



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

May 21, 2010

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz
Secretary of the State
30 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Secretary Bysiewicz:

I hereby return without my signature Substitute Senate Bill 139, *An Act Concerning Independent Monitoring of the HUSKY Program*.

While well-intentioned, this bill unnecessarily requires an additional annual independent monitoring of the HUSKY program. Currently, there are four separate review processes. To statutorily mandate a particular study is not only redundant, but unnecessarily burdensome and costly.

The Department of Social Services, which administers the HUSKY program, contracts with a certified External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) under federal guidelines to provide monitoring and an annual evaluation of program performance as to the quality, timeliness and access to health care services provided to all HUSKY clients. This evaluation also provides a review of contract compliance, information system capabilities, client rights and other critical patient care and administrative issues. Also, EQRO certification brings with it enhanced federal matching at 75 percent versus 50 percent for uncertified organizations.

Second, the Department of Social Services recently and proactively enhanced HUSKY program reporting by requiring Managed Care Organizations to adopt a comprehensive set of Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set measures (HEDIS) approved for use in Medicaid. Even as it supports individual Managed Care Organization accountability, the information derived from HEDIS will considerably improve the Department of Social Services' ability to evaluate overall program performance.

Third, since 1994, the Department of Social Services has shared data through its monthly reports to the Medicaid Managed Care Council (Council). The Council, as you know, was statutorily established to advise the Department of Social Services on the development and implementation of HUSKY, and later the State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) program, as well as to provide ongoing legislative and public input into the monitoring of those programs. The Council evaluates access to and education about the HUSKY and SAGA programs, as well as health care services provided, the quality of those health care services, coordination of health coverage among plans and reforms, grievance procedures and the program's financial status. The Council consists of legislators, Medicaid consumers, advocates, health care providers, insurers and state agencies.

Prior to the implementation of HEDIS, the Department of Social Services had contracted for several years with a fourth organization to conduct an additional independent analysis of HUSKY access, utilization and quality. The Department of Social Services is in the process of again executing another 15-month contract to provide that additional, independent study.

For these reasons, pursuant to Section 15 of Article Fourth of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and Article III of the Amendments thereto, I am returning Substitute Senate Bill 139 without my signature.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Jodi Bell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

M. Jodi Bell
Governor