
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 991 (File 538, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON PALLIATIVE CARE.

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes, within available appropriations, a 13-member Palliative Care Advisory Council within the Department of Public Health (DPH). The council must (1) analyze the current state of palliative care in Connecticut and (2) advise DPH on matters related to improving palliative care and the quality of life for people with serious or chronic illnesses.

The bill requires the council to report annually, starting no later than January 1, 2015, its findings and recommendations to the DPH commissioner and Public Health Committee.

*Senate Amendment "A" (1) removes the requirement that the chairperson schedule the council's first meeting; (2) increases, from six to seven, the number of council members appointed by the DPH commissioner; (3) requires the council to meet at the DPH commissioner's request; and (4) allows the DPH commissioner to appoint to the council, a health care provider with experience or expertise in inpatient palliative care in a psychiatric facility.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

PALLIATIVE CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Council members include:

1. (a) one physician certified by the American Board of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and (b) one registered nurse or advanced practice registered nurse certified by the National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses, both

- appointed by the governor;
2. seven licensed health care providers with experience or expertise in (a) inpatient palliative care in a hospital, nursing home, or psychiatric facility, (b) palliative care in a patient's home or community setting, (c) pediatric palliative care, or (d) palliative care for young adults, adults, or the elderly, all appointed by the DPH commissioner;
 3. one licensed social worker experienced in working with people with serious or chronic illness and their families, appointed by the House speaker;
 4. one licensed pharmacist experienced in working with people with serious or chronic illness and their families, appointed by the Senate president pro tempore;
 5. one spiritual counselor experienced in working with people with serious or chronic illness and their families, appointed by the House minority leader; and
 6. one American Cancer Society representative or person experienced in advocating for people with serious or chronic illness and their families, appointed by the Senate minority leader.

The appointing authorities must make their appointments by December 31, 2013 and fill any vacancies. The members serve three-year terms without compensation, but are reimbursed for necessary expenses while performing their duties. The members must elect a chairperson.

The first meeting must be held by December 31, 2013. (It is unclear who must schedule this meeting.) The council must meet biannually and at the call of the chairperson or the request of either the DPH commissioner or a majority of the members. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum. Any council action taken requires a majority vote of those present.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0 (04/01/2013)