act, the Department of Social Services shall (1) be the sole
9 state agency that sets emergency and nonemergency medical
10 transportation fees or fee schedules for any transportation services that
11 are reimbursed by the department for said medical assistance
12 programs; and (2) recognize and provide payment for "specialty care
13 transports", as defined in subparagraph (C) of subdivision (9) of
14 section 19a-177, for recipients of benefits from such medical assistance
15 programs.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2009	17b-276(b)

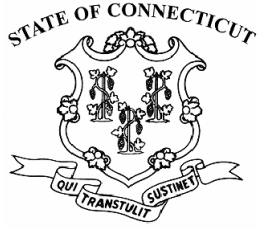
Statement of Purpose:

To have the Department of Social Services recognize and pay for specialty care transports.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]

Co-Sponsors: SEN. DOYLE, 9th Dist.; REP. NAFIS, 27th Dist.

S.B. 38



General Assembly

February Session, 2008

Raised Bill No. 172

LCO No. 1380

01380_____INS

Referred to Committee on Insurance and Real Estate

Introduced by:
(INS)

AN ACT REQUIRING COMMUNICATION OF MAMMOGRAPHIC BREAST DENSITY INFORMATION TO PATIENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2008*) Each mammography
2 report provided to a patient shall include information about breast
3 density, based on the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System
4 established by the American College of Radiology. Such report shall
5 disclose that insurance companies shall provide additional benefits, as
6 specified in sections 38a-503 and 38a-530 of the general statutes, for
7 comprehensive ultrasound screening of an entire breast or breasts if a
8 mammogram demonstrates heterogenous or dense breast tissue, based
9 on the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System established by the
10 American College of Radiology.

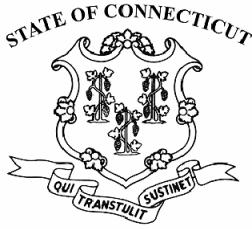
This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	October 1, 2008	New section
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Statement of Purpose:

To provide information to patients about breast density for the early detection of breast cancer.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 172

February Session, 2008

* SB00172INS 031108 *

**AN ACT REQUIRING COMMUNICATION OF MAMMOGRAPHIC
BREAST DENSITY INFORMATION TO PATIENTS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 38a-503 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2008*):

3 (a) Each individual health insurance policy providing coverage of
4 the type specified in subdivisions (1), (2), (4), (6), (10), (11) and (12) of
5 section 38a-469 delivered, issued for delivery, renewed, amended or
6 continued in this state on or after October 1, 2001, shall provide
7 benefits for mammographic examinations to any woman covered
8 under the policy which are at least equal to the following minimum
9 requirements: (1) A baseline mammogram for any woman who is
10 thirty-five to thirty-nine years of age, inclusive; and (2) a mammogram
11 every year for any woman who is forty years of age or older. Such
12 policy shall provide additional benefits for comprehensive ultrasound
13 screening of an entire breast or breasts if a mammogram demonstrates
14 heterogeneous or dense breast tissue based on the Breast Imaging
15 Reporting and Data System established by the American College of
16 Radiology or if a woman is believed to be at increased risk for breast
17 cancer due to family history or prior personal history of breast cancer,
18 positive genetic testing or other indications as determined by a
19 woman's physician or advanced practice registered nurse.

20 (b) Benefits under this section shall be subject to any policy
21 provisions that apply to other services covered by such policy.

22 (c) On and after October 1, 2008, each mammography report
23 provided to a patient shall include information about breast density,
24 based on the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System established
25 by the American College of Radiology. Where applicable, such report
26 shall include the following notice: "Your mammogram does show that
27 you have significantly dense breast tissue, and a follow-up breast
28 ultrasound has been suggested. A report of your mammography
29 results was sent to (insert physician or provider name here)".

30 Sec. 2. Section 38a-530 of the general statutes is repealed and the
31 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2008*):

32 (a) Each group health insurance policy providing coverage of the
33 type specified in subdivisions (1), (2), (4), (11) and (12) of section 38a-
34 469 delivered, issued for delivery, renewed, amended or continued in
35 this state on or after October 1, 2001, shall provide benefits for
36 mammographic examinations to any woman covered under the policy
37 which are at least equal to the following minimum requirements: (1) A
38 baseline mammogram for any woman who is thirty-five to thirty-nine
39 years of age, inclusive; and (2) a mammogram every year for any
40 woman who is forty years of age or older. Such policy shall provide
41 additional benefits for comprehensive ultrasound screening of an
42 entire breast or breasts if a mammogram demonstrates heterogeneous
43 or dense breast tissue based on the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data
44 System established by the American College of Radiology or if a
45 woman is believed to be at increased risk for breast cancer due to
46 family history or prior personal history of breast cancer, positive
47 genetic testing or other indications as determined by a woman's
48 physician or advanced practice registered nurse.

49 (b) Benefits under this section shall be subject to any policy
50 provisions that apply to other services covered by such policy.

51 (c) On and after October 1, 2008, each mammography report

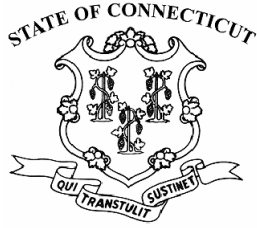
52 provided to a patient shall include information about breast density,
53 based on the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System established
54 by the American College of Radiology. Where applicable, such report
55 shall include the following notice: "Your mammogram does show that
56 you have significantly dense breast tissue, and a follow-up breast
57 ultrasound has been suggested. A report of your mammography
58 results was sent to (insert physician or provider name here)".

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2008	38a-503
Sec. 2	October 1, 2008	38a-530

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In subsection (c) of section 1 and subsection (c) of section 2, "on or after" was changed to "on and after" for accuracy.

INS *Joint Favorable Subst.*



General Assembly

January Session, 2009

Governor's Bill No. 832

LCO No. 2453

*02453 _____ *

Referred to Committee on Environment

Introduced by:

SEN. MCKINNEY, 28th Dist.

REP. CAFERO, 142nd Dist.

AN ACT CONCERNING BOATING SAFETY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2009*) (a) A person is guilty of
2 manslaughter in the second degree with a vessel when, while
3 operating a vessel upon the waters of this state under the influence of
4 intoxicating liquor or any drug, or both, such person causes the death
5 of another person as a consequence of the effect of such liquor or drug.

6 (b) Manslaughter in the second degree with a vessel is a class C
7 felony and the court shall suspend the safe boating certificate for
8 operation or certificate of personal watercraft operation for one year
9 for any person found guilty under this section.

10 Sec. 2. Section 15-140l of the general statutes is repealed and the
11 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2009*):

12 (a) A person commits the offense of reckless operation of a vessel in
13 the first degree while under the influence when, while under the

14 influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug, or both, or while such
15 person has an elevated blood alcohol level content, such person
16 operates a vessel at such speed or maneuvers a vessel in such a manner
17 as to result in (1) [death or] serious physical injury to another person,
18 or (2) damage to property in excess of two thousand dollars.

19 (b) Any person guilty of reckless operation of a vessel in the first
20 degree while under the influence shall be fined not less than two
21 thousand five hundred dollars or more than five thousand dollars or
22 imprisoned not more than two years, or both.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2009</i>	15-140l

Statement of Purpose:

To implement the Governor's budget recommendations and to increase penalties for a person who causes the death of another while operating a vessel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]