



Lifespan

Delivering health with care.

Government Relations

245 Chapman Street
Suite 200
Providence, RI 02905

Tel 401 444-3720
Fax 401 444-6471
Email dbalasco@lifespan.org

David A. Balasco, Esq.
Vice President

March 1, 2021

Representative Evan Shanley
Chairman
House State Government and Elections Committee
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 5486, An Act Relating to Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals – Employee Criminal Records Check

Dear Chairman Shanley:

On behalf of the Lifespan affiliated hospitals, I respectfully urge the House Committee on State Government and Elections to support ***H 5486, An Act Relating to Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals – Employee Criminal Records Check***. Lifespan sought introduction of this legislation to authorize the Attorney General’s office to conduct mandated nationwide criminal records check for those seeking employment within our facilities licensed by the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH).

Under our current statute, these prospective employees are required to seek background checks only by the state police or local police departments. Unfortunately, many of these departments do not have the resources to allow for fingerprinting and background checks to be conducted on a regular schedule. This delays the prospective employee an opportunity to “on-board” into their new position, sometimes from three to five weeks or more, until the background check can be completed. Such delays in the start date of a new hire can result in deferment of program implementation or staffing shortages that requires overtime to fill those shifts.

By allowing the Attorney General’s office the authority to expand background checks to this classification of employees, the legislation will improve hiring times and reduce resource strain on the state and local police. Lifespan has on average, approximately 150 applicants requiring this background check annually.

Future employees can start jobs faster and Lifespan can expect new hires to fill positions more quickly and efficiently with the addition of the Attorney General’s office and its new BCI location to those authorized to perform criminal background checks.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill and for your consideration of our concerns.
Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Balasco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent and the last name "Balasco" following in a similar style.

David Balasco, Esq.

Vice President, Government Relations