

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7101

AN ACT CONCERNING FLU SHOTS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS PRIOR TO

Title: HOSPITAL DISCHARGE.

Vote Date: 2/26/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/19/2019

File No.: 32

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill would allow hospitals to offer senior citizens influenza vaccinations prior to discharge, unless medically contraindicated. According to Testimony, the flu can be particularly severe for the elderly. The CDC highly recommends that all individuals aged six months and older receive their flu vaccine, especially individuals who are considered to be part of high risk groups such as senior citizens.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Submitted for Proposed Bill No. 7101

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Christine Belvin, Member, Board of Directors, Farmington Services for the Elderly: Ms. Belvin testified in strong support of the bill, stating that the flu is a very serious health risk for seniors, as well as their caregivers, and that the flu can be a very serious illness for senior citizens resulting in hospitalization and even potentially death. Ms. Belvin also testified that the CDC recommends that any one in "High Risk Groups", particularly the elderly, receive their flu shot.

Ruth Canovi, Director of Advocacy in CT, American Lung Association: Ms. Canovi testified in support of the bill, discussing concerns over how the flu can be severe and even fatal for high risk individuals, such as the elderly. Ms. Belvin also cited the CDC, and its

recommendation that everyone aged six months and older should get vaccinated, and how this is especially advised for high risk groups, such as seniors.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Connecticut Hospital Association: The organization testified that they believe that the bill is unnecessary, stating that under the current law, Connecticut is performing at or above the national average in terms of rates of immunizations.

Winnie Harrison, President, CT Vaccine Rights League: Ms. Harrison testified in opposition to the bill, stating her belief that the flu vaccine is highly ineffective and has many adverse effects. Ms. Harrison also testified that she believed it would put pressure on seniors to receive the vaccine.

Marcella Kurkowski, Resident, Wallingford, CT: Ms. Kurkowski testified in strong opposition to the bill, citing her own personal beliefs and stated she believes that it would create a mandate.

Isabella Menozzi, Resident, Roxbury, CT: Ms. Menozzi testified in opposition to the bill, stating that she believes that the bill would create a mandate and would only serve to benefit corporations and pharmaceutical and chemical manufacturers. She also stated her belief that the flu vaccine is particularly ineffective for seniors.

Meredith Nielson, Resident, Cheshire, CT: Ms. Nielson testified in strong opposition to the bill, expressing her belief that flu vaccines are high risk pharmaceutical products, and that seniors should be able to consult with their personal, trusted physician before agreeing to receive the vaccine. Ms. Nielson also expressed her concerns that senior citizens may be more susceptible to succumb to perceived pressures from hospital staff.

Reported by:
Gaia McDermott, Clerk
Avarice Jacovino, Assistant Clerk

Date: 3/11/2019