

# Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1481

AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION IN SERVICES FUNDED UNDER

**Title:** MEDICAID.

**Vote Date:** 3/14/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/11/2025

**File No.:** 444

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Human Services Committee

## **CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Rep. Sarah Keitt, 134th Dist.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill asks DSS to require providers who receive Medicaid reimbursement to agree in writing to not discriminate against folks protected under the state's human rights statutes. This bill seeks to protect residents of the state from discrimination in healthcare and asking for written agreement is a substantial step to providing these protections.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

[Connecticut Department of Social Services, Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner:](#)

appreciates the opportunity to discuss ways to ensure further comprehensive coverage for non-discrimination towards Medicaid members. They add however, the enrollment agreement that providers sign already is very comprehensive in accordance with current laws.

[Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities \(CHRO\), Tanya Hughes, Executive Director:](#)

appreciates the intent of this bill but is concerned about the practical challenges of determining discrimination and believes only a Human Rights Referee or superior court judge should make such findings before funding is affected. More importantly, withholding Medicaid reimbursements could lead providers to deny care to those in need, ultimately harming the vulnerable populations the bill aims to protect.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[The Arc Connecticut, Director of Advocacy, Carol Scully](#): supports this bill and its goal to further prohibit discrimination by healthcare providers receiving Medicaid reimbursement. They go on to cite studies to support their testimony.

[LeadingAge Connecticut, President, Mag Morelli](#): supports this bill as they find it simply codifies what is already required under the current provider agreement.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

[Connecticut Catholic Conference, David Reynolds, Associate Director of Public Policy](#): opposes this legislation for its lack of reference to religious exceptions specifically towards gender affirming care services that catholic hospitals may be required to conduct. They also mention the lack of clarity on appeals and believes this is too broad of a approach.

[LGB Courage, Peter Doyle](#): opposes this bill because they find it will mandate doctors to provide gender-affirming care and disregard ethical medical standards.

[Do No Harm, Lauren Schwartz, MD, BC Psychiatry & Neurology, FAPA, Senior Fellow](#): opposes this bill while appreciating the effort to prevent discrimination in healthcare, they believe this bill will lend itself to discriminatory practices towards healthcare providers in mandating them to preform gender affirming care (includes footnotes).

[Steve Ward, MD, BC Internal Medicine](#): opposes this bill while adding they do not object signing agreement to not discriminate. They find that this bill will allow for mandates to preform gender affirming care on minors. They said if they are forced to provide care against their conscience, they will not be able to care for Medicaid patients.

[Connecticut State Medical Society \(CSMS\)](#): appreciates the intent of the bill but opposes it because of concerns that its language could unintentionally restrict physicians from making decisions to protect the safety of their staff, other patients, and themselves, particularly when dealing with violent or threatening behavior.

[Connecticut Hospital Association \(CHA\)](#): supports protecting folks from discrimination, however, they find the language in the bill to be duplicative and unnecessary, they oppose this legislation.

**Reported by: Christian Talarski**

**Date: 4/3/2025**