



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 530

February Session, 2000

House Bill No. 5252

House of Representatives, April 11, 2000

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. DYSON of the 94th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

An Act Concerning State Supplement Benefits For Disabled Persons Sharing A Residence With A Person Providing Transfer Assistance.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) The Commissioner of Social Services shall,
2 within available appropriations, establish a pilot program to provide
3 additional financial benefits for persons with severe physical
4 disabilities (1) who are unable to transfer independently, (2) who apply
5 for or receive aid under the state supplement program, and (3) who
6 reside with a person who provides transfer assistance to such persons.
7 Benefits shall be provided under the program only if the person
8 providing such transfer assistance is not related to the person with a
9 severe physical disability. Under the program, payments shall be made
10 in an amount equal to the amount of the increased benefit the person
11 would receive under the state supplement program if the person
12 providing such transfer assistance were not living with the person
13 with a severe physical disability.

14 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall adopt regulations in
15 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes to
16 administer the program established under subsection (a) of this
17 section. Said commissioner may implement the program while in the
18 process of adopting such regulations, provided notice of intent to
19 adopt the regulations is published in the Connecticut Law Journal
20 within twenty days after implementation.

21 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

HS Committee Vote: Yea 18 Nay 0 JF C/R APP

APP Committee Vote: Yea 50 Nay 0 JF

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: See Explanation Below

Affected Agencies: Department of Social Services

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation**State Impact:**

This bill establishes a pilot program within the Department of Social Services for people with severe disabilities who share a residence with an individual who provides care to assist with activities of daily living. Under current shelter cost calculations policy, this individual would have their benefit level under the State Supplement program reduced to reflect the fact that they may share living expenses. This pilot program would allow individuals to receive the full shelter cost benefit. The bill specifies that the program be operated within available expenditures. The House version of the Appropriations Act includes \$120,000 for the program. The Senate version of the Appropriations Act contains no funding for this initiative.

OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5252

AN ACT CONCERNING STATE SUPPLEMENT BENEFITS FOR DISABLED PERSONS SHARING A RESIDENCE WITH A PERSON PROVIDING TRANSFER ASSISTANCE.**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner, within available appropriations, to establish a pilot program to provide additional financial assistance to people with severe physical disabilities who are eligible for or receiving State Supplement Program (SSP) benefits and live with a non-relative who provides "transfer assistance." (This term is not defined, but appears to mean helping someone move about.) Only those individuals who are unable to transfer independently qualify. The financial assistance is the equivalent of the additional SSP payment the individual would receive if he were not living with the helper (up to \$200). (It is not clear whether this assistance would be available to someone who is already sharing housing and another person moves in to provide the transfer assistance.)

The commissioner must adopt regulations to administer the pilot, but can begin implementing earlier, provided she publishes notice in the *Connecticut Law Journal* within 20 days of implementation.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2000

BACKGROUND**SSP**

The SSP (a.k.a., Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled) provides cash assistance to individuals who are age 65 and over, and those between the ages of 18 and 65 who are disabled or blind, who qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), although SSI eligibility is not a prerequisite. Gross monthly income is limited to \$1,536 and assets can

be worth no more than \$1,600 for single applicants, and \$2,400 for married couples.

SSP benefits are determined by looking at an applicant's countable income and comparing it to his "needs." For someone living in the community, need is calculated by taking the amount of the person's rent (which can be no more than \$400 for someone living alone, or \$200 for someone in shared housing) and adding a personal needs allowance of \$164.10. The sum is compared to combined earned and unearned income, minus earned and unearned income "disregards" and impairment-related work expenses (countable income). If countable income is less than the need, the person qualifies and the difference is the benefit amount.

Related Bill

SB 118, favorably reported to the Senate by the Appropriations Committee on March 27, requires DSS to increase the unearned income disregards in the SSP program by the amount of any cost-of-living increases in the SSI program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference
Yea 18 Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 50 Nay 0