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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 6653**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTHY HOMES.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Housing (DOH), by January 1, 2022, to establish a pilot program that provides at least 500 residential dwellings with (1) energy efficiency retrofits (e.g., retrofitting existing HVAC systems) and (2) residential improvements that reduce health and safety hazards found in these dwellings, such as the removal, remediation, and abatement of lead, radon, or other contaminants. The program ends on December 31, 2031.

Under the bill, the pilot program is funded through the Healthy Homes Fund (see BACKGROUND). The bill requires the DOH commissioner, beginning on January 1, 2022, and annually after that until the program ends, to spend \$500,000 from the fund for the program and any related administrative expenses. These expenses may include hiring employees and entering into contracts.

The bill also requires the DOH commissioner to report on the pilot program's status and expenditures to the Appropriations, Housing, Energy and Technology, and Planning and Development committees. The commissioner must do this annually starting by January 1, 2023, until the pilot program ends.

Lastly, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

#### **PILOT PROGRAM**

##### ***Purpose***

Under the bill, the pilot program must annually provide at least 500 residential dwellings with:

1. energy efficient retrofits, including retrofitting existing heating, ventilation, or air conditioning systems; and
2. residential improvements that reduce health and safety hazards in these dwellings, including the removal, remediation, and abatement of lead, radon, and other contaminants.

The bill requires energy efficiency retrofits to be consistent with guidelines in the Conservation and Load Management Plan that electric companies, in coordination with gas companies, submit to the Energy Conservation Management Board under existing law.

### ***Contracts and Employees***

The bill also authorizes the DOH commissioner to contract with nonprofit organizations to hire in-home environmental assessors to perform the energy efficiency retrofits and residential improvements described above.

To qualify for this employment, an in-home environmental assessor must:

1. for energy efficient retrofits, (a) be certified to perform these retrofits by a nationally recognized certifying organization or (b) have earned a certificate in energy retrofits, in-home environmental assessments, or a related field from an accredited higher education institution, or
2. for residential improvements to reduce health and safety hazards, (a) be certified to remove, remediate, or abate these hazards by a nationally recognized certifying organization or (b) have earned a certificate in the removal, remediation, or abatement of these hazards, or a related field, from an accredited higher education institution.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### ***Healthy Homes Fund***

By law, the Healthy Homes Fund is a separate nonlapsing General Fund account used to support (1) the Crumbling Foundations

Assistance Fund, which assists homeowners with concrete foundations damaged by pyrrhotite (i.e., crumbling foundations); (2) homes with structure subsidence or water damage in New Haven and Woodbridge; and (3) DOH lead removal, remediation, and abatement activities. The fund is capitalized by revenue from an annual \$12 surcharge on certain homeowners' insurance policies.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 31 Nay 2 (03/26/2021)