Committee on Children  
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-886  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE LICENSURE OF THE ALBERT J. SOLNIT CHILDREN’S CENTER.  
Title:  
Vote Date: 3/7/2019  
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute  
PH Date: 2/28/2019  
File No.:  

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SPONSORS OF BILL:  
Committee on Children  

REASONS FOR BILL:  
To rename Albert J. Solnit Children's Center to Albert J. Solnit Children's Hospital, and require such hospital to obtain licensure from the Department of Public Health.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:  

Vannessa Dorantes, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families:  
The commissioner testified in favor of the concept of this bill, but the Department does have some concerns. Currently, the Department of Public Health does not license private or public PRTF’s (Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility) in Connecticut, but DPH licensing staff do visit the PRTF’s to ensure that they meet the federal standards of PRTF’s. Instead, DCF licenses the private PRFT’s in Connecticut using the child care facility regulations and DCF nursing practice standards which include medication administration guidelines set forth internally. The Department of Children and Families licensing staff use federal guidelines when reviewing PRTF’s to prepare them for a certification survey prepared by DPH that enables the facilities to receive Medicaid funding. In conclusion, if the intent of this bill is to require Solnit to be brought up to hospital standards, the Department believes the fiscal impact would be immense.

Sarah Eagan, Child Advocate, Office of the Child Advocate:  
The state child advocate strongly supports this bill that would require state-run treatment programs to be licensed and regulated by the Department of Public Health and require regular inspections to ensure federal compliance of PRTF’s. Since the legislature passed a bill to separate Whiting Forensic from CT Valley Hospital and made Whiting Forensic subject
to state licensing and regulations requirements. In conclusion, the OCA believes that children seeking mental health treatment in a state-run facility should be granted the same protections as those in private facilities, which this bill addresses.

**Raul Pino, Commissioner, Department of Public Health:**
The commissioner submitted testimony on this bill to explain the role that DPH plays in licensing. Similar to the testimony of the Department of Children and Families, the commissioner explained that DPH does not license any PRTF’s in Connecticut and the Department does not have any statutory or regulatory ability to license PRTF’s. Instead, these state-run facilities are certified with the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services and are accredited through a CMS approved accrediting organization. Furthermore, the Department of Social Services receives a confirmation from the PRTF’s indicating that the facility has met all the requirements of Part 483, subpart G of the Code of Federal Regulations that direct the use of restraint and seclusion. Certification surveys for PRTF’s are conducted roughly every five years due to federal guidelines. In conclusion, the commissioner welcomed further discussion with DCF and committee members on this important issue.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**
See response from administration/agency.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**
None expressed.

**Reported by:** Mikhela Hull  
**Date:** 3/12/19