



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 764

January Session, 2005

Substitute House Bill No. 6960

House of Representatives, May 16, 2005

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. MERRILL of the 54th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING GENDER SPECIFIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2005*) Notwithstanding any
2 provision of the general statutes or any regulation of Connecticut state
3 agencies, not later than October 1, 2010, all behavioral health services
4 and substance abuse services provided by the state, or by a private
5 service provider under contract with the state, shall be gender specific,
6 as appropriate, to comprehensively address the unique needs of a
7 targeted gender group. Such services shall include, but not be limited
8 to, services that address the psychological consequences of domestic
9 violence, sexual assault and similar trauma. Not later than October
10 first of the five next succeeding years, the Commissioner of Mental
11 Health and Addiction Services shall submit a report to the General
12 Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
13 general statutes, which sets forth the efforts and progress made during
14 the preceding twelve months toward the provision of such gender

15 specific services.

16 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2005*) The Department of Mental
17 Health and Addiction Services, in collaboration with the Department
18 of Correction, the Department of Children and Families and the Court
19 Support Services Division, shall establish, within available
20 appropriations, a competitive grant program to encourage best
21 practices in the delivery of gender specific treatment programs and
22 services.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2005</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2005</i>	New section

APP *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 06 \$
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services	GF - Cost	See below
Judicial Department	GF - Cost	See below
Department of Children & Families	GF - Cost	See below

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

As the bill provides for implementation by no later than October 1, 2010, the exact timing of the costs described below is uncertain.

The bill requires that all behavioral health and substance abuse services delivered to clients of various state agencies must be gender specific to comprehensively address the unique needs of a targeted gender group. It also specifies some types of services that would qualify.

These requirements will lead to significant increased costs to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Currently, some but not all, DMHAS and DCF programs are gender specific. These departments would incur significant costs to examine all behavioral health programs to determine which are conducive to gender specific programming, redesign as necessary those programs that do not meet the requirements of the bill, and provide the training and resources necessary to implement the redesigned programs.

The bill also requires DMHAS to establish a competitive grant program to encourage best practices in the delivery of gender specific

treatment programs and services. The impact of this requirement is uncertain, as the bill does not specify the size nor the source of funding for the grant.

The Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Department spends over thirty million dollars annually on contracts to provide adult offenders under probation supervision in the community with various services. It is anticipated that the bill's requirements would substantially increase the total state cost to provide adult probation services to offenders in the community since relatively few female offenders have access to gender-specific services currently.

The bill would raise the average cost of services by requiring the segregation of clients according to gender and thereby increasing: (1) the number of groups to be served through any single program; and (2) the overall number of programs needed to provide gender-specific services statewide. The bill also would require new programs to be implemented in order to provide gender-specific services that are comprehensive and address particular needs, such as trauma, that the bill includes. Lastly, significant administrative costs would be incurred to develop, implement and oversee these program expansions and measure their effectiveness on an on-going basis.

Due to the large number of women on probation who do not have access to gender-specific programming currently (over thirteen thousand or roughly twenty per cent of the total number of probation clients statewide) and the relative expense of comprehensive gender-specific programs that may be required (\$31,000 per slot in some instances), it is anticipated that the Court Support Services Division would incur costs of approximately \$6 million to \$8 million annually under the bill.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6960

AN ACT CONCERNING GENDER SPECIFIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires all behavioral health and substance abuse services contracted for or provided by the state to be gender-specific by 2010, as appropriate, to comprehensively meet the unique needs of the targeted gender. Services must include the help with psychological consequences of domestic violence, sexual assault, and similar trauma. The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) commissioner must submit five annual reports to the legislature on its efforts and progress. The first report is due by October 1, 2006.

It also establishes, within appropriations, a competitive grant program to encourage best practices in gender-specific treatment programs. DMHAS must collaborate with the departments of Correction and Children and Families and the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division in developing the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2005

BACKGROUND***Legislative History***

The House referred the bill (File 515) to the Appropriations Committee on April 28. On May 3, Appropriations voted a substitute that sets 2010 as the deadline by which gender specific services must be implemented, requires annual progress reports, establishes the competitive grant program within appropriations, and eliminates the original bill's requirement for collaboration with a consortium representing women's issues.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 39 Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 33 Nay 7