



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 57

January Session, 2011

Senate Bill No. 128

Senate, March 14, 2011

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. MUSTO of the 22nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING EXPANSION OF THE CONNPACE APPLICATION PERIOD.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 17b-492 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
3 *October 1, 2011*):

4 (a) Eligibility for participation in the program shall be limited to any
5 resident (1) who is sixty-five years of age or older or who is disabled,
6 (2) whose current annual income at the time of application or
7 redetermination, if unmarried, is less than twenty thousand eight
8 hundred dollars or whose annual income, if married, when combined
9 with that of the resident's spouse is less than twenty-eight thousand
10 one hundred dollars, (3) who is not insured under a policy which
11 provides full or partial coverage for prescription drugs once a
12 deductible is met, except for a Medicare prescription drug discount
13 card endorsed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in
14 accordance with Public Law 108-173, the Medicare Prescription Drug,

15 Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003, or coverage under
 16 Medicare Part D pursuant to said act, and (4) on and after September
 17 15, 1991, who pays an annual forty-five-dollar registration fee to the
 18 Department of Social Services. On January 1, 2012, and annually
 19 thereafter, the commissioner shall increase the income limits
 20 established under this subsection over those of the previous fiscal year
 21 to reflect the annual inflation adjustment in Social Security income, if
 22 any. Each such adjustment shall be determined to the nearest one
 23 hundred dollars. [On and after October 1, 2009, new applications to
 24 participate in the ConnPACE program may be accepted only from the
 25 fifteenth day of November through the thirty-first day of December
 26 each year, except that individuals may apply within thirty-one days of
 27 (A) reaching sixty-five years of age, or (B) becoming eligible for Social
 28 Security Disability Income or Supplemental Security Income.] The
 29 Department of Social Services shall accept new applications to
 30 participate in the ConnPACE program throughout each calendar year.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2011	17b-492(a)

HS *Joint Favorable*

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.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 12 \$	FY 13 \$
Department of Social Services	GF - Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill establishes year round open enrollment for new clients of the ConnPACE program, which will result in minimal increased costs to the state. Currently, new clients may enroll only from November 15th to December 31st annually.

This change will allow new applicants to the program to receive benefits from the Department of Social Services sooner each year. The current average cost per client is \$15.32. However, as 26,435 of the current 26,992 ConnPACE clients are also enrolled in Medicare Savings Plans, ConnPACE clients receive most of their pharmaceutical benefits from the federal government. Therefore, the state cost of these expedited benefits is expected to be minimal.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

Sources: Department of Social Services Caseload Information, Public Hearing Testimony

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 128*****AN ACT CONCERNING EXPANSION OF THE CONNPACE APPLICATION PERIOD.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to accept new ConnPACE applications any time during the year. In general, under current law, DSS may accept new applications only between November 15 and December 31 (the enrollment period for the Medicare Part D program). The ConnPACE program provides wrap-around assistance (e.g., premium subsidies) to individuals eligible for Medicare Part D, and help with prescriptions for individuals under age 65 with disabilities who are not eligible for Medicare.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2011

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 17 Nay 0 (03/01/2011)