

# Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6128

AN ACT CONCERNING CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONS LICENSED OR CERTIFIED AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL BUT WHO ARE NOT EMPLOYED AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL

**Title:** SERVICES PERSONNEL.

**Vote Date:** 3/29/2019

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/11/2019

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

The Public Health Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill allows for an exemption to continuing education requirements for certain emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. Under current law, EMS personnel, including Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), Emergency Medical Responders (EMRs), advanced EMTs and EMT instructors are required to be recertified every three years as well as complete a 30-hour Department of Health continuing education course. This bill would allow certified EMS personnel who are not currently employed as such to be recertified without having to complete the 30 hour continuing education course until they re-enter employment as EMS personnel.

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

**Raul Pino, MD, MPH, Commissioner of the Department of Public Health (DPH):** The Department supports this bill. Under this proposed legislation, emergency medical personnel who have completed the required education and training process and earned certification would be considered "inactive" during periods of prolonged unemployment, rather than lose their certification entirely. Current law states that a certified person would become ineligible for re-certification 36 months after the date of expiration of their certification, unless they complete required continuing education courses. Additionally, emergency medical service instructors (EMSI) are required to actively teach during each certification period. If an EMSI has not taught for 36 months following expiration of their certification, they become ineligible to renew their certification. The Department recognizes that EMS personnel are critical to

the health and safety of the residents of our state. Allowing these individuals the opportunity to leave temporarily would remove the need to complete an extensive and costly reentry process and potentially ensure greater numbers of providers are available to serve the public. The Department respectfully recommends some language changes. The bill needs to be more specific regarding the “recertification requirements “since EMSI certification requires not only continuing education, but also a minimum number of hours teaching in the field. The language should also include a requirement stating that the certified individual must complete the continuing education course prior to returning to active duty. It was pointed out in the testimony that this bill does not apply to paramedics who only need to pay an annual fee to remain licensed and, who are not required to participate in continuing education courses. The Department would be happy to assist the Public Health Committee on language to move this bill forward.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

None submitted.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Gregory Allard, VP, Association of Connecticut Ambulance Providers (EMS PRO, Inc.:**

Mr. Allard believes this legislation is not needed because the 2019 DPH technical changes bill proposes going from a state managed system to a nationally recognized certification system; the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) also known as the National Registry. The National Registry is an independent, not-for –profit organization. It is important to note that national EMS certification is not a license to practice, but it is a process used to validate competent practice by EMS personnel. In his testimony, Mr. Allard includes language from the National Registry’s website regarding inactive EMS personnel. Mr. Allard also points out that National Registry policy applies to only three of the four responder levels recognized in Connecticut. Those include EMTs, advanced EMTs and paramedics. Not included in the Registry are two areas. One area is the requirements for Emergency Medical Responders to be recertified, and the other area not addressed is oversight of EMS instructors. While Mr. Allard supports the intent of this bill, he believes that the DPH Office of Emergency Medical Services is already ahead of this issue by looking to make Connecticut a National Registry state.

**Reported by: Kathleen Panazza**

**Date: April 5, 2019**