

1 H.639

2 Introduced by Representative Till of Jericho

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Health; hospital licensing; congenital heart defect screening

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require
7 birthing facilities licensed by the State to perform a critical congenital heart
8 defect screening using pulse oximetry on every newborn in its care.

9 An act relating to pulse oximetry to screen newborns for congenital heart
10 defects

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

13 The General Assembly finds that:

14 (1) Congenital heart defects are structural abnormalities of the heart that
15 are present at birth and range in severity from holes between chambers of the
16 heart to more severe malformations, such as the complete absence of one or
17 more chambers or valves. Some critical congenital heart defects can cause
18 severe and life-threatening symptoms that require intervention within the first
19 days of life.

1 (2) Congenital heart defects are the number one killer of infants with
2 birth defects.

3 (3) According to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services’
4 Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children,
5 congenital heart disease affects approximately seven to nine of every 1,000
6 live births in the United States and Europe.

7 (4) The cost of care for individuals with congenital heart disease
8 amounted to \$1.9 billion in 2011.

9 (5) While prenatal ultrasound screening and repeated clinical
10 examinations can detect and identify newborns with congenital heart defects,
11 these methods alone identify less than half of all cases.

12 (6) Pulse oximetry is a noninvasive test that estimates the percentage of
13 hemoglobin in blood that is saturated with oxygen. When pulse oximetry is
14 performed on newborns it is effective at detecting life-threatening congenital
15 heart defects that would otherwise go unnoticed.

16 (7) Newborns with abnormal pulse oximetry results require immediate
17 confirmatory testing and intervention. Many newborn lives could be saved by
18 earlier detection and treatment of congenital heart defects if the State required
19 licensed birthing facilities to perform pulse oximetry on newborns prior to
20 discharge.

1 Sec. 2. 18 V.S.A. § 1905 is amended to read:

2 § 1905. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

3 Upon receipt of an application for license and the license fee, the licensing
4 agency shall issue a license when it determines that the applicant and hospital
5 facilities meet the following minimum standards:

6 * * *

7 (7)(A) The care of maternity patients and ~~newborn~~ newborns shall
8 comply with such reasonable regulations as the licensing agency may establish
9 and thereafter modify in the public interest.

10 (B) Any inpatient birthing facility or ambulatory health care facility
11 licensed to provide birthing services and newborn care shall perform a critical
12 congenital heart defect screening using pulse oximetry on every newborn in its
13 care prior to discharge from the facility.

14 * * *

15 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

16 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.