



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 47

February Session, 2014

Substitute House Bill No. 5385

House of Representatives, March 19, 2014

The Committee on Public Health reported through REP. JOHNSON of the 49th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN HOSPITALS.

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

1 Section 1. Section 19a-490i of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2014*):

3 Each acute care hospital in this state shall:

4 (1) Develop and annually review a policy on the provision of
5 interpreter services to non-English-speaking patients;

6 (2) Ensure [, to the extent possible,] the availability of interpreter
7 services to patients whose primary language is spoken by a group
8 comprising not less than five per cent of the population residing in the
9 geographic area served by the hospital;

10 (3) Prepare and maintain a list of qualified interpreters;

11 (4) Notify hospital staff of the requirement to provide interpreters to
12 non-English-speaking patients;

13 (5) Post multilingual notices of the availability of interpreters to
14 non-English-speaking patients;

15 (6) Review standardized forms to determine the need for translation
16 for use by non-English-speaking patients;

17 (7) Consider providing hospital staff with picture and phrase sheets
18 for communication with non-English-speaking patients; and

19 (8) Establish liaisons to non-English-speaking communities in the
20 geographic area served by the hospital.

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>October 1, 2014</i> | 19a-490i |

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In the title, "act" was inserted, for accuracy.

PH *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

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:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

The bill requires acute care hospitals to provide foreign language interpreter services to patients. As the John Dempsey Hospital at the University of Connecticut Health Center already provides interpreting services, there is no fiscal impact.

The Out Years**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5385*****AN ACT CONCERNING LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN HOSPITALS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires acute care hospitals to ensure the availability of interpreter services for patients whose primary language is spoken by at least 5% of the population residing in the hospital's geographic service area. Current law requires hospitals to do so only to the extent possible.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014

BACKGROUND***Interpreter Services***

The law requires acute care hospitals to undertake a number of activities to ensure that patients who do not speak English have access to their services, including (1) preparing and maintaining a list of qualified interpreters, (2) posting multilingual notices regarding the availability of interpreters, and (3) establishing liaisons with non-English speaking communities in their geographic service areas (CGS § 19a-490i).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 26 Nay 0 (03/10/2014)