
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 325

AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID RECIPIENTS WITH COMPLEX MEDICAL NEEDS.

SUMMARY:

This bill limits a provision requiring the use of refurbished wheelchairs, parts, and components in the repair or provision of customized wheelchairs for Medicaid recipients. By law, Medicaid covers customized wheelchairs only when a standard wheelchair will not meet a person's needs, as the Department of Social Services (DSS) determines.

Current law requires the use of refurbished wheelchairs, parts, and components whenever practicable. The bill instead requires it only for purchases by the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) or the Birth-to-Three Program, whenever practicable.

Existing law, unchanged by the bill, allows DSS to designate categories of durable medical equipment in addition to customized wheelchairs for which reused equipment, parts, and components must be used whenever practicable.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

BACKGROUND

DORS

DORS provides vocational rehabilitation services to assist people with significant disabilities to find and keep employment. DORS also provides disability determination services for applicants for certain benefits and provides comprehensive independent living services through contracts with community-based independent living centers.

By law, DORS may purchase, without the issuance of a purchase order, (1) wheelchairs and placement equipment, at a cost of up to

\$3,500 per unit; (2) adaptive equipment, at a cost of up to \$10,000 per unit; and (3) modified vehicles for persons with disabilities, at a cost of up to \$25,000 per vehicle.

Birth-to-Three Program

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) administers the Birth-to-Three program, which provides early intervention services to children eligible under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under Part C, a child under age three needs early intervention services if he or she (1) is experiencing developmental delays as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures in one or more of the areas of cognitive, physical, communication, social or emotional, and adaptive development or (2) has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 0 (03/20/2014)