

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5154

AN ACT REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY POLICE

Title: OFFICERS.

Vote Date: 3/10/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/22/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

COSPONSORS

Rep. Mary Welander

Rep. Anthony L. Nolan

REASONS FOR BILL:

H.B. 5154 provides handouts to police officers containing information regarding behavioral and mental health treatment resources specifically for children as well as for victims of domestic violence in their vehicle, to be distributed when the officer is called to domestic disturbances. This bill will ultimately provide support to children who are struggling with behavioral and mental health and make them aware of the services available to help them get the help they need. This bill will also provide support to domestic violence victims, providing resources that could help them navigate their options for next steps after a domestic violence incident.

Proposed substitute language for this bill will require law enforcement to provide documents of resources if there is a child on the scene, the documents must be made available t in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish. In addition to requiring law enforcement to carry these documents, ambulance companies and organizations must carry and distribute them as well. The language was changed from "Not later than December 1, 2019" to "2022, and annually thereafter" to reflect the current year this law would go into effect. The handouts must be provided to the distributors as well as electronically to the Department of Education, Division of State Police within the department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, municipal police departments, ambulance companies and organizations,

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

All committee members voted in support of H.B. 5154.

Liza Andrews, Director of Public Policy and Communications of Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) supports the bill with the proposed substitute language. They highlight two existing statutes addressing the provision of information about domestic violence services by law enforcement: CGS § 46b-38b subsection that states law enforcement must distribute information at the scene, and CGS § 54-203 which outlines the responsibility of the Judicial Branch, Office of Victim Services.

Zachary McKeown, Senior Legislative Associate of CT Conference of Municipalities & Maggie Goodwin, Coordinating Committee of Social Welfare Action Alliance of CT support the bill, stating: SWAA CT suggests that making police departments the gatherers of the necessary referral information would begin to strengthen working relationships between social workers in local mental health and domestic violence programs and law enforcement. Additionally, SWAA CT recommends that the statewide agencies for police officers to utilize to obtain referral information be 211 services, DMHAS, and the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence, instead of the agencies listed.

Peter Zera, National Representative of International Association of EMTs and Paramedics supports the bill with proposed changes. Zera asks the committee to consider including EMS professionals in the bill, making it a requirement that they have the documents of resources on hand when needed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Molly Lukiwsky

Date: 3/15/2022