

# Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5415

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COLLECTION AND USAGE OF HEALTH EQUITY

**Title:** DATA.

**Vote Date:** 3/26/2018

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/16/2018

**File No.:** 438

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Public Health Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

To require the statewide health information technology plan to enhance the ability to collect and use health equity data to improve health outcomes and include general standards on the collection, storage, and usage of such data. Among other requirements, the standards must address data security and privacy and be compatible with any national data standards and the requirements for an electronic health information system.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

### **Victoria Veltri, Executive Director, Office of Health Strategy (OHS):**

The OHS is submitting testimony in support of HB 5415. Our mission is to implement comprehensive data-driven strategies for promoting equal access to high quality health care, controlling health care costs, and ensuring better health for the citizens of Connecticut.

A top OHS goal for Fiscal Year 2019 is to provide the public with access to more health care data through the:

- creation of a state Health Information Exchange to facilitate health care coordination, reduce costs and provide patient access to personal medical records
- establishment of a Core Data Analytics Solution (CDAS) to support in-depth data analytics
- managing the All-Payer Claims Database (APCD) to provide transparency about healthcare costs and quality;
- leveraging the data collected and analyzed by the Office of Health Care Access (OHCA), soon to be the Health Systems Planning Unit of OHS, pertaining to hospital

financial, billing, and discharge data, hospital expenses and revenues, uncompensated care volumes, hospital utilization, demographic, clinical, charge, payer and provider statistics, among other measures; and

- creating a consumer health information website that will allow the public to find accurate and reliable information to help make informed decisions when choosing health plans and providers.

By authorizing the OHS to develop an annual inventory of healthcare data, OHS will be able to submit an analysis of said inventory, and recommend legislation that will enhance our goal of data accessibility and transparency. This bill is consistent with the mission and duties of our office.

**Subira Gordon, , Executive Director, Commission on Equity and Opportunity(CEO):** On behalf of the CEO, I am providing testimony in support of HB 5300. As a nonpartisan agency with a data-driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation, our primary focus is to recommend and support legislation to eliminate disparities through the creation of opportunities that will build connections, and promote change.

Connecticut is considered one of the healthiest states in the nation but it falls short concerning the ethnic minority community. Usable data will allow stakeholders the opportunity to create strategic interventions to help this population most affected. As a volunteer on the Community Profile Team of Susan G. Komen, I have come to recognize the disparities that exist in breast cancer. White women are diagnosed at a much higher rate than women of color, but women of color die from this disease at a much higher rate.

The collection of uniform health data will provide stakeholders with the tools to drive positive results. Requiring all state agencies charged with the collection of health data to do so in a specified way will allow stakeholders, such as the CEO, to access this information during research efforts.

Section two of this bill guarantees the collection of health data from all communities, including those facing health disparities. This will help improve decision making and interventions.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Monte Wagner, DNP, MPH, APRN-BC, Co-Chair, Health Policy Committee, CT APRN Society (CTAPRNS):**

The passage of HB 5415 will provide accessible, cost effective, and high quality health care to the citizens of Connecticut. CTAPRNS also support the oversight of the health information and claims data that will be collected by the Office of Health Strategy.

**Karen Siegel, Health Policy Fellow, Connecticut Voices for Children:**

Connecticut Voices for Children (CVC) supports HB 5415 and it will enable and promote policies to integrate health systems and data collection by the Office of Health Strategy (OHS).

The OHS is well situated to improve cross-agency coordination of health systems and services, improve data integration, and generate holistic analyses of the state's efforts to promote health equity. Therefore, CVC believes it is appropriate for the OHS to be charged with these responsibilities. Long-term, a well-integrated data network will increase efficiency in the areas of costs, response to requests for information, and the analyses of health data to allow for informed decisions regarding health care policies.

**The Alliance for Children's Mental Health (ACMH):**

The Alliance supports HB 5415. It is the hope of ACMH that the Office of Health Strategy will work with us, other mental health stakeholders serving children and the legislative bodies to identify and prioritize cost effective strategies that will meet the needs of the behavioral health communities while improving health outcomes for Connecticut's children.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Zehua Xia Ph., Orange, Connecticut:**

I would respectfully request that the Public Health Committee include language to answer the following questions:

- which agent or agency will execute the work of developing the annual inventory of health care data
- if an outside agency is contracted to develop such data inventory, how will the contract be awarded, and whether or not the public will be allowed to bid for the contract
- make clear the types of information to be collected and stored
- who will be given access to the collected data, and what protocols will be used to protect individual privacy
- what will be reported in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, and how will the public get access to the report and,
- how does that report differ from many reports already available through various research institutes.

**Reported by: Beverley Henry**

**Date: 04/17/2018**