SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1239 FILED ON: 1/14/2009

SENATE . . . . . No. 445

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act relative to prescription drug voice synthesizers..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 175 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 47W the following section:-

Section 47X. For the purposes of this section, the following word shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly otherwise requires:

"voice synthesizer", a product that attaches to bottles and or reads electronically a code on the label of a prescription which verbally then converts the textual information encoded by a screen-reader and feeds it to the soundcard for oral reproduction.

Any blanket or general policy of insurance described in subdivision (A), (C) or (D) of section 110 which provides prescription drug insurance, which is delivered or issued for delivery or subsequently renewed by agreement between the insurer and the policyholder within or without the commonwealth shall provide coverage for the expense of a medially prescribed voice-synthesizer used in connection with a container that would provide audible information of

a prescription for use by a person who is legally blind or visually impaired. The policy holder shall be responsible for returning the container to a pharmacist for refill.

SECTION 2. The Commissioner of the Division of Insurance shall adopt regulations to implement and provide information of Chapter 147 Section 47X of the General Laws within 90 days of its effective date.

SECTION 3. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, an individual, public or private institution, business or other organization that regularly and primarily provides a service to a disabled person shall inform the disabled person of the availability of the voice synthesizer referred to in section 47X of chapter 175 of the General Laws.