

Testimony
Senate Bill 2109 – Department of Human Services
Senate Human Services Committee
Senator Judy Lee, Chairman
January 10, 2007

Chairman Lee, members of the Human Services Committee, I am Barbara Fischer, Assistant Director of Budget and Operations, of the Department of Human Services.

This bill removes the language that requires renewal of the basic care and nursing facility moratoriums. In essence, it makes both moratoriums permanent unless decided differently by future Legislative Assemblies.

Currently, there are two exceptions to the Basic Care Bed Moratorium, which are: (1) a nursing facility may convert bed capacity to basic care beds; and (2) or an entity can demonstrate the need to the Department of Health, and to the Department of Human Services. To demonstrate a need, the facility must show that occupancy within a 50-mile radius at existing basic care facilities is at or above 90 percent.

The Department is proposing additional language that would provide a preference to basic care facilities that propose to serve a minimum number of Medicaid-eligible individuals. We are requesting this language as the most recent requests for additional Basic Care beds have primarily come from facilities who do not intend to serve Medicaid clients. We are concerned that if this continues, access to Basic Care services for Medicaid clients would be greatly diminished. This new section is also the reason the Department has requested an Emergency Clause, as we would

like to be able to enforce this, should any new Basic Care Bed applications are submitted between passage of this bill and August 1, 2007.

I would happy to address any questions that you may have.