
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5481 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING HOSPICE CARE AT A SHORT-TERM HOSPITAL SPECIAL HOSPICE OR A HOSPICE FACILITY.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to develop a pilot program to identify and use a licensed short-term hospital special hospice (see BACKGROUND) to treat Medicaid patients with advanced illness who (1) are eligible for hospice, (2) clinically complex and high acuity, and (3) cannot be safely managed at home or in a nursing home. Under the bill, the hospice facility must get the appropriate license to care for these patients. DSS must implement the pilot program by December 30, 2027, within funds specifically appropriated for this purpose.

The bill also requires the commissioner or her designee, by January 15, 2027, to report to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees on the pilot program's development, including any potential savings, as well as legislative and funding recommendations.

*House Amendment "A" replaces the original bill (File 426) and adds the pilot program provision.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Inpatient Hospice Facility Regulation

Connecticut has two sets of inpatient hospice regulations: one for facilities licensed before July 31, 2012, that provide a hospital level of care ("short-term hospital special hospice") and a second category, with less stringent requirements, for inpatient facilities licensed after that date ("hospice facility") (Conn. Agencies Regs., § 19a-495-5a et seq.). For the latter, these facilities operate based on Medicare's minimum

regulatory requirements for inpatient hospital facilities (42 C.F.R. § 418.110).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23 Nay 0 (03/19/2026)