Public Health Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-923
Title: AN ACT ALLOWING BEHAVIOR ANALYSTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR REGULATED PROFESSIONALS.
Vote Date: 3/8/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/4/2019

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
This legislation would add behavioral analysts to the DPH-regulated professionals eligible to participate in the assistance program. The assistance program provides support to healthcare providers with a physical or mental illness, as well as emotional disorders. In order to participate, approved professionals must contribute a $5 licensing fee that is used towards funding the program.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
Department of Public Health (DPH): DPH supports the intent of this legislation. Public Act 15-244 increased the licensing fee for regulated healthcare providers eligible for the assistance program by five dollars. DPH collects the fee and uses it to fund the assistance program. Currently, behavioral analysts are not required to pay the licensing fee and are not included in the assistance program.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Dr. Melissa Olive, Connecticut Association for Behavior Analysts (CTABA): Public Act 17-2 implemented the licensure program for behavioral analysts and became effective on July 1, 2018. Despite granting licensure, analysts could not join the assistance program that aims to provide support for professionals with substance abuse disorders, as well as mental or physical illness. The assistance program is run by the Health Assistance InteRvention Education Network (HAVEN), which focuses on the wellness of healthcare providers in order
to ensure patient safety. CTABA urges that HAVEN is written into the bill in order to guarantee that they receive the appropriate funds to run the program.

Maureen Sullivan Dinnan, Chief Executive Officer, Health Assistance InterVention Education Network (HAVEN): This legislation is aligned with HAVEN’s mission, which supports healthcare professionals suffering from substance abuse disorders, or mental or physical illness. Since HAVEN’S launch in 2007, services are in a high demand, which has placed a financial burden on the organization. They believe this fiscal challenge justifies a five dollar licensing fee from participating healthcare providers. HAVEN believes that behavioral analysts should have access to support services, and has submitted substitute language that proposes they contribute to the program as other participating professionals do.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None submitted.

Reported by:  Meagan Schantz  Date: 3/11/19