



Haine supports measure to ensure nursing homes aren't punished for state's mistakes

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SPRINGFIELD – State Senator Bill Haine (D-Alton) co-sponsored and spoke adamantly in support of a measure passed by the Illinois Senate that will allow patients who have waited more than 45 days to determine their Medicaid status to become provisionally eligible.

Haine co-sponsored the legislation after hearing dozens of complaints from frustrated constituents who experienced significant delays in getting their Medicaid status approved.

Federal law requires the state to make this determination in less than 45 days, but in Illinois many patients have been callously forced to wait several months, and in some cases even up to a year.

The bulk of pending eligibility applications are for residents in long term care, such as nursing homes. Currently there are 4,500 long-term care Medicaid applications pending over 90 days.

In 2016, Haine even hosted a meeting with local nursing homes, the Office of the Inspector General and the Department of Human Services to find a solution to prevent these delays. While the delays have somewhat improved, it is not fully solved.

In the meantime, many nursing homes have been forced to cover these costs while the applications are pending, creating extreme financial strain and even resulting in the shutdown of some homes.

“The failure of the state to process these applications in a timely fashion has caused unnecessary hardship on patients and families that rely on nursing homes to take care of

their loved ones,” Haine said. “This legislation will force these agencies to work together on behalf of these citizens and their family members.”

The legislation, Senate Bill 2913, has passed both chambers of the General Assembly and will soon be considered by the governor.