

House of Representatives, March 9, 1998. The Committee on General Law reported through REP. FOX, 144th DIST., Chairman of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONSUMER RIGHTS OF HEALTH CARE PATIENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 (NEW) (a) As used in this act:

2 (1) "Patient" means any person who has
3 received services from an institution for the
4 prevention, diagnosis or treatment of human health
5 conditions on either an inpatient or outpatient
6 basis; and

7 (2) "Institution" has the same meaning as set
8 forth in section 19a-490 of the general statutes.

9 (b) Each institution shall provide its
10 patients upon admittance with a written statement
11 indicating: (1) If applicable, that the
12 institution has funds pursuant to the federal
13 Hill-Burton Act, 42 USC 291, as from time to time
14 amended, hospital bed funds, as defined in section
15 19a-509b of the general statutes, or similar funds
16 that are available to assist low income patients;
17 and (2) that, if requested by the patient, an
18 itemized copy of the patient's bill shall be sent
19 to the patient and that any questions or
20 complaints pertaining to the patient's bill may be
21 directed to a designated department within the
22 institution.

23 (c) If requested by a patient, the
24 institution shall provide such patient with an
25 itemized bill not later than thirty days after the
26 date of such request. Such itemized bill shall
27 identify, in plain language, each individual
28 service, supply or medication provided to the
29 patient by the institution and the specific charge
30 for such service, supply or medication.

31 GL COMMITTEE VOTE: YEA 16 NAY 0 JF

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"THE FOLLOWING FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND BILL ANALYSIS ARE PREPARED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SOLELY FOR PURPOSES OF INFORMATION, SUMMARIZATION AND EXPLANATION AND DO NOT REPRESENT THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OR EITHER HOUSE THEREOF FOR ANY PURPOSE."

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT - BILL NUMBER HB 5216

STATE IMPACT	Cost, see explanation below
MUNICIPAL IMPACT	None
STATE AGENCY(S)	University of Connecticut Health Center

EXPLANATION OF ESTIMATES:

Passage of the bill requires that, when requested, itemized billing be provided to patients responsible for any portion of a hospital services bill. This would result in costs of \$40,000-\$60,000 to the University of Connecticut Health Center in providing such information due to additional postage and processing costs. In addition, in order to provide "plain language" billing as indicated in the amendment, adjustments in the current computerized billing system would be required and may result in further cost of \$40,000 to \$50,000.

It should be noted that the Health Center currently provides detailed itemized billing upon the request of individuals or their insurance company(s). In addition, extended patient stays often result in significant amounts of pages of itemized billing.

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OLR BILL ANALYSIS

HB 5216

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONSUMER RIGHTS OF HEALTH CARE PATIENTS

SUMMARY: This bill requires health care institutions to give patients a statement on admittance indicating that (1) the institution has Hill-Burton, hospital bed, or similar funds available to help pay the bills of low income patients, if it does; (2) an itemized bill will be sent on request; and (3) patient billing complaints may be sent to a designated department.

The bill requires health care institutions to send an itemized bill to a patient within 30 days, if the patient requests one. A bill must identify in plain language each individual service, supply, or medication and the specific charge for each.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 1998

BACKGROUND**Health Care Institutions**

The bill covers "health care institutions" which are already defined by law as hospitals; homes for the aged; health care facilities for the handicapped; nursing homes; rest homes; home health care agencies; homemaker-home health aide agencies; mental health facilities; substance abuse treatment facilities; infirmaries operated by educational institutions for the care of students, faculty, and employees; facilities providing services for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, or care of human health conditions, except state facilities for people with mental illness or substance abuse problems; and residential facilities certified by the Medicaid program as intermediate care facilities for people who are mentally retarded.

Hill-Burton Act and Hospital Bed Funds

The federal Hill-Burton Act provides funds to build or renovate hospitals and requires hospitals that received

funding to provide some free or reduced-cost care to indigent patients. The hospital bed fund law requires hospitals that received financial gifts for patient care to meet informational posting, written summary, staff training, and reporting requirements.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 16 Nay 0