

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6774

AN ACT CONCERNING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY EMPLOYEE AND

Title: VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECKS.

Vote Date: 2/18/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/6/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The legislation proposes to have background checks required for all prospective employees and volunteers of long-term care facilities to help prevent elder abuse.

The **JFS language (LCO 4994)** deletes the requirement for volunteers who do not have direct access to patients or residents to submit to background checks and leaving the requirement for prospective employees and staff.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Connecticut Dept. of Aging and Disability Services, Ms. Mairead Painter, Long-Term Care Ombudsman: She is in **support** of any requirement for background checks on persons who are accessing residents in long-term care communities.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

LeadingAge Connecticut, Ms. Mag Morelli, President: This bill proposes to modify the current Applicant Background Check Management System (ABCMS) that is managed by the Dept. of Public Health which has been in operation for over a decade. We want to be clear that direct access is not the same definition as direct care. Direct access means anyone who may have the opportunity to access the resident, client, or patient. In a facility this would include any employee who has access to the building or the grounds of the building where the residents live. If legislation is passed to require all volunteers to undergo an ABCMS

background check, we would ask that exceptions be placed into the statute for community and school groups and others who are supervised during their visit, performance, or activity.

Home Matters Caregiving, Mr. Matthew Scher and Ms. Asha Scher, Owners: They are in **support** of any efforts to improving senior care including background checks for facility employees.

Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Council, Mr. John Balisciano, President of the Resident Council at Apple Hewett Rehab: He is in **support** of this proposal. It is important that all employees and volunteers get a proper background check before working in a nursing home. This bill will help protect residents and make us feel safe in their homes.

Statewide Coalition of President of Resident Council, Ms. Susan Bilansky, Emeritus President of the Resident Council at the Hebrew Center: She is supportive of this legislation. Every person working in a nursing home should have their history reviewed to help prevent potential abuse.

Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Council, Ms. Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez, President: She and the organization urge **support** for this proposal. They believe that background checks are a basic and essential safeguard that will help to keep them safe in their homes and that they shouldn't have to worry about those who are entrusted with their care.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Connecticut Assisted Living Association, Mr. Chris Carter, President: They are **opposed** to this bill. They believe that the Dept. of Public Health's, Applicant Background Check Management System (ABCMS) already addresses this need.

Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assistant Clerk

Date: 2/21/25