

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6677

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING ADULT DAY CENTERS.

Vote Date: 02/28/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/21/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

HB 6677 requires that the commissioner of Social Services to develop a plan to increase the number of persons eligible to receive adult day services under the state's home care program for the elderly. Also, to increase fee schedule effective July 1, 2023, for adult day care services by 10% over the fee schedule for the previous fiscal year and authorizes the Commissioner of Social Services to amend the Medicaid state plan to add the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Connecticut Dept. of Social Services, Ms. Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner: They **oppose** this legislation. The Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly is a 1915 © Medicaid waiver that may target specific populations for services, federal regulation does not permit states to limit services within the waiver. Expanding eligibility would require additional funding that is not in the Governor's budget. The increase in adult day services would result in additional costs of \$1 million dollars. The governor's budget includes funding to study provider rates and they are waiting the results of that study. And finally, they are in the process of studying the costs and benefits associated with the PACE program.

Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity, Ms. Kiley Pratt, Master's Student, Yale School of Public Health: They submitted testimony in **support** of this proposal. Adult Day Centers provide a critical component for the aging population to "age in place" by increasing access to daytime services, while also allowing residents to live at home. If adopted, it will expand access to various in-need populations in the state including those 18 – 64 who have certain medical conditions that would benefit from the services Adult

Day Centers provide. Neighboring states have passed similar laws allowing for the Medicaid payment of Adult Day Centers for those 18 – 64 years old.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Edenbridge Health: Dr. Stephen Gordon, MBA Founder & CEO
Dr. Alan Abrams, Chief Medical Officer
Mr. Brian Mckaig, SVP Program Launches**

They testified in strong **support** of this bill particularly as is pertained to Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). They provided specific details of PACE and its benefits. They point out how PACE saves taxpayer dollars, have high quality outcomes and an enhanced quality of life. They also mention aspects of PACE that are of interest like coordinated whole person care delivered by an integrated team, a role for the participants, financial flexibility in the delivery of care. They are also supportive of increasing the number of people eligible for adult day services.

Kinship Health, John Enderle, CEO: His testimony was in **support** of this bill. His comments included an Executive Overview of the PACE Program.

LeadingAge, Connecticut, Ms. Mag Morelli, President: Their testimony indicated their **support** for this proposal. Their comments included support for including younger adults who need nursing home level of care but who are living in the community, advancing the PACE Program within the state and addressing the cost of transportation.

Alzheimer's Assoc., Connecticut Chapter, Ms. Christy Kovel, Director of Public Policy: They offered their testimony in **support** of the bill. They point out that Adult Day Centers are staffed by nurses, social workers, recreational therapists and provide support for family caregivers and provide a cost-effective option to support people living with Alzheimer's or dementia at home. Attending an Adult Day Center is a lifeline for families who are taking care of loved ones at home.

Jewish Senior Services, Mr. Andrew Banoff, President and CEO: They strongly **support** this bill which would enable the Dept of Social Services to submit a plan amendment to add PACE as an option within the state's Medicaid program. States can elect PACE services to Medicaid beneficiaries as an optional benefit and as all our surrounding states have done so. PACE programs centers in 30 other states and serve approximately 60,000 people. Over 20 years ago our state enacted legislation to move forward with a PACE option but it was not accomplished by the deadline set in the statute.

Juniper Homecare, Mr. Andrei Brel, President: Adult Day Centers have been challenged financially over the last several years due to Covid, dramatically higher gas prices, food prices and labor market fluctuations. They **support** the general intent to expand adult day services and the proposal to reimburse for transportation services offered by adult day centers. They suggest that the committee consider a proposal for DSS to evaluate expanding adult day services and enable the offering of adult day services under the Community First Choice waiver. They believe that Adult Day Services are the best, efficient, effective and inclusive service for the money spent. They also support establishing PACE.

Fallon Health, Mr. Richard Burke, President & CEO: They strongly **support** this legislation, and they encourage Connecticut to enable and submit a state plan amendment to add PACE as an option within the state's Medicaid program. PACE provides economic benefits to the state by helping older adults and those who require complex care to live at home. It reduces the burden on nursing homes and hospitals and frees up resources for other health care needs. PACE has a strong track record of success across the country and its programs have received support from participants, caregivers, and the health care community.

Fairfield Senior Advocates, Mr. William Lenahan: They **support** developing a plan to increase the number of persons eligible to receive adult day services, a 10% increase in the fee schedule for adult day care services and DSS amending the Medicaid state plan to add the PACE program. Their testimony also included the history of the PACE program on how and when it began and who it has served over the years.

Caring Connection, Ms. Cheryl Rosenbaum, Coordinator: Their testimony was in **support** of this bill. They believe in expanding Adult Day Services and the proposal to reimburse their programs for the transportation services they offer. The need for this service does not only serve those with Alzheimer's and dementia but also victims of stroke, brain injuries and other neurological diseases.

River House Adult Day Center, Ms. Donna Spellman, Executive Director: They are in **support** of the general intent to expand adult day services offered by their centers as well as with the proposal to reimburse transportation services and the efforts to open the Medicaid State Plan to adult day services for individuals under the age of 55. They are also in support of the establishment of the PACE program. They are hopeful that the plan moves forward, and adult day services are permitted under the Community First Choice waiver.

Partnerships Adult Day Care Center, Ms. Shirley Pripstein, Board Member and Past President: They **support** this proposal. She has seen that the finances of adult day center are precarious. Approximately 20 centers in Connecticut have closed since the beginning of the Covid epidemic. They have gotten through the last three years with loans and grants, but they are unable to bring costs down to make the budget balance at the current levels of reimbursements. Their CAN's and recreational therapists are minimum wage employees and minimum wages have increased. Reimbursement rates must rise accordingly.

Your Community Yoga Center, Ms. Jennifer Brosious, Owner, Board Member of Partnerships Adult Day Care Center: She is in **support** of this bill. Adult day Centers provide those with dementia and Alzheimer's a program to attend during the day where they receive cognitive stimulation, socialization, snacks, meals, and medical services. As a board member of Partnerships and looking at their finances she can see that Adult Day Centers deserve support for the value they provide for the elderly, caregivers and how it impacts the entire community.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None

Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk

Date: 3/6/23