



Senate

File No. 609

General Assembly

January Session, 2001

(Reprint of File No. 314)

Senate Bill No. 1026
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 3, 2001

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES FACILITIES BY SELF HELP
GROUPS.**

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

1 Subsection (q) of section 17a-451 of the general statutes is repealed
2 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 (q) (1) The commissioner may make available to municipalities, [or]
4 nonprofit community organizations or self help groups any services,
5 premises and property under the control of the Department of Mental
6 Health and Addiction Services but shall be under no obligation to
7 continue to make such property available in the event the department
8 permanently vacates a facility. Such services, premises and property
9 may be utilized by such municipalities, [or] nonprofit community
10 organizations or self help groups in any manner not inconsistent with
11 the intended purposes for such services, premises and property. The
12 Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services shall submit
13 to the Commissioner of Administrative Services any agreement for
14 provision of services by the Department of Mental Health and

15 Addiction Services to municipalities, [or] nonprofit community
16 organizations or self help groups for approval of such agreement prior
17 to the provision of services pursuant to this [section] subsection.

18 (2) The municipality, [or] nonprofit community organization or self
19 help group using any premises and property of [said] the department
20 shall be liable for any damage or injury which occurs on [said] the
21 premises and property and shall furnish to the Commissioner of
22 Mental Health and Addiction Services proof of financial responsibility
23 to satisfy claims for damages on account of any physical injury or
24 property damage which may be suffered while [said] the municipality,
25 [or] nonprofit community organization or self help group is using
26 [said] the premises and property of [said] the department in such
27 amount as the commissioner determines to be necessary. The state of
28 Connecticut shall not be liable for any damage or injury sustained on
29 [said] the premises and property of the department while [said] the
30 premises and property are being utilized by any municipality, [or]
31 nonprofit community organization or self help group.

32 (3) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services
33 shall adopt regulations, [pursuant to sections 4-166 to 4-174, inclusive]
34 in accordance with chapter 54, to carry out the provisions of this
35 subsection. As used in this subsection, "self help group" means a group
36 of volunteers, approved by the commissioner, who offer peer support
37 to each other in recovering from an addiction.

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: None

Affected Agencies: Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation**State Impact:**

This bill as amended allows the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to allow self-help groups to use departmental facilities for meetings. This change formalizes a current practice of the agency, and therefore no additional funding would be required as a result of the adoption of this bill as amended.

House "A" clarified that only groups that have been approved by the commissioner may use DMHAS facilities. This change had no fiscal impact.

OLR Amended Bill Analysis

SB 1026 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES FACILITIES BY SELF HELP GROUPS.**SUMMARY:**

This bill authorizes the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) commissioner to allow self-help groups to use department facilities and services. Currently, municipalities and nonprofit community organizations are afforded this opportunity. The bill defines a "self-help group" as a group of volunteers, approved by the commissioner, offering peer support to one another in recovering from addiction. The self-help group, like municipalities and non-profits, must provide DMHAS with proof of financial responsibility to satisfy any damage claims related to any physical injury or property damage while the group is using department facilities. DMHAS is not liable for any damage or injury occurring on department property while used by self-help groups.

*House Amendment "A" requires the commissioner to approve a "self-help group."

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2001

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 24 Nay 0