

General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7159

Title: AN ACT ADDRESSING OPIOID USE.

Vote Date: 3/21/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/12/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Joe Aresimowicz, 30th Dist.

Rep. Matthew Ritter, 1st Dist.

Sen. Martin M. Looney, 11th Dist.

Sen. Bob Duff, 25th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill will make technical and conforming changes to help address the opioid epidemic in the state of Connecticut. Though the opioid overdose epidemic is stabilizing, it still remains 1.7 times higher than the national average; this is attributed to local and state overdose prevention procedures. This bill will continue to help drive down the opioid use in our state.

Substitute language:

This bill will make changes to the laws regarding pharmacies, pharmacists and practitioners in addition to the following to address the opioid epidemic.

Pharmacists would now be required to offer consultations to all patients when dispensing prescription drugs, not just Medicaid patients.

Trained pharmacy technicians would have access to Connecticut's Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System (CPMRS) to help pharmacists in increasing efficiency.

Prescribing practitioners or their agents are not prohibited from disclosing information on CPMRS to Department of Social Services for purposes of medical assistance programs.

Drug manufacturers and wholesalers would be required to report to Department of Consumer Protection decisions to terminate or refuse an order from a pharmacy or prescribing practitioner for Schedule II, III, IV or V controlled substance within 5 days.

Life insurance and annuity policies or contracts will not have the ability to exclude coverage based solely on an individual having received the drug naloxone (an opioid antagonist).

Prescribing practitioners who prescribe an opioid drug for more than a 7 day supply will include information on the prescription and 12 week supply to establish a treatment agreement with the patient or discuss a care plan for chronic opioid drug use.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Lamont, Ned, Governor, State of Connecticut

The statutory changes in this proposal will help continue to drive down opioid use in Connecticut. This proposal makes changes to reduce the misuse of prescription opioids, strengthens oversight of prescriptions, facilitates use of Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, prohibits discrimination against individuals who use life-saving opioid antagonists and enhance communication between health care practitioners and patients regarding the use of opioids.

Seagull, Michelle, Commissioner of Consumer Protection, State of Connecticut

Commissioner Seagull enthusiastically supports this bill which makes several changes to DCP Drug Control Statutes in order to combat prescription drug misuse and abuse epidemic. DCP looks forward to continuing the work with Gov. Lamont's office, other state agencies, legislature and various counterparts in health care.

Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, Commissioner of Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, State of Connecticut

Though DMHAS is not directly impacted by HB7159, the agency supports this bill. This bill will assist with reducing unnecessary or uninformed opioid use. This bill allows for pharmacists to educate the public and also provides pharmacy technicians to have a role in addressing the opioid crisis. DMHAS would like to emphasize the importance of developing treatment plans for those who require pain medication longer than 12 weeks.

Pino, M.D., M.P.H, Commissioner of Department of Public Health, State of Connecticut

The Department of Public Health has been actively involved with several statewide agencies and councils that share prevention and treatment information along with surveillance data and promotes policies and intervention strategies regarding opioid use. The DPH support this bill.

Insurance Department, State of Connecticut

The Insurance Department supports this bill. It is important not to punish people who carry Naxolone, so that they can help family members, friends or even someone they do not know from a drug overdose.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Tinker, Nathan, CEO, Connecticut Pharmacists Association

Connecticut Pharmacists are always willing to work closely with DCP and the Legislature to assure safety and quality of their practice. There are some concerns that the association has with this legislation. Pharmacists already offer counseling to patients regarding their medication. Pharmacy technicians should be appropriately trained and certified in order to

access the prescription monitoring program. It should be at the discretion of the pharmacist if they would like to utilize a duly trained/certified technician.

Santiago, Joanne, Dr. Connecticut Chiropractic Association, Inc.

This bill should help alleviate the opioid crisis and are reasonable. It should include alternative treatments to chronic and acute pain rather than opioids. Some of the recommended alternatives are physical therapy, acupuncture, massage and chiropractic care. This recommendation comes from many reputable government and non-profit healthcare organizations.

Andrews, MD., Rebecca and Katz, MD., Marilyn, UCONN HEALTH, The UCONN Health Task Force

Our Opioid Task Force at UCONN is interdisciplinary group of clinicians, educators and researchers. We collaborate on a variety of issues regarding opioid prescriptions and pain. Alternatives also are researched. The goals of this bill are laudable and it is critical that opioid abuse continue to be addressed. We applaud the Governor for raising HB7159 and would like to continue to make recommendations to assist the legislature.

American Council of Life Insurers

In this current form, it is believed that this will help those on the front lines of the opioid crisis. We support this bill.

Connecticut Hospital Association

Supports this bill with revisions

McKeown, Zachary, Legislative Associate, CCM

CCM is in support of this bill

Marconi, Rudy, First Selectman, Town of Ridgefield

Though overdose fatalities have decreased in Connecticut, we still are still 1.7 times higher than the national rate. This bill is supported by Connecticut Council of Small Towns.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk

Date: 03/28/2019