

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6820

AN ACT PREVENTING AN ADVERSE ACTION AGAINST A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER DUE TO AN ADVERSE ACTION TAKEN BY ANOTHER STATE AS A RESULT OF SUCH PROVIDER'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE TERMINATION OF

Title: A PREGNANCY.

Vote Date: 3/10/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/6/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill prohibits the Department of Public Health (DPH) or the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) from taking any punitive action against a provider based solely on the provider being involved in the delivery of reproductive health care services that were performed in accordance with Connecticut law, as well as actions levied by another state based on that state's laws prohibiting providers from performing certain reproductive healthcare services. At a time when the numbers of providers do not meet the needs of our state, punishing them for performing services that are in accordance with state law is counterproductive.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Manisha Juthani, MD, Commissioner, CT Department of Public Health (DPH):

The Commissioner, while appreciating the intent of the bill, is concerned that there are risks to the intent by permitting the licensure of, and prohibiting disciplinary actions against, providers- particularly out-of-state providers who may have committed acts that would be illegal under CT state law. DPH will support this law when these provisions are clarified and protect the safety and quality of healthcare delivery in Connecticut.

Matt Blumenthal, State Representative, CT General Assembly, Co-Chair, Reproductive Rights Caucus:

Rep. Blumenthal strongly supports this bill as it protects medical providers in Connecticut from adverse actions taken by another state for their role in the delivery of reproductive health services that are legal in Connecticut. This action will incentivize providers to choose Connecticut to provide their needed healthcare services. By protecting these providers, we are improving access to healthcare services for all citizens in Connecticut.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA):

CHA supports the intent of the bill but offers language to address an area of concern. As drafted, the bill would create unintended consequences since it would permit providers to practice in Connecticut who had provided care in other states that might constitute unprofessional conduct and could include gross negligence. CHA offers language to address this area of concern.

CT Chapter, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG):

The CT chapter of ACOG strongly supports this bill, which will provide protection for health care professionals from adverse action as the result of the providers' participation in the delivery of reproductive health services that were in accordance with Connecticut state laws.

Liz Gustafson, MSW, State Director, Pro-Choice CT:

Ms. Gustafson shared her personal experience and pointed out that, in a time when the tenets of the Roe decision are under attack, there are providers who show up every day providing needed reproductive health services to women of all backgrounds. It is time that the people of Connecticut stand up for these providers and support this bill.

Others in Support of this bill:

Donna Grossman
Lynne Ide, Universal Healthcare Foundation of CT
Dr. Molly Markowitz, CT AAP Chapter
Shira Tarantino, Pink Wave Action

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Suzy Smith, Prolife Council of CT:

Ms. Smith argues that HB 6820 carves out special immunity for abortionists by making it illegal to penalize them for their services under the guise of reproductive health. How does this bill protect the health of women?

Peter Wolfgang, President, Family Institute of CT Action:

Mr. Wolfgang believes it would be hypocrisy to punish Connecticut providers for following their strongly held beliefs while protecting providers who break the laws of other states. It highlights a moral preference for abortion over religious freedom.

Others in Opposition to This Bill:

Linda Dalessio

Debbie Esposito

Mary Nagy, Nurse-Health Educator

Reported by: David Rackliffe, Asst. Clerk

Date: 3/21/2023