



STATE OF CONNECTICUT Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services



Legislative Update # 6

February 6, 2014

A big shout out to the advocacy community who came to speak against the bills that would limit access to senior disabled housing at the Housing Committee public hearing this week.

The legislative committee process continues with more bills and concepts getting raised for public hearing and committees scheduling public hearings on bills the committees have already raised. The DMHAS technical bill has come out in draft form on Monday. The bill number is HB 6708 An Act Concerning Various Revisions to The Mental Health and Addiction Statutes.

Please remember the governor's budget address will be given on February 18th. Any legislative initiatives connected to the budget will be made public that day as well. We will send out any of those bills if they impact the behavioral health community. Public hearings will follow in the next two weeks and we have provided some additional information later in this update. We expect to have a schedule early next week as well as the list of subcommittee chairs and members. We will get that to you as soon as it becomes available.

List of bills that have been raised by Committees

SB 704 An Act Concerning A Study On Landlord-Tenant Issues. To study current landlord-tenant issues.

SB 799 An Act Concerning The South Fire District Of Middletown. To alleviate the financial and tax burden cast upon the South Fire District of Middletown in 2011 when the state eliminated the Connecticut Valley Hospital Fire Department, resulting in a dramatic increase in call volume whereby the tax-paying residents of the South Fire District have assumed that responsibility with no financial support since 2011.

HB 5492 An Act Concerning Working Persons With Disabilities. To waive the asset requirement for married persons to participate in a program that provides medical assistance to working persons with disabilities.

HB 5618 An Act Concerning Community-Based Residential Facilities. To enact recommendations concerning state-operated group homes.

HB 6378 An Act Providing Veterans' Preferences In The Rental Assistance Program And Housing Authority Projects. To give preference to veterans when applying for housing assistance if they meet certain federal criteria.

HB 6391 An Act Increasing Mental Health Services For Veterans And Members Of The Armed Forces. To assist our soldiers and veterans by creating a safety net of services to help with their transition from the military to civilian life.

HB 6465 An Act Concerning Purchase Of Service Contracts. To ensure all purchase of service contracts and Medicaid fee for services accounts reflect the actual cost of services provided in relation to reasonable increases in the consumer price index or inflation.

HB 6483 An Act Establishing A Task Force To Study Group Home Distribution. To determine how to equitably distribute group homes throughout the state.

HB 6550 An Act Concerning Medicaid Provider Audits. To ensure that audits of Medicaid providers are conducted in a fair and reasonable manner.

Public hearings of interest

Planning and Development Committee will have a public hearing on the bills that would hamper that states ability to site facilities for the residential care and treatment of persons with behavioral health disorders (HB5618 and HB 6483). The hearing will be on Friday Feb 13th at 11:00 in room 2B.

Budget hearings

The hearings will be held on Feb 24 thru Feb 27 and on March 3 thru March 6th. The DSS budget hearing and the DMHAS budget hearing **are usually held on Fridays** (Feb 27th and March 6th) because they tend to be very well attended. We do not have that confirmed but wanted to give the advocacy community some sense of timing. Once again, we will notify you of those dates as soon as they become available.

Accessing Information via the Connecticut General Assembly Web Page:

If you wish to get the details/status on a bill, read the text of a bill, or check on committee agendas or upcoming events in the Bulletin, log onto the Connecticut General Assembly web page at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>

If you wish to look up committee agendas or check upcoming events in the Bulletin, these can be accessed on that same page by scrolling down and clicking on the appropriate item.