



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 829**

January Session, 2009

Substitute House Bill No. 6405

*House of Representatives, April 29, 2009*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. GERAGOSIAN of the 25th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAM.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 17a-453d of the general statutes is repealed and  
2 the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

3 The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in  
4 collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, shall,  
5 within existing budgetary resources, provide behavioral health  
6 services, on a transitional basis, for the dependents and any member of  
7 any [reserve] component of the armed forces of the United States who  
8 has been called to active service in the armed forces of this state or the  
9 United States for Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi  
10 Freedom. Such transitional services shall be provided when no  
11 Department of Defense coverage for such services is available or such  
12 member is not eligible for such services through the Department of  
13 Defense, until an approved application is received from the federal



The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill expands eligibility for the Military Support Program to active duty members of the armed forces of the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) or Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and their dependents. This expansion of eligibility will occur within the available appropriations of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

Currently there are 17,000 Connecticut citizens who have served in OEF and/or OIF. Of this number, 6,000 are reserve personnel who are currently eligible to receive Military Support Program services. The remaining 11,000 citizens are veterans of active duty military service. This bill would expand Military Support Program services to this active duty population.

The expansion of eligibility within available appropriations will likely result in one of four outcomes: (1) DMHAS will proceed with the expansion of eligibility and require a deficiency appropriation in FY 10; (2) DMHAS will delay the expansion of eligibility pending the approval of additional appropriations to meet this mandate in future fiscal years; (3) DMHAS will shift administrative resources from other departmental priorities to expansion of eligibility, thereby impacting existing departmental programs; or (4) DMHAS will not expand eligibility.

**The Out Years**

Because the bill states that this expansion in eligibility is to be done within available resources, there is no fiscal impact in the out years.

*Sources: 2/19/09 Public Hearing Testimony*

**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 6405*****AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR THE MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill extends eligibility for transitional behavioral health services to members and dependents of members of any component, not just reserve components, of the U.S. Armed Forces called to active service for Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) or Operation Iraqi Freedom. But the bill limits, to within existing budgetary resources, agency responsibility to provide the services.

By law, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, must provide the services when Department of Defense (DOD) coverage is unavailable or the member is ineligible for DOD services.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2009

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Joint Favorable Change of Reference  
Yea 10 Nay 0 (02/26/2009)

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference  
Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/25/2009)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute  
Yea 54 Nay 0 (04/15/2009)

