

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2647

As Passed House:
February 17, 2014

Title: An act relating to electronic timekeeping for in-home personal care or respite services.

Brief Description: Concerning electronic timekeeping for in-home personal care or respite services.

Sponsors: Representatives Jinkins, Harris, Tharinger, Cody, Morrell and Freeman; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health & Human Services: 2/6/14 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/14, 95-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Social and Health Services to establish exemptions to electronic timekeeping requirements for home care agencies to address situations in which a landline is not available.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Morrell, Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Cody, Green, G. Hunt, Kagi, Ormsby, Ross, Schmick and Tharinger.

Staff: James Kettel (786-7123).

Background:

Home care agencies provide home care services to individuals in their places of residence. Home care services are nonmedical services and assistance provided to ill, disabled, or vulnerable individuals to allow them to remain in their residences. These services include

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personal care for the individual, homemaker assistance with household tasks, respite care assistance and support for the family, and other nonmedical services or delegated nursing tasks.

Starting July 1, 2010, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has been prohibited from paying a home care agency for in-home personal care or respite services if the home care agency does not verify the agency employee hours by electronic timekeeping. The 2013-15 State Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act authorized the DSHS to establish exemptions to electronic timekeeping requirements for home care agencies to address situations in which a landline is not available.

Summary of Bill:

The authority to establish exemptions to electronic timekeeping requirements for home care agencies, in situations in which a landline is not available, is made permanent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) One hundred percent of home care agencies have adopted electronic timekeeping. Agencies also have an alternative method for documenting hours when electronic timekeeping is not available. The alternative method is used in rare circumstances. If a client does not have a landline available, a client has immediate personal care needs, or a work shift begins somewhere other than the home, the alternate method of electronic timekeeping is needed. A proviso in the 2013-15 budget has provided the flexibility to create an exemption to the electronic timekeeping requirement. This bill makes the exemption permanent. Whether the exemption happens through the proviso, or through this bill, it is important. Otherwise, the DSHS is at risk of audit findings.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Jinkins, prime sponsor; Bill Moss, Department of Social and Health Services; Peter Nazzel, Catholic Community Services; Steve Breaux, Service Employees International Union 775; and Jerry Reilly, Elder Care Alliance.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Marcela Diaz, Sea Mar Community Health Center.