OLR Bill Analysis
sSB 304 (File 345, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MATERNITY MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a Maternity Mortality Review Program within the Department of Public Health (DPH) to identify maternal deaths in Connecticut, and review related medical records and other relevant data, including death and birth records, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner’s files, and physician office and hospital records.

It also establishes a Maternal Mortality Review Committee within DPH to conduct comprehensive, multidisciplinary reviews of maternal deaths to identify associated factors and make recommendations to reduce these deaths. Specifically, when meeting, the committee must consult with relevant experts to evaluate DPH’s information and findings from its review of maternal deaths in the state. Within 90 days after meeting, the committee must report its findings and recommendations to the DPH commissioner.

The bill establishes related medical records requirements for licensed health care providers, health care facilities, and pharmacies. Under the bill, information obtained by the Maternal Mortality Review Program and the Maternal Mortality Review Committee generally (1) is confidential and not subject to disclosure, (2) is not admissible as evidence in any court or agency proceeding, and (3) must be used solely for medical or scientific research purposes.

Under the bill, a “maternal death” is the death of a woman (1) while pregnant or (2) within one year after the date when the woman ceases to be pregnant, regardless of whether the death is related to her pregnancy.

The bill also makes technical changes.
“Senate Amendment “A” replaces the original bill with similar provisions. In doing so, it modifies provisions on (1) the Maternal Mortality Review Committee membership and duties and (2) medical records and reporting requirements. It also adds the provision establishing a Maternal Mortality Review Program within DPH.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2018

MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Under the bill, the Maternity Mortality Review Committee may include the following members, as needed, depending on the case under review:

1. two licensed physicians appointed by the Connecticut State Medical Society, one who is a pediatrician and one who specializes in obstetrics and gynecology;

2. one community health worker appointed by the Commission on Equity and Opportunity;

3. one licensed nurse-midwife appointed by the Connecticut Nurses Association;

4. one licensed clinical social worker appointed by the National Association of Social Worker’s Connecticut Chapter;

5. one licensed psychiatrist appointed by the Connecticut Psychiatric Society;

6. one licensed psychologist appointed by the Connecticut Psychological Association;

7. the Chief Medical Examiner, or his designee;

8. one Connecticut Hospital Association member;

9. one representative of a community or regional program or facility that provides services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities or substance use disorders appointed by the DPH
commissioner;

10. one representative of the UConn-sponsored Health Disparities Institute; or

11. any additional members the co-chairs determine would be beneficial to serve on the committee.

Under the bill, the committee co-chairs are (1) the DPH commissioner, or his designee and (2) a representative designated by the Connecticut State Medical Society. The co-chairs must convene a committee meeting at the DPH commissioner’s request.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Under the bill, licensed health care providers, health care facilities, and pharmacies must provide the Maternal Mortality Review Program reasonable access to all relevant medical records associated with maternal death cases the program reviews.

The bill also authorizes DPH to provide the Maternal Mortality Review Committee with information it deems as necessary for the committee to make recommendations to prevent maternal deaths.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea  20  Nay  7  (03/19/2018)