Public Health Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1005
AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING REVISIONS TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEFINITIONS, CERTIFICATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.

Vote Date: 3/22/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/18/2019

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Health Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill makes various changes to the statutes on emergency medical services (EMS). It substitutes the term “EMS provider” with “EMS organization” and allows a volunteer, hospital based, or municipal ambulance service to apply to DPH to add a branch location to their service area without needing to go through a hearing process. This bill also requires that starting January 1, 2020, all emergency medical services (EMS) providers which includes emergency medical responders (EMRs), emergency medical technicians (EMTs), advanced emergency medical technicians (AEMTs) and paramedics to obtain and renew their state certification or licensure by completing national education and examinations requirements.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Raul Pino, MD, MPH, Commissioner of the Department of Public Health (DPH):
DPH thanks the Committee for raising their bill. These changes will capture both the definition of an EMS provider and EMS organization into one comprehensive term used throughout the statutes. The Department also has no objections to an EMS organization adding branch locations within their existing service area without needing to go through a hearing process. This provision would alleviate the need for the Department to assign staff to process these requests. This bill will consolidate the examination process from a mix of national, state, and local level testing to one uniform national standard. The Department recognizes the non-profit National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) as the best testing and certifying agency for all levels of EMS personnel. NREMT provides suggested continuing
education standards which are based on workforce studies and evidence based medicine. The NREMT offers free educational materials, many using web-based technology, to EMS educators for use in the recertification training. The Department urges passage of this legislation which will streamline operations by consolidating the testing and reporting process, modernize the continuing education process leading to faster credentialing of providers and will result in cost savings to the EMS provider and the state as we report and track continuing education requirements.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Dan Syne, First Selectman of Scotland and Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Board Member: CCM supports this proposal which would streamline and improve the current EMS certification and continuing education process in Connecticut through adoption of national certification standards for EMS exams. Streaming this process would especially benefit small towns that have seen an alarming reduction in EMS personnel. Adoption of this process would also reduce administrative burdens on the individual as well as the municipality and EMS provider resulting in time and cost savings. This would also align our EMS recertification process with the standards in other states.

Michael Zacchera, Chairperson of the Connecticut EMS Education and Training Committee: The Committee was asked to collaborate on a project in conjunction with the DPH Office of Emergency Medical Services to review the recertification process of the state’s EMS providers. This bill represents the culmination of over two years of work by our committee. Following much discussion, the Committee recommended using the NREMT standard for the recertification process. The conclusion was that this model would lead to a simplified recertification process for EMS providers and also improve the quality and standards of the continuing medical education courses. We also shared this recommendation with various EMS councils and providers throughout our state. It was the general consensus of these groups that this was a sound recommendation. The NREMT has indicated they would work with the state to update the recertification of current providers to align with the national standards. By aligning with the NREMT, Connecticut would have a more streamlined, efficient and updated standard for recertification of EMS providers. The organizations urges passage of the bill.

Greg Allard, Chairman of the CT EMS Advisory Board: The Board supports this bill that proposes a change in how EMS providers will not only initially be certified and licensed, but also, how they will maintain their continuing education requirements going forward. Working with the NREMT provides national certification which results in legally validated competency. When an individual obtains national certification, employers, state licensing authorities and the public know that the individual has received the most current training and has demonstrated competency. Mr. Allard requests one language change on line 31. He would recommend the inclusion of “and non-emergency” between the words emergence and conditions.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None submitted.