

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1190
Title: AN ACT REQUIRING NURSING HOMES AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES TO BE EQUIPPED WITH AN AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR.
Vote Date: 2/19/2025
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/3/2025
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would require by January 1, 2026, that the administrator of each nursing home and assisted living facility arrange for the following:

- Provide and maintain an automated external defibrillator (AED) in a central location on the premises of the home or facility.
- Maintain and test the device in accordance with the manufacturer guidelines.
- Make the location of the AED known and assessable to staff, residents and family members who visit the facility.
- Ensure that at least one staff member of the home or facility who is trained in CPR and AED standards as set forth by the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association is on premises during all hours of operation.

Substitute language changes "assisted living facility" to "assisted living services entity" in chapter 368v of the general statutes, that provides, among other things, nursing services and assistance with activities of daily living in a managed residential community to a population that is chronic and stable.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Representative Tony Scott, Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) 112th District:

Rep. Scott proposed this bill after hearing from a constituent who voiced concern when he realized that the assisted living facility where his grandmother was staying did not require an automated external defibrillator (AED) be in the facility. Rep. Scott pointed out that 356,000

deaths per year in the USA are the result of cardiac arrest and yet, survival can be as high as 90% if treated within minutes of the onset of the arrest. Many individuals living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes are at higher risk of sudden cardiac arrest since such incidences increase with age. Rep. Scott shared that he is not a fan of mandates but in this case the minimal cost involved is worth the potential to save a life.

Representative Christie Carpino, CGA, 32nd District:

Residential communities assisted living communities and nursing homes have a high concentration of individuals with some health concerns who are living or staying in these facilities 24 hours a day 7 days a week. In addition, there are staff caring for them and family and friends visiting. Anyone of these individuals could suffer a cardiac emergency and would benefit from an AED. Simply put, these devices save lives.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Meg Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut.

Ms. Morelli supports this bill as reasonable however she believes the language of the bill needs to be clearly drafted when it comes to assisted living communities. Connecticut does not have a statutory definition of "assisted living facility" and LeadingAge would like to replace that reference in the bill language. The two entities in our state referred to as "assisted living" are a combination of services provided by a licensed Assisted Living Service Agency (ALSA) that are delivered in a Managed Residential Community (MCR) registered with the Department of Public Health (DPH). We need to determine whose responsibility it is to supply the AED, who would install it, and who would be responsible to ensure that trained staff are available throughout the day. Once these roles and responsibilities are determined, LeadingAge would be happy to provide suggested statutory language. LeadingAge also has a concern that some assisted living services are provided in affordable independent senior housing centers. We need to look more closely at these housing sites and may need to assist with funding equipment and training of staff. For these reasons, LeadingAge would ask the Committee to consider exempting the congregates and other affordable housing sites from the certified staffing requirement.

CT Association of Health Care Facilities, CT Center for Assisted Living, (CAHCF/CCAL)

CAHCF/CCAL states that Connecticut skilled nursing facilities are licensed and regulated and well positioned to comply with the AED requirements proposed in this bill. It should be noted that any costs associated with this mandate in a skilled nursing facility would be reimbursable under Medicaid. However, Connecticut assisted living facilities are not regulated, reimbursed by Medicaid or staffed life skilled nursing facilities.

Dr. Marie Roberto, PhD:

Dr. Roberto points out that for persons who may be reluctant to perform CPR, an AED provides an alternative for emergency intervention. Also, the bill would make our state law consistent with our neighboring states. Dr. Roberto asked the Committee to consider expanding the legislation to include continuing care communities that provide all three levels of care: independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing home care.

The following individuals submitted testimony in support of this bill:

- Margaret Coe, MD
- Donald Grayson, former fire commissioner in Bristol and Cromwell.

- Sharon Gauthier, Nurse Advocate, PAFY Care Management
- A Nursing home Administrator (anonymous)

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Chris Carter for the Connecticut Assisted Living Association (CALA):

CALA has concerns regarding some of the requirements of this bill. CALA suggests that assisted living providers in our state be exempted from requiring 24/7 onsite staff certified in CPR because assisted living facilities are not staffed like a nursing home. In addition, assisted living community residents reside in apartments with services provided to them when needed, as needed. In this type of community, the normal and required response of the staff to an emergency is to call 911, just as you would in a person's home. CALA also has concerns regarding the number of AEDs required in settings of various sizes, the availability of trained staff, liability issues and the cost associated with obtaining the maintaining the AEDs as well as updating staff training.

Anna Lancaster:

Ms. Lancaster has issues with working people not being listened to. Rather than this issue, our government should be more focused on lowering our taxes, stop giving healthcare to illegals, then we won't see the downgrading of Connecticut society.

Reported by: Kathleen Panazza

Date: February 20, 2025