
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 1481 (File 444, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION IN SERVICES FUNDED UNDER MEDICAID.

SUMMARY

By law, the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) enforces Connecticut's human rights laws and investigates discrimination complaints. This bill requires a CHRO officer, after reviewing evidence and conducting a hearing as part of an investigation of alleged discrimination, to notify the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner in writing about any finding of a violation committed by a health care provider while providing health care to a Medicaid enrollee. Existing law prohibits discrimination based on, among other things, race, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity or expression, color, veteran status, and domestic violence victim status.

The bill also allows the DSS commissioner, upon receiving CHRO's notice, to withhold or recoup Medicaid payments from any provider who was determined to have discriminated against a beneficiary. In determining the amount of Medicaid payments to withhold or recoup, the commissioner must consider (1) if the provider continued to discriminate against a beneficiary after a complaint was filed, (2) the number of complaints filed against the provider, and (3) any damages CHRO ordered the provider to pay.

*Senate Amendment "A" replaces the underlying bill and (1) specifies that CHRO must make the determination that discrimination occurred; (2) allows DSS to recoup, in addition to withhold, Medicaid payments from providers who discriminate; (3) specifies factors DSS must consider when determining the amount of Medicaid payments to withhold or recoup; and (4) delays the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the provision allowing DSS to

withhold or recoup Medicaid payments is effective July 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

DSS Provider Agreements

Under current practice, providers enrolling in Medicaid must sign agreements with DSS requiring them to, among other things, comply with federal and state anti-discrimination laws as a condition of receiving Medicaid reimbursement.

Related Bill

sSB 1380, as amended by Senate “A” and passed by the Senate, classifies discrimination by health care providers as a discriminatory practice under CHRO laws. By doing so, it allows people aggrieved by these violations to file a complaint with CHRO alleging discrimination.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 6 (03/13/2025)