

Human Services Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-806

AN ACT EXPANDING MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR TREATMENT OF CERTAIN

Title: EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONDITIONS.

Vote Date: 3/14/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/11/2025

File No.: 372

Disclaimer: *The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Sen. Martin M. Looney, 11th Dist.

Rep. Josh Elliott, 88th Dist.

Rep. Jillian Gilchrest, 18th Dist.

Rep. Sarah Keitt, 134th Dist.

Rep. Anthony L. Nolan, 39th Dist.

Sen. Jorge Cabrera, 17th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Medicaid enables low income patients to access health care services through insurance, including for emergency medical conditions. This allows patients to be treated in a rapid manner to treat conditions that require immediate medical attention. However, Medicaid in Connecticut currently does not provide as much coverage for outpatient treatment. This forces patients to extend their stay in hospitals and produces a burden on the patient and hospital. This bill will expand the emergency medical conditions covered by Connecticut's Medicaid and standardize conditions covered by federal law. Additionally, this bill will establish a system for Medicaid patients to apply in advance for emergency coverage for conditions treated in outpatient settings.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Social Services \(DSS\), Commissioner Andrea Barton Reeves](#); opposes the expansion of the definition of emergency medical conditions due to the potential of the definition not aligning with the federal definition of emergency medical conditions, which could then impact Connecticut's receipt of federal Medicaid funds. Additionally, the services covered by the expanded definition may not align with the funding allocations in the

Governor's recommended budget, which would impact the ability of DSS to implement the bill. The current federal standards focus on the emergent status of the medical condition rather than the diagnosis. Therefore, outpatient and other coverage does not align with the federal standard for Medicaid coverage, and including these settings would fall out of scope from the Governor's recommended budget. It is stated that establishing a system for Medicaid patients to apply for advance Medicaid coverage would cost at least \$250,000 to modify the support system and \$50,000 for staff resources, which would be out of scope from the Governor's recommended budget.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

CT Citizen Action Group, Associate Director, Liz Dupont-Diehl; supports this bill stating that expanding laws around emergency medical care in Connecticut would improve health outcomes for uninsured and undocumented populations and would increase the federal compensation for Connecticut hospitals and the state.

Rheumatoid Arthritis patient, Donna Grossman; supports this bill expressing that early medical interventions for acute and chronic medical conditions improves health outcomes for patients. Medical professionals may not treat patients requiring care due to lack of insurance or low Medicaid reimbursement rates, which can be ameliorated through this bill.

Connecticut General Assembly, State Senator, Martin Looney; supports this bill expanding Connecticut's definition of an emergency medical condition. Undocumented people in Connecticut can only access limited medical care when experiencing an emergency medical condition in accordance with the federal definition of an emergency medical condition. Connecticut should expand the definition of an emergency medical condition, which would still qualify the state for the federal Medicaid match.

Center for Children's Advocacy, Director of the Disability Rights Project, Bonnie Roswig; supports this bill because of the needs of current patients that cannot access medical care due to the current definition of emergency medical conditions in Connecticut's Medicaid policies. The advanced application for emergency coverage from Medicaid can decrease emergency room usage and costs of inpatient care while improving health outcomes of society.

The Arc of Connecticut, Inc., Director of Advocacy, Carol Scully; supports this bill, expressing that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) rely on emergency rooms for medical care and the expanded definition of emergency medical conditions would aid their access to medical care.

She Leads Justice, Policy Director, Tonishia Signore; supports this bill to secure medical care for all uninsured Connecticut residents experiencing chronic medical conditions, including undocumented communities. Limited access to healthcare for people with chronic conditions can lead to more serious conditions, more extensive treatment, and higher costs to the person and healthcare system.

Disability Rights Connecticut, Litigation Attorney, Sheldon Toubman; supports this bill, justifying the expansion of the definition of emergency medical conditions with evidence of

federal Medicaid reimbursement for the added conditions. An expanded definition can increase the coverage and avoid the incurred costs of declining patient conditions.

Unitarian Universalist Society East, Member, Monica van Beusekom; supports this bill to improve health conditions for the 6% of Connecticut residents that are uninsured and 58% of Connecticut undocumented residents that are uninsured. Improving access to healthcare improves the health outcomes for Connecticut residents and supports the right to healthcare.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Nimisha Srikanth

Date: 3/27/2025