



2007 Regular Legislative Session Session 1/3/07 to 6/6/07 BILL TRACKING WRAP-UP

*Brief summaries of bills passed of interest to members overall.
(not necessarily inclusive of all bills that may have passed)*

To track bill details go to <http://www.cga.ct.gov/> and track by Bill Number.
By Nora Duncan, Public Policy Specialist

S.B. #66: AN ACT EXPANDING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR SPECIALIZED FORMULAS FOR CHILDREN. This bill requires group and individual health insurance policies to cover specialized formulas (dietary specific via FDA) for children up to age 12 instead of up to age eight. The bill applies to insurance and HMO policies delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed in the state on or after 10/1/07 that cover (1) basic hospital expenses, (2) basic medical-surgical expenses, (3) major medical expenses, (4) accidents only, and (5) hospital or medical services. It does not apply to a self-insured benefit plan, which is regulated under the federal ERISA. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #170/Public Act #07-57: AN ACT CONCERNING PARDONS. This bill specifies that the Board of Pardons and Paroles can grant a pardon to someone convicted of a violation that carries a prison term in the same manner as the board can for someone convicted of an offense and also allows the board to accept pardon applications (1) three years after a person's conviction of a misdemeanor or violation and (2) five years after a person's felony conviction. The bill allows the board to accept an application before these dates for extraordinary circumstances. Under current policy, the board does not accept applications until five years after a person *completes* the sentence for the crime. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #398/Public Act #07-107: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS COUNCIL. This bill creates a 26-member Trafficking in Persons Council to: (1) consult with government and non-governmental organizations in developing recommendations to strengthen state and local efforts to prevent trafficking, protect and assist victims, and prosecute traffickers; (2) identify criteria for providing services to adult trafficking victims and their children; and (3) hold meetings to provide updates and progress reports. The council must meet at least three times per year and annually report to the General Assembly on its activities and recommend legislation, beginning 1/1/08. The bill places the council in the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women for administrative purposes only. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

S.B. #581: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION OF PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS FOR RESIDENTIAL HOUSING. This bill requires the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to use at least 10% of its annual private activity bond allocation for multifamily residential housing in calendar year 2008 and at least 15% in each subsequent year. By law, 60% of the private activity bonds that state issuers may issue must be allocated to CHFA. The bill also requires CHFA's board of directors to review and analyze the authority's multifamily housing goals and programs to determine how it can increase production and promote preservation of multifamily housing, including such housing for households with incomes less than 50% and less than 25% of area median income. The board must also review the use of private activity bonds in conjunction with 4% federal tax credits and report its findings and recommendations to the Planning and Development and Housing committees by 1/1/08.

S.B. #1066/Public Act #07-148: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES. This bill permits the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to develop a single affirmative action plan that covers its central office and each of its divisions and facilities, rather than separate plans as required under current law. It also dictates mailing procedures for documents concerning court actions and proceedings. The bill also (1) changes the term “substance abuse disability” to “substance abuse disorder” and (2) repeals several obsolete statutes. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #1103/Public Act #07-28: AN ACT CONCERNING NONFORFEITURE BENEFIT REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO LONG-TERM CARE POLICIES. This bill prohibits an insurer from issuing a long-term care policy on or after 7/1/08 unless it had offered the prospective insured an optional nonforfeiture benefit during the policy solicitation or application process. If the nonforfeiture option is declined, the insurer must give the insured a contingent benefit if the policy lapses. Regulations must be adopted by the insurance commissioner by 7/1/08. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

S.B. #1106/Public Act #07-142: AN ACT CONCERNING PROCEDURES FOR THE HEARING OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST STATE CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS BY THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND THE DOCUMENTATION OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES ADOPTED BY STATE CONTRACTORS. This bill establishes a separate process for the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) to hear and remedy complaints against contractors and subcontractors for noncompliance with state antidiscrimination laws; mandatory antidiscrimination provisions in state and certain political subdivision contracts, and the set-aside law. It does so by allowing CHRO to bring a matter to a public hearing based on its monitoring and compliance process instead of also going through its normal complaint process. The bill spells out the specifics about procedural requirements, penalties, etc. The bill authorizes the chief human rights referee, instead of CHRO's executive director or designee, to appoint a hearing officer or human rights referee to hear complaints against contractors and subcontractors filed by CHRO under the bill. The bill requires that before entering into the contract with the state or any political subdivision other than a municipality, the contractor must provide documentation to support the nondiscrimination agreement and warranty the law requires for such contracts. The documentation must be a company or corporate policy adopted by resolution of the contractor's board of directors, shareholders, managers, members, or other governing body. The bill specifies that “contract” includes any extension or modification of the contract, and “contractor” includes any successors or assigns of the contractor. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07, except for the provisions dealing with documentation of company or corporate policy, which are effective upon passage.

S.B. #1109/Public Act #07-62: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPRIVATION OF RIGHTS ON ACCOUNT OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION. This bill makes it a class A misdemeanor to subject someone to the deprivation of rights, privileges, and immunities secured or protected by the state or federal laws or constitutions because of sexual orientation. This crime is punishable by imprisonment for up to one year, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both. It makes it a class D felony if (1) property is damaged as a consequence of a violation in an amount exceeding \$1,000 or (2) the violator wears a mask, hood, or other device designed to conceal his identity. A class D felony is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both. It also gives the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) jurisdiction to investigate complaints of deprivations of rights, privileges, and immunities secured or protected by any state or federal law or constitution on the basis of sexual orientation. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #1152/Public Act #07-8: AN ACT CONCERNING PLACEMENT OF SIBLINGS OF CHILDREN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. This bill increases short-term, unlicensed placement options for foster children. It allows the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to place half- and step-siblings together with an unlicensed caregiver who is related to at least one of the children. Currently, these caregivers must be related to all children placed with them. It also lowers, from 14 to 10, the minimum age for placing children temporarily with unlicensed family friends or other responsible adults who already know the child. As under existing law, DCF must first conduct a home study and basic family assessment. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #1156/Public Act #07-63: AN ACT ALIGNING THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM MOTOR VEHICLE RULE WITH THE CARE4KIDS MOTOR VEHICLE RULE. This bill effectively permits the Department of Social Services (DSS) to exclude all of a household's motor vehicles from being counted as assets in determining the household's eligibility for the food stamp program, saving the state time and money in registration searches and getting more people on food stamps. DSS can align the rules for Care4Kids, which has no motor vehicle asset limit, as opposed to federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), which does. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

S.B. #1249: AN ACT CONCERNING TAX ABATEMENTS FOR PROPERTY CONVEYED TO A NONPROFIT LAND CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION. When a nonprofit land conservation organization acquires real or personal property, it must pay the property taxes or interest on delinquent taxes that were due before it acquired the property. This bill allows towns to abate these payments. A town may do this through its legislative body or, if that body is a town meeting, the board of selectmen. EFFECTIVE upon passage and applicable to assessment years beginning 10/1/07.

S.B. #1337/Public Act #07-44: AN ACT CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION AWARDS RECEIVED BY PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY STATE HUMANE INSTITUTIONS. This bill prohibits the state from claiming or applying a lien against certain lump-sum payments received by people who have been supported wholly, or in part, by the state in a humane institution. PA 05-280 added an exemption for a settlement or award in a housing or employment discrimination case, but did not cover people in humane institutions. The law defines a "humane institution" as any facility or program administered by the departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Mental Retardation, or Children and Families. The bill also prohibits towns from claiming or applying a lien against any money received as a settlement or award in a housing or employment discrimination case by a beneficiary of (1) the former town General Assistance program, (2) state aid in a state humane institution, or (3) a number of other assistance programs. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

S.B. #1396: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE PURCHASE OF SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES. This bill codifies existing practice by expanding the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary's authority to waive the competitive procurement requirements set out in the personal service agreement (PSA) statute for any purchase of service (POS) contract between a state agency and a human services private provider. By law, he can waive these requirements under certain circumstances for PSAs. The bill also allows him to waive them for POS contracts between a state agency and a private provider organization or municipality for ongoing direct health and human services for agency clients. The bill requires the secretary, to ensure continuity of care in health and human services delivery, to develop a plan for the competitive procurement of health and human services by 1/1/08, in consultation with the Connecticut Nonprofit Human Services Cabinet and representatives of impacted state agencies. It requires the secretary to submit the plan by 2/1/08 to the Human Services and Public Health committees. In developing the plan, the secretary must consider the following factors: (1) current market rate for the services provided; (2) whether services a new private provider provides assure service recipients' health, safety, and well-being; (3) whether a new private provider's services assure that community-based services are conveniently located and readily accessible for service recipients; (4) whether selection of a new private provider can avoid unnecessary challenges of local zoning law; and (5) whether selection of a new private provider can avoid creating a conflict with the current service provider's existing bonding contracts or placing the current service provider at risk for losing bonding investment. The bill allows the secretary to implement the plan on or after 7/1/08. The bill also adds health services to the OPM secretary's responsibility to establish uniform policies and procedures for obtaining, managing, and evaluating the quality and cost effectiveness of human services purchased from private providers and requires the secretary to report to the General Assembly on the system for purchasing such services in the state by 1/1/08 and then every two years. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

S.B. #1439/Public Act #07-113: AN ACT CONCERNING CONSERVATORS AND APPEALS OF CONSERVATORSHIPS AND GUARDIANSHIPS. This bill makes revisions to the conservatorship statutes including 1) stronger notice requirements; 2) guidance on appointment of counsel for the respondent; 3) a prohibition on serving as both counsel for the respondent and guardian ad litem or conservator; 4) a requirement that jurisdiction be established by clear and convincing evidence; 5) adoption of new procedural protections (e.g. use of rules of evidence, taping of hearings); 6) enhanced guidance on standards for appointment of and role of conservators; 7) adoption of a rebuttable presumption of limited conservatorship; and 8) standards for appeals. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

S.B. #1451/Public Act #07-130: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT HOMECARE OPTION PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY. The bill establishes a Connecticut Home Care Option Program for the Elderly and a Connecticut Home Care Trust Fund, administered by the state comptroller. The program and the fund must help people plan and save for the costs of certain elderly services that (1) are either not covered by a long-term health insurance policy or supplement services covered by such a policy or by Medicare and (2) will allow them to remain in their homes or live in a non-institutional setting as they age. The bill allows participants to establish individual savings accounts, with tax exemptions, within the fund and allows a designated beneficiary to withdraw funds from an account to pay for qualified home care expenses. Finally, the bill eliminates the 250-person limit on the number of participants in a state-funded pilot program that allows seniors to hire their own personal care assistance (PCA) attendants directly instead of going through a home health care agency. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07, in most part.

S.B. #1484: AN ACT CONCERNING THE HEALTHFIRST CONNECTICUT AND HEALTHY KIDS INITIATIVES. This bill creates a HealthFirst Connecticut Authority to study and develop policy options to cover all CT residents, reduce health care costs, and improve quality. The Authority must release recommendations by 12/1/08. This bill also creates a Universal Primary Care Access Authority to develop a plan for universal access to primary care for all CT residents by 12/31/08. The act provides foreign language interpreter services for Medicaid recipients, HUSKY coverage is increased to 400% of the federal poverty level (FPL), to 185% of FPL for parents and caretaker relatives, and to 250% of FPL for pregnant women, provides two months of HUSKY coverage for all CT newborns, and enhances HUSKY outreach funding. This bill also directs the state to apply for a federal waiver to expand SAGA coverage to 100% of FPL. It increases to 26 the age that children can remain on their parents' health insurance policies, regardless of student or dependent status, while CT residents. The act designates eHealthConnecticut as the state's lead health information exchange organization for 5 years and funds the CT Health Information Network (CHIN) to coordinate health and social service data between state agencies and the UConn Health Center. This bill also increases Medicaid provider rates by an unspecified amount and makes grants to community and school-based health centers. EFFECTIVE, in most part, 7/1/07.

H.B. #5108/Public Act #07-47: AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO THE CHILD POVERTY AND PREVENTION COUNCIL. This bill extends state agency and gubernatorial reporting responsibilities related to the legislative goal of reducing child poverty by 50% by 6/14 through 2014, rather than through 11/1/07 as current law reads. It makes the same change to the law requiring the council to make annual progress reports on the state's funding for prevention services to the governor and committees of cognizance: Appropriations, Children's, Education, Human Services, and Public Health committees. It also extends, from FY 08 through FY 21, the requirement that the governor's biennial budget document include a prevention report that includes appropriations recommendations for prevention services from the agencies impacted by committees of cognizance and others serving youth and families.

H.B. #5259/Public Act 07-48: AN ACT CONCERNING REFUNDS OF PREPAID PREMIUMS MADE BY SENIOR CITIZENS TO HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDERS FOR MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT POLICIES. This bill requires insurers, HMOs, or other entities that issue, continue, or renew Medicare supplement policies or certificates to refund to people who cancel their Medicare supplement policies any premium they prepaid for coverage that will not be used because of the cancellation. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #5508/Public Act #07-49: AN ACT AUTHORIZING COMMITMENT TO A CHRONIC DISEASE HOSPITAL UNDER A PHYSICIAN'S EMERGENCY CERTIFICATE. This bill permits a physician to place a person for psychiatric treatment in a chronic disease hospital under a 15-day emergency certificate if the hospital has a separate psychiatric unit, regardless of the law that requires the hospital's medical director to determine that the hospital and its staff can adequately care for and treat the patient. But it prohibits a person from being placed in such a hospital if the placing physician believes the person has active suicidal or homicidal intent. Certain examination time frames are established. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B.#5537/Public Act #07-134: AN ACT CONCERNING WHEELCHAIR TRANSFER SAFETY. This bill requires various vehicles (school buses, ambulances, livery, etc.,) to be equipped with assistive devices that ensure the safety of wheelchair users. The bill authorizes the motor vehicle commissioner to adopt regulations, in consultation with the transportation and public health commissioners, and designates violations of these requirements as infractions. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07

H.B. #5639: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CLOSING OF A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY. This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to hold a public hearing at the nursing home, rest home, residential care home, or intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded within 30 days after the facility submits a letter of intent or applies for a certificate of need (CON), whichever happens first, to establish a new, additional, expanded or replacement facility, service or function; expand or reduce its services or number of beds; make certain capital expenditures; or close the facility. Current law allows the commissioner to hold a hearing on an application, at his discretion in terms of location and time frames. The bill specifically prohibits any such facility from closing, terminating a service, or decreasing substantially its total bed capacity until a public hearing has been held in accordance with the bill and the commissioner has approved the facility's request. A \$5,000 civil penalty can be imposed for a facility that does not comply and the fine must be deposited in a special DSS fund to protect nursing home residents. The bill also extends the current moratorium on new nursing homes and nursing home beds from 6/30/07 to 6/30/12. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #6270/Public Act #07-52: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ILLEGAL USE OF HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES. This bill increases the fine for violations of the laws relating to the provision and use of designated handicapped parking from \$85 to \$150 for the first violation and \$250 for subsequent violations. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #6390/Public Act #07-153: AN ACT CONCERNING TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR DEFENDANTS FOUND NOT COMPETENT TO STAND TRIAL. This bill authorizes courts to give the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) the option to treat some mentally ill criminal defendants in less restrictive settings than hospitals and implements the change. Current law gives the department this option only after the Probate Court (1) civilly commits a criminal defendant to its custody and (2) determines that inpatient treatment is not necessary. The bill applies to defendants charged with nonviolent crimes whose mental illnesses render them unable to stand trial and who are unlikely to become competent within the period in which they can lawfully be detained (18 months or the maximum prison sentence they could serve, whichever is shorter). This is the same population currently eligible to pursue civil commitment rather than be subject to further criminal proceedings. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #6391/Public Act #07-71: AN ACT CONCERNING INVOLUNTARY ADMINISTRATION OF PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATION FOR PURPOSES OF COMPETENCY TO STAND TRIAL. In some circumstances, courts may order the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to give defendants psychiatric medication without their consent in order to restore them to competency so that their trial can resume. Currently, a court's authority to order involuntary medication ends when the defendant's competency is restored. The bill, instead, allows courts to extend these orders for as long as the criminal charges are pending. It applies to situations in which a court has found that the defendant (1) is likely to relapse if the medication is discontinued and (2) because of mental illness, is unable to give informed consent to continue taking it. The bill establishes procedures and legal standards for making this determination that mirror existing laws governing involuntary medication of defendants in order to restore them to competency. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #6646/Public Act #07-101: AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID BILLING PRACTICES FOR FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS. This bill allows the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to reimburse federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) under the Medicaid program for multiple medical, behavioral health, or dental services provided to a patient in the same day, regardless of the type of service provided, rather than one service in each category, per day, as allowed now. A 2003 law (PA 03-3, June 30 Special Session) (1) directed DSS to make changes in the Medicaid reimbursement methodology for FQHCs and (2) required the commissioner to file a status report with the Appropriations and Human Services committees by 3/1/04. The bill extends the deadline to 1/1/08. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #6715/Public Act #07-137: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PALLIATIVE USE OF MARIJUANA. This bill allows a physician to certify an adult patient's use of marijuana after determining that the patient has a debilitating condition and could potentially benefit from the palliative use of marijuana. It establishes a procedure for certifying patients and prevents arrests and prosecution under the new law. It allows people suffering from these conditions and their primary caregivers (not permitted is a primary care giver who has been convicted of drug dealing or possession) to possess a quantity of marijuana that the bill sets to treat the conditions. Registration with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) with a \$25 fee is required. Fees are to be deposited into a separate, nonlapsing Palliative Marijuana Administration Account effective 7/1/07. The bill requires law enforcement agencies to return marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia, or other property seized from a patient or primary caregiver who complies with its provisions. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #6893/Public Act #07-155: AN ACT CONCERNING EXPANDED OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES BY THE CHOICES HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. This bill expands the statutory role of the Department of Social Services' CHOICES health insurance assistance program in disseminating information and providing advice to Medicare beneficiaries to specifically include the federal Medicare Part D prescription drug program and long-term care options in the state. The bill also requires CHOICES to collaborate with other state agencies and entities in developing consumer-oriented websites that provide information on Medicare plans, including Medicare Part D plans and available long-term care options. It adds CHOICES personnel designated by the social services commissioner to the group charged with developing the state's long-term care website, which began operating in 2006. (The other entities are the Office of Policy and Management, the Select Committee on Aging, the Commission on Aging, and the Long-term Care Advisory Council). EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #7007//Public Act #07-73: AN ACT RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION. This bill renames the Department of Mental Retardation as the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and authorizes the DDS commissioner to determine how and when related administrative changes, such as revisions to business cards, stationery, and signage, occur. It also makes a number of technical, conforming changes. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7008: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION. This bill prohibits a probate court from excluding people from being a plenary or limited guardian of a person with mental retardation solely because they (1) work for a private agency the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) funds or licenses or (2) operate a DMR-licensed community training home. It permits the Children and Families (DCF) and Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) departments to access DMR's abuse registry to check whether a job applicant is listed there. It increases the cap on state dollars from DMHAS and DMR to Executive Director salary from \$75,000 to \$100,000, EFFECTIVE upon passage, with contractual COLA adjustment increases allowed annually EFFECTIVE 7/1/07. The bill extends through 6/30/09 (from 6/30/07) the moratorium on the sale, lease, or transfer of state-owned, state-operated property used to house people with mental retardation. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07 unless noted in explanation.

H.B. #7037: AN ACT EXPANDING THE SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM TO SIBLINGS OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH RELATIVE CAREGIVERS, AND THE RIGHT OF FOSTER PARENTS, PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PARENTS AND RELATIVE CAREGIVERS TO BE HEARD IN CERTAIN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS. This bill makes more guardians eligible for cash and medical assistance through the Department of Children and Families (DCF's) Subsidized Guardianship Program. The program is currently restricted to relatives taking care of foster children whose parents are either dead or unlikely to be able to care for them within the foreseeable future. Under the bill, caregivers qualify for additional subsidies when they assume guardianship of the child's half- or step-siblings to whom they are not related. The bill also gives these foster parents, prospective adoptive parents, and relative caregivers the right to be heard at all proceedings concerning an abused or neglected child they are caring for or who was under their care in the last year. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7055/Public Act # 07-75: AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL NECESSITY AND EXTERNAL APPEALS. This bill prohibits insurers, HMOs, and other entities from issuing individual and group health insurance policies that do not contain a statutory definition of "medically necessary" or "medical necessity." The bill extends timeframes, from 30 days to 60 days, for appealing to the insurance commissioner (i. e. , external appeal) after a person has exhausted a company's utilization review or internal grievance procedures. EFFECTIVE 1/1/08, except for the appeal provision, which is effective upon passage.

H.B. #7065/Public Act #07-83: AN ACT CONCERNING LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF WAIVER APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. (*Vetoed and veto override successful*). This bill strengthens legislative oversight of the Department of Social Services' (DSS) federal waiver applications by requiring, rather than permitting, the Human Services and Appropriations committees to (1) advise the DSS commissioner of their approval, rejection, or modification of the application within 30 days of receiving it; (2) hold a public hearing; and (3) makes the committees' failure to advise an automatic approval. If the committees reject the waiver application, the commissioner may not submit it to the federal government. He must modify the application when the committees advise him to do so. If the committees disagree, the bill requires their chairmen to appoint a 6-member conference committee composed of three members from each committee and dictates procedures from there. When submitting the application to the federal government, the bill requires the commissioner to include a complete transcript of the joint committees' proceedings along with the written comments submitted to the committees and during the public comment period. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #7067/Public Act #07-117: AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT AND POWERS OF CONSERVATORS AND SPECIAL LIMITED CONSERVATORS WITH RESPECT TO PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT. This bill specifies that criminal defendants who cannot or will not consent to take psychiatric medication needed to treat their condition are entitled to legal representation in matters involving petitions to subject them to forced medication. It also sets notice and hearing rules governing their involuntary medication proceedings. It also specifies that probate court orders on this issue and on the issue of involuntarily releasing any psychiatric patient's medical records must be supported by clear and convincing evidence. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07. FYI: See H.B.#6391 above.

H.B. #7127/Public Act #07-16: AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSITIONARY RENTAL ASSISTANCE. This bill permits the Social Services (DSS) commissioner to establish priorities for allocating transitionary rental assistance. By law, the transitionary rental assistance program provides up to 12 months of rental assistance for private housing to people leaving the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program who either (1) have income that exceeds the TFA benefit (\$543 per month for a family of three living in most parts of the state) or (2) work at least 12 hours per week. The program is administered within available appropriations. EFFECTIVE Upon Passage.

H.B. #7139: AN ACT INCREASING PENALTIES FOR THE SALE OF CIGARETTES OR TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO MINORS. This bill increases the civil penalties for (1) minors who purchase cigarette or tobacco products and (2) people who sell, give, or deliver the products to them. The bill also authorizes the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) commissioner to investigate allegations of noncompliance with certain notice requirements by dealers and distributors. After doing so, it allows him to refer the case to the state's attorney or impose a civil penalty. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7140/Pulic Act #07-4: AN ACT CONCERNING NOT-FOR-PROFIT ENTITIES AND CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING EVENTS AT WHICH ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR IS SOLD. This bill increases from 4 to 8 the number of one-day liquor permits a charitable organization may obtain in a calendar year. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B #7157/Public Act #07-34: AN ACT CONCERNING STAFF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALZHEIMER'S SPECIAL CARE UNITS AND PROGRAMS. The bill requires Alzheimer's special care units or programs annually to provide at least one hour of Alzheimer's and dementia-specific training to all unlicensed and unregistered staff with in 6 months of date of hire. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7163: AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES AND REVISING THE SCOPE OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE. This bill does many things in Department of Public Health (DPH). Under the bill, a podiatrist cannot engage in independent ankle surgery procedures without receiving a permit from the DPH must develop a process for issuing such permits. Sections 7-9 revises funding provisions for HIV and AIDS services and expands the type of organizations that can receive funds to provide such services and expands service recipients to include people with HIV and those at risk of contracting HIV or AIDS. Currently, agencies receiving DPH funding to provide AIDS tests must give priority to individuals at high risk establish a fee schedule based on ability to pay. The bill eliminates the fee schedule requirement and specifies that the testing is for HIV. Sections 1, 2 and 19-22 make technical corrections to the advance health care directives statutes amended last session. Sections 24-25 amends current law that provides that the alcohol and drug abuse counselor licensure and certification statutes do not apply to the activities of various licensed professionals acting within the scope of their profession, doing work consistent with their training, and not holding themselves out as alcohol and drug counselors. It does so by (1) removing chiropractors, acupuncturists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists from the exempt list; (2) adding professional counselors; and (3) specifying that nurses mean advanced practice registered nurses and registered nurses. It also specifies that the person must be working consistent with his or her license, rather than "training. *Note: The goal, as worked out with DPH and trade associations is to allow qualified professionals, other than just LADC's, to not only supervise employees, but sign off on treatment plans – a glitch in current law.* EFFECTIVE 10/1/07, except for the provisions on physician assistant supervision registration and alcohol and drug counselors which take effect upon passage.

H.B. #7191/Public Act #07-86: AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE STATE-WIDE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM. The State-wide Respite Care Program provides respite care for people with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders, regardless of age, who (1) have annual incomes up to \$30,000 and liquid assets up to \$80,000 and (2) are not covered by Medicaid. This bill allows people under age 65 receiving community Medicaid, which does not provide respite care, to participate in the State-wide Respite Program by changing the people excluded from this program from those covered by Medicaid to those covered by the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE). EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #7217/Public Act #07-158: AN ACT CONCERNING DISCHARGE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR INMATES, RESPONSIBILITY FOR OBTAINING BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES FROM CERTAIN PAROLEES AND DISCHARGE OF MENTALLY ILL PRISONERS. This bill requires the Department of Correction (DOC) to create a discharge savings account for each inmate to accumulate up to \$1,000 payable to the inmate on discharge. This bill also makes DOC responsible for DNA testing of sex offenders, rather than the Board of Pardons and Parole. The bill eliminates an outdated provision requiring referral to the Connecticut Prison Association of a mentally ill male prisoner transferred to a state mental hospital when he is to be released at the end of his sentence. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07, except for the provisions on collecting DNA samples and referrals of mentally ill male prisoners, which are EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7222/Public Act #07-76: AN ACT CONCERNING USE OF UNLICENSED ASSISTIVE PERSONNEL IN RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES. This bill allows unlicensed “assistive personnel” employed in residential care homes to perform limited health-related activities for residents, including: blood pressure and temperature with digital medical instruments under some circumstances; obtain and document a resident’s weight; and to assist residents in using glucose monitors. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7240/Public Act #07-160: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE STATE’S WELFARE REFORM INITIATIVE. This bill makes changes in the state’s welfare-to-work program. It allows the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to run parts of the cash welfare program, Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), using state funds only to help the state avoid federal work participation rate-related penalties. The bill expands the Safety Net program to include families who have complied with the Jobs First program rules. The bill makes specific Department of Labor (DOL) records available for review by the state’s regional workforce investment boards provided the records’ confidentiality is protected and makes specific changes to conform to federal law. EFFECTIVE 7/1/07.

H.B. #7283: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A LONG-TERM CARE INITIATIVE. This bill changes the elimination period under a long-term care (LTC) policy. Under current law, an LTC policy must contain a “reasonable” elimination period (i. e. , a waiting period after the onset of the injury, illness, or function loss during which no benefits are payable). The bill instead requires an elimination period that is (1) up to 100 days of confinement or (2) between 100 days and two years of confinement if an irrevocable trust is in place that is estimated to be sufficient to cover the person’s confinement costs during this period. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.

H.B. #7350/Public Act 07-66: AN ACT CONCERNING IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS. This bill generally prohibits out-of-school suspensions and extends, from 5 to 10 days, the maximum length of in-school suspensions. This bill requires suspensions to be in-school suspensions unless the school administration determines, at the required informal suspension hearing, that the student (1) poses such a danger to persons or property or (2) is so disruptive of the educational process, that he or she must serve the suspension outside of school, and expands in-school suspensions from 5 to 10 day maximum consecutive days. EFFECTIVE 7/1/08.

H.B. #7407: AN ACT CONCERNING A DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP AND THE RIGHTS OF INMATES WITH MENTAL ILLNESS. This bill requires DOC to consider a licensed psychiatrist’s diagnosis to appropriately assess an inmate and provide individualized, clinically appropriate, and culturally competent mental health services to treat the inmate’s condition. This applies if the psychiatrist diagnosed the inmate (1) with a mental illness and (2) as dangerous to himself or herself or others and informed DOC of this current diagnosis. Collaboration with the Judicial Branch , departments of Social Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services, as necessary and within available appropriations, before planned release, to assist the inmate in obtaining housing, mental health treatment services, public benefits, and employment counseling on release. Custodial staff will be given mandatory mental health training, within available appropriations. The DOC commissioner must to report to the Appropriations, Judiciary, and Public Health committees by 2/1 annually with (1) the number of inmates requiring mental health services in the previous calendar year and (2) a description of the services provided by DOC and contracted health care providers, if applicable. EFFECTIVE 10/1/07.