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## OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 881

### **AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.**

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BACKGROUND

**SUMMARY**

This bill creates new programs and policies affecting workforce training, postsecondary education, and public transportation as part of a statewide workforce strategy.

Among other things, the bill creates a new Office of Workforce Strategy to develop a statewide workforce strategy and coordinate the (1) funding of workforce training programs and (2) measurement and evaluation of education and workforce development program outcomes. It also tasks the Office of Higher Education (OHE) with creating a database of credentials offered in Connecticut to promote degrees, certificates, certifications, government licenses,

apprenticeships, and job training programs. The bill also adjusts various reporting requirements by higher education institutions and employers to inform the statewide workforce strategy.

The bill also creates a new bulk pass, reduced-rate public transportation program for riders affiliated with certain education and employment training programs (i.e., employees, clients, students, or customers of a training program, alternate route to certification program provider, higher education institution, private occupational school, employer, state or municipal agency, and public nonprofit social service provider).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021, unless otherwise noted below.

### **§§ 1 & 41-50 — OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

*Eliminates OWC and replaces it with a new OWS, headed by a chief workforce officer; generally transfers to the chief workforce officer the workforce development-related functions and duties currently assigned to the labor commissioner and OWC; and establishes additional duties and reporting requirements*

The bill eliminates the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) within the Department of Labor (DOL) and replaces it with a new Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS). The bill places OWS within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for administrative purposes only.

Under the bill, OWS is headed by a chief workforce officer appointed by the governor with confirmation by both the House and Senate. The governor must appoint someone (1) knowledgeable about public sector workforce training programs and (2) with the training and experience to perform the duties described below. The chief workforce officer reports directly to the governor. The bill transfers to the chief workforce officer the workforce development-related functions and duties that are currently assigned to the labor commissioner and OWC, including those described below.

It also makes conforming changes (§§ 57-66).

#### ***Chief Workforce Officer's Functions and Duties***

***Lead Official and Principal Advisor on Workforce Policy.*** Under

current law, DOL serves as the lead state agency for developing employment and training strategies and initiatives needed to support Connecticut's position in the knowledge economy. The DOL commissioner, with OWC's assistance, serves as the governor's principal workforce development policy advisor and the liaison with local, state, and federal workforce development agencies. He coordinates (1) the state's implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (see BACKGROUND) and (2) state agencies' workforce development activities.

The bill generally transfers these functions and duties to the chief workforce officer, designating him or her as the (1) lead state official for developing employment and training strategies and initiatives and (2) governor's principal advisor for workforce development policy, strategy, and coordination. The bill requires the chief workforce officer to coordinate the state plan, budget, and implementation of WIOA and issue guidance to this effect. He or she must do so on behalf of the governor and Governor's Workforce Council (i.e., currently, also known as the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC); see §§ 17-40 & 51-56 below), and in consultation with the DOL commissioner, who must offer any resources he can make available for this purpose.

Under the bill, the chief workforce officer must additionally serve as the liaison with the Governor's Workforce Council and regional workforce development entities.

**Workforce Cabinet.** The bill requires the chief workforce officer to chair a Workforce Cabinet comprising the state agencies involved in employment and training. (Existing law requires the governor to designate these agencies and requires their department heads to annually report specified information on the programs offered.) The bill requires the Workforce Cabinet to meet at the direction of the governor or chief workforce officer.

**Governor's Workforce Council.** OWS must (1) provide staff

support, and any other resources the chief workforce officer can make available, to the Governor's Workforce Council and (2) coordinate all necessary support that the council may need and that other state agencies make available.

**State Workforce Strategy.** The bill requires the chief workforce officer to develop a state workforce strategy and update it as necessary. The strategy must be developed in consultation with the Governor's Workforce Council and the Workforce Cabinet and approved by the governor.

**State and WIOA-Funded Programs.** Under the bill, the chief workforce officer must coordinate and align (1) each workforce development activity funded by the state through WIOA funds and (2) any state grant programs administered by, or in collaboration with, a state agency to further the goals and outcomes of the state workforce strategy and the Governor's Workforce Council's workforce development plan.

**Public, Legislative, and Local Official Involvement.** The bill transfers to the chief workforce officer the requirement to establish systems to ensure the maximum involvement of the public, legislature, and local officials in workforce development policy, strategy, and coordination. In doing so, it eliminates the current requirement that this involvement extend to the state's implementation of WIOA.

**Contractual Agreements.** The bill transfers to the chief workforce officer the authorization to enter into contractual agreements to carry out OWS's purposes, but it requires him or her to do so in conjunction with one or more state agencies and with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary's approval.

**Agency Guidance.** The bill requires the chief workforce officer to (1) issue guidance to state agencies, the Governor's Workforce Council, and regional workforce development boards to further the state workforce strategy and (2) consult with these entities on its implementation. This guidance must (1) comply with state and federal laws, (2) be approved by the OPM secretary, and (3) take effect at least

14 days after OPM approves it.

**Other Duties.** The chief workforce officer must also:

1. collaborate with the regional workforce development boards to adapt the best practices for workforce development for statewide implementation, if possible;
2. together with state agencies, including DOL, the State Department of Education (SDE), and OPM, coordinate the measurement and evaluation of education and workforce development program outcomes;
3. review the WIOA state plan (which outlines Connecticut's four-year workforce development strategy) for each of the workforce development system's core programs, before the plan is submitted to the governor;
4. market and communicate the state workforce strategy to ensure maximum engagement with students, trainees, job seekers, and businesses, and elevate the state's national workforce profile;
5. identify subject areas, courses, curriculum, content, and programs that may be offered to students in primary and secondary school to improve student outcomes and meet the state's workforce needs (for identifying academic programs for which private sector specialists may donate their teaching services under existing law); and
6. in consultation with DOL, coordinate with regional workforce development boards and community action agencies to ensure compliance with state and federal laws in order to expand the service capabilities of programs offered under WIOA and the U.S. DOL's American Job Center system.

**Workforce Data**

Current law authorizes DOL, with OWC's assistance, to ask any state office, department, board, commission, or agency to provide

reports, information, and assistance that is necessary or appropriate for DOL to carry out its duties and requirements. The bill (1) transfers this authorization to the chief workforce officer; (2) expands it by allowing him or her to request data, in addition to reports, information, and assistance, from these agencies and entities; and (3) explicitly allows the officer to make the requests to public colleges and universities. However, the bill requires that any data requests from an agency participating in CP20 WIN be submitted through CP20 WIN according to its established policies and procedures (see BACKGROUND).

### ***Annual Report to the Legislature***

Each year, beginning by October 1, 2022, the bill requires the chief workforce officer to submit a report on the states' workforce development to the governor and Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Education, Commerce, and Labor and Public Employees committees. At a minimum, the report must include information on OWS's programs and the number, demographics, and outcomes of people they serve.

The bill also eliminates the current requirement that DOL annually report to the legislature on its two- and five-year forecast of workforce shortages by occupation.

## **§ 2 — CAREERCONNECT ACCOUNT**

*Establishes a new CareerConneCT account in the General Fund to fund workforce training programs; requires the chief workforce officer to report to the legislature and governor on these programs and the individuals they served*

The bill establishes the "CareerConneCT account" as a separate, nonlapsing General Fund account and requires DECD to use it to fund workforce training programs that OWS recommends. The bill requires the account to contain any moneys the law requires to be deposited in it. (SB 887 of the current session authorizes \$20 million in general obligation bonds in each year of the next biennium for CareerConneCT workforce training programs.)

Under the bill, the chief workforce officer, in coordination with the DOL commissioner and regional workforce development boards, must ensure that participants in any workforce training program funded

through the CareerConneCT account also enroll in any federally funded workforce development program.

Annually, beginning by October 1, 2022, and ending October 1, 2024, the chief workforce officer must report to the governor and Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Education, Commerce, Labor and Public Employees committees on the workforce training programs funded through this account. The report must, at a minimum, provide information on the number, demographics, and outcomes of the individuals served by these programs.

### **§§ 3 & 4 — CREDENTIALS DATABASE**

*Requires OHE to create a database of the credentials offered in Connecticut; beginning by July 1, 2024, requires specified institutions and training providers to submit information about the credentials they offer to be included in the database; requires OWS to establish standards to designate certain credentials as “credentials of value”*

#### ***Credentials Database***

By January 1, 2023, OHE’s executive director, in consultation with the advisory council described below, must create a database of the credentials offered in Connecticut. Under the bill, a “credential” is a documented award issued by an authorized body. It includes the following:

1. degrees or certificates awarded by colleges and universities, private occupational schools, or State Board of Education (SBE)-approved alternate route to certification (ARC) program providers;
2. certifications awarded through an examination process designed to demonstrate that an individual has the knowledge, skill, and ability to perform a specific job;
3. government licenses that allow someone to practice a specific occupation based on predetermined qualifications; and
4. documented completion of an apprenticeship or job training program.

The database must explain the skills and competencies earned

through a credential in uniform terms and plain language. In creating the database, the executive director must use the (1) minimum data policy established by the New England Board of Higher Education's (NEBHE) High Value Credentials for New England initiative and (2) uniform terms, descriptions, and standards for comparing and linking credentials in Credential Engine's Credential Transparency Description Language-Achievement Standards Network (see BACKGROUND).

The database must, at a minimum, include the following data for each credential:

1. name and type of credential being offered and its credential status type (i.e., active, deprecated, probationary, or superseded);
2. entity that owns or offers the credential;
3. a short description of the credential and the language in which it is offered;
4. a website that provides related information;
5. estimated cost and duration for completion;
6. the industry related to the credential, which may include its code under the North American Industry Classification System;
7. the occupation related to the credential (e.g., its North American Industry Classification code or U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics standard occupational classification system code); and
8. a listing of online or physical locations where it is offered.

***Advisory Council***

The bill establishes a council to advise the OHE executive director on the database's implementation. The advisory council must include the state's chief data officer and representatives from OWS, OHE, OPM, DOL, SDE, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities,

UConn, and independent higher education institutions. The chief workforce officer, chief data officer, and OHE executive director, or their designees, must cochair the council, appoint its members, and schedule meetings.

***Requirement to Submit Credential Information***

Annually, beginning by July 1, 2024, the bill requires specified institutions and training providers to submit information about the credentials they offer to be included in the database. Specifically, this requirement applies to each higher education institution, private occupational school, SBE-approved ARC program provider, and training program provider listed on DOL’s Eligible Training Provider List, excluding any state agencies or departments.

Each of these entities must submit the information in the form and manner the OHE executive director prescribes, including the data described above. Higher education institutions, however, may omit the industry code data for any credentials for which it is not applicable.

The bill also authorizes DOL, in consultation with the advisory council, to require any pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship program sponsor to submit information about its program to OHE for inclusion in the database.

***Credentials of Value***

The bill requires OWS to establish standards to designate certain credentials as “credentials of value.” These standards may include (1) meeting the workforce needs of Connecticut’s employers, (2) enrollment and completion rates, (3) net cost, (4) whether the credential transfers to or stacks onto another credential of value, (5) duration until completion, and (6) types of employment opportunities and earnings available upon completion.

OWS must compile and annually update its list of credentials of value and include it in the database.

**§§ 5 & 6 — HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVALS**

*Allows eligible higher education institutions to apply to OWS for additional program approval exemptions beyond those allowed under current law; terminates reporting requirements for BOR and BOT on new programs and program changes they approve for their respective institutions*

Current law exempts qualifying independent colleges and universities from OHE's approval process for up to 12 new higher education programs per academic year and any modifications to their existing programs. Institutions qualify for this exemption if they:

1. are eligible to participate in the Federal Family Education Loan program;
2. have a financial responsibility score of at least 1.5, as determined by the U.S. Department of Education (this score reflects the overall relative financial health of institutions); and
3. have been located in Connecticut and accredited as a degree-granting institution in good standing for at least 10 years by a federally recognized regional accrediting association.

The bill allows these eligible institutions to apply to OWS for additional exemptions beyond the 12 per academic year allowed under current law. OWS may waive the program approval requirement for any new program if it determines that the program aligns with and furthers the goals of the state workforce strategy approved by the governor.

The bill terminates, on June 30, 2024, the requirement that these exempt institutions annually file with OHE a list and description of any new programs introduced, and any existing programs discontinued, in the preceding academic year. As under existing law, the institutions must continue to annually file their (1) program approval process and all actions their respective governing boards took concerning new program approvals, and (2) financial responsibility composite score.

The bill also terminates, as of June 30, 2024, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and UConn Board of Trustees (BOT) reports to OHE on the new programs and program changes they approved. (In

doing so, however, it retains an existing requirement that BOR notify OHE of new and modified programs.) By law, BOR reviews and approves recommendations to establish new academic programs for the universities within the Connecticut State University System, the community colleges, and Charter Oak State College, and BOT does so for UConn.

## **§ 7 — PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOL AND ARC PROGRAM STUDENT DATA**

*Requires each private occupational school and ARC program provider to submit specified data to OHE on each of their enrolled students; prohibits OHE from releasing to the public any of this identifiable student information*

By January 1, 2023, the bill requires each private occupational school and SBE-approved ARC program provider to submit to OHE specified data on each of their enrolled students. The data must include course enrollment; course and credential completion; fees and tuition charged; federal student loans received; federal student loan balances; and state-assigned student identifiers, if applicable. (By law, SDE assigns a unique student identifier to each student to track his or her performance in the public school information system.) The schools and providers must submit this data in the form and manner OHE prescribes.

The bill prohibits OHE from releasing to the public any identifiable student information provided by these schools and providers. OHE must establish policies to protect this information as if it were protected student data subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

## **§ 8 — QUARTERLY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYERS**

*Requires employers subject to the state's unemployment law to report certain data about each employee in their quarterly wage reports to DOL; requires personally identifiable employee data to be kept confidential, but allows nonidentifiable data to be shared for specified purposes*

### ***Expanded Reporting Requirement***

The bill requires employers subject to the state's unemployment law to report specified data about each employee in their quarterly wage reports to DOL. Specifically, employers must report the following data

for each employee:

1. gender identity, age, race, ethnicity, veteran status, disability status, and highest education completed;
2. home address and address of primary work site;
3. occupational code under the BLS standard occupational classification system;
4. hours and days worked and salary or hourly wage; and
5. employment start date in the current job title and, if applicable, employment end date.

The DOL commission may issue guidance defining each of these data fields. The bill phases in these reporting requirements, based on the employer's number of employees, as follows:

1. beginning with the third quarter of 2024 for employers with 100 or more employees;
2. beginning with the third quarter of 2025 for employers with 99 or fewer employees, except as provided below; and
3. beginning in the third quarter of 2027 for employers with 49 or fewer employees that do not have an electronic payroll system.

The bill states that these provisions may not be construed to require employees to provide information on their gender identity, age, race, ethnicity, or veteran or disability status, if these disclosures are not otherwise required by law.

### ***Electronic Report Submissions and Waivers***

The bill allows employers to request a waiver from the electronic reporting requirement for the employee data described above, just as existing law allows them to do for electronic wage reports and reimbursements. As under existing law, employers, or their agents, may submit a written request for a waiver on a DOL-prescribed form

at least 30 days before the report is due. The DOL commissioner must grant the request if, based on the information the employer or agent submits, he finds that the requirement would cause an undue hardship. The commissioner must promptly notify the employer or agent of his decision, which cannot be further reviewed or appealed. A waiver is good for one year.

The bill also makes a minor change to the electronic reporting requirement for the quarterly wage reports.

### ***Confidentiality of Employee Data***

The bill prohibits the DOL commissioner from releasing to the public any identifiable employee information provided by employers under the bill's reporting requirement. But it allows him or the department to share nonidentifiable information (1) with another state agency, state or territory, or the federal government, or (2) to support a CP20 WIN data request, submitted according to CP20 WIN's policies and procedures, for program administration, audit, evaluation, or research purposes.

## **§ 9 — DISCLOSURE OF TAX RETURN INFORMATION FOR CP20 WIN DATA REQUESTS**

*Authorizes DRS to release tax return information for evaluation or research purposes under specified conditions*

The bill authorizes the Department of Revenue Services (DRS) commissioner, to the extent allowed by federal law, to disclose tax return information for evaluation or research purposes to (1) another state agency or (2) support a data request submitted through CP20 WIN, in accordance with CP20 WIN's policies and procedures.

By law, "return information" includes:

1. a taxpayer's identity;
2. the nature, source, or amount of the taxpayer's income, payments, receipts, deductions, exemptions, credits, assets, liabilities, net worth, tax liability, tax collected or withheld, tax under- or over-reportings, or tax payments; and

3. any other data received, recorded, prepared, or collected by or furnished to the DRS commissioner regarding (a) a return or (b) a determination of liability for a tax, penalty, interest, fine, forfeiture, or other imposition or offense (CGS § 12-15(h)(2)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

## **§ 10 — RECORDS PROTECTION FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS**

*Prohibits the sharing of student financial aid applications with federal immigration authorities*

The bill prohibits several individuals and entities from sharing, disclosing, or otherwise making accessible to any federal immigration authority records or information obtained from an institutional aid application for undocumented students. These individuals and entities are officers, employees, or agents of a department, board, commission, public higher education institution, or any other state agency; or any officer, employee, or agent of a local or regional board of education.

## **§ 11 — CTPASS PROGRAM**

*Establishes the Ctpass program by January 1, 2022, to allow certain individuals in an approved class to use certain public transit services for free or at low cost*

The bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to establish the Ctpass program by January 1, 2022, to allow certain individuals in an approved class to use certain public transit services without cost or at low cost. These individuals are employees, clients, students, or customers of a training program, alternate route to certification program provider, higher education institution, private occupational school, employer, state or municipal agency, and public nonprofit social service provider. DOT must post information regarding the program on its website in a manner that, in the commissioner's view, will maximize awareness and participation by the greatest number of eligible organizations.

Under the bill, these eligible organizations may submit to the DOT commissioner an application to participate in Ctpass. The commissioner may then negotiate terms and conditions and enter into a contract with the organization. The terms and conditions must

include (1) the amount of compensation or reimbursement required from the eligible organization, (2) the definition of approved class specific to the eligible organization, and (3) any limitations on times of use or types of public transit services available to the approved class. The compensation or reimbursement negotiated in the contract must be in an amount that the commissioner finds necessary or advisable, as long as it ensures that DOT's transit service expenditures do not increase due to administrative costs incurred operating the program.

The bill requires that a contract under the CTpass program be valid upon OPM's approval for a maximum two-year term; however, the first contract with an eligible organization must not exceed 12 months. Before renewing a contract with an eligible operator, the DOT commissioner must consider the following to re-evaluate the required compensation or reimbursement amount: (1) prior pass usage information and (2) any transit services expenditure increases incurred by DOT. The bill allows the commissioner to treat several eligible operators as a single eligible organization for contract purposes under the program.

By January 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the bill requires the DOT commissioner to report to the OPM secretary on the financial data and pass usage information for each contract under the CTpass program.

### **§§ 12 & 13 — CHESLA LOAN AND AWARD ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT**

*Allows certain students or their parents to take out student loans and receive certain financial aid with CHESLA to enroll in certificate programs and requires CHESLA to establish an account to fund and operate certain loans*

The bill allows (1) students enrolled in a Connecticut "high-value certificate program" or their parents to take out student loans with the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) and (2) these students to receive grants, scholarships, fellowships, or other non-repayable assistance from CHESLA. Under the bill, a "high value certificate program" is a non-credit, subbaccalaureate certificate program offered by a higher education institution or a private occupational school that OWS designates as a

“credential of value” (see § 4). A “Connecticut high-value certificate program” is a high-value certificate program offered by a higher education institution or private occupational school in the state.

Additionally, the bill requires CHESLA to establish the Certificate Loan Loss Reserve and Funding account. This separate, nonlapsing account must contain any funds required by law to be deposited in it, including state appropriations or bonds sale proceeds. CHESLA must spend these funds to (1) fund loans that it issues to a borrower to finance Connecticut high-value certificate program enrollment, (2) cover any losses CHESLA incurs from issuing these loans and reasonable and necessary expenses for administering these loans, and (3) cover any initial implementation expenses before the loans’ origination.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021, for the CHESLA account provision and October 1, 2022, for the loan provision.

#### **§ 14 — CREDENTIALS AND SKILLS REPORT**

*Requires the chief workforce officer to submit a biennial report on certain credentials and skills, starting by September 1, 2022*

By September 1, 2022, and biennially thereafter until September 1, 2028, the bill requires the chief workforce officer to submit to the governor and BOR a report on in-demand credentials and skills that lead to quality jobs.

#### **§ 15 — WORKFORCE TRAINING AND CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

*Requires the chief workforce officer, correction and labor commissioners, and OPM undersecretary for criminal justice, to report their recommendations for improving workforce training and credential attainment for incarcerated individuals*

By February 1, 2023, the bill requires the chief workforce officer, together with the correction and labor commissioners and OPM undersecretary for criminal justice, to report on recommendations to improve workforce training and credential attainment for individuals incarcerated by the Department of Correction. They must (1) recommend whether credential attainment should be a factor for early release and (2) identify in-demand credentials and skills that lead to

quality jobs and any barriers to equitably accessing those jobs.

They must submit the report to the governor, OPM secretary, and the Judiciary, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Labor, and Commerce committees.

## **§ 16 — FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT EXEMPTIONS**

*Exempts specified student and employee records from disclosure under FOIA*

The bill exempts the following from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA):

1. any information reported to an executive branch agency by a higher education institution, private occupational school, or other training or certificate program providers about applicants or enrolled students, including enrollment, program completion, student loan, or other financial aid information;
2. any employee information provided to DOL by an employer under the bill's expanded quarterly reporting requirement (see § 8);
3. FAFSA records or information;
4. any records pertaining to institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status; and
5. admission applications to higher education institutions held by any department, board, commission, public college or university, state agency, or board of education and any materials that are not otherwise protected from disclosure under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

## **§§ 17-40 & 51-56 — GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL**

*Renames the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission the Governor's Workforce Council*

The bill renames the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) the Governor's Workforce Council, thus aligning the statutes to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 4. It makes

related conforming changes throughout the statutes.

Executive Order No. 4, signed by the governor on October 29, 2019, requires CETC to also be known at the Governor’s Workforce Council and, among other things, designates the council as the governor’s principal advisor on workforce development issues. It required the council to convene a group of stakeholders and review and report on the state’s workforce development system.

## **§§ 57 & 58 — REPEALERS**

*Repeals certain laws on certificate programs*

The bill repeals the following laws about certificate programs:

1. definitions related to the programs (CGS § 10a-57a);
2. requirements for higher education institutions and private occupational schools to submit, collect, and compile data about certificate programs (CGS § 10a-57b);
3. the requirement that OHE develop and post online a one-page fact sheet for each subbaccalaureate certificate program offered by each higher education institution and private occupational school in the state (CGS § 10a-57c);
4. the requirement that OHE annually review a sample of student data for all for-credit and noncredit subbaccalaureate certificate programs offered by higher education institutions and private occupational schools (CGS § 10a-57e); and
5. the requirement that BOR formulate written definitions for all subbaccalaureate certificates earned on a for-credit or noncredit basis and awarded by Connecticut higher education institutions and private occupational schools (PA 16-44, § 3).

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Legislative History***

The Senate referred the bill (File 327) to the Education Committee, which reported a substitute that removed the following provisions

from the bill:

1. requiring reports from certain school districts explaining their decision not to utilize the community eligibility provision of the National School Lunch Program;
2. creating new contents and sharing requirements for student success plans;
3. adding computer science to the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subject listings in the public high school graduation requirements;
4. establishing new parameters for student placement in high-level courses by boards of education;
5. creating a pilot program that allows student enrollment in UConn early college experience courses without prerequisites;
6. requiring each board of education to adopt a challenging curriculum policy for K-12 students;
7. requiring completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as a condition for high school graduation;
8. increasing the number of credits required to earn an adult education diploma;
9. raising the age when a student may withdraw from high school;
10. requiring the education commissioner and OWS to recommend strategies to state agencies, boards, and legislative committees to encourage students to pursue postsecondary education;
11. requiring boards of education to update their weighted grading policies;
12. creating the Connecticut Automatic Admissions Program for admission to the four Connecticut state universities; and

13. requiring boards of education to calculate a grade point average and class rank percentile for grade 11 students using a uniform, BOR-approved method to determine eligibility for the automatic admissions program.

### ***Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)***

WIOA provides federal funds to states for a range of career services, job training, education, and related services and supports. It authorizes six core programs, including the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. The law requires each state to submit a state plan that outlines a four-year strategy for the state's workforce development system.

### ***CP20 WIN***

CP20 WIN (i.e., the Connecticut Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network) provides a framework and mechanism for securely sharing longitudinal data across participating agencies. It is designed to provide information to education, workforce, and agency staff and leaders to help improve education and workforce outcomes.

Requests for data from CP20 WIN must be for conducting an audit or evaluation of a federally or state-funded education program and benefit a local or state education authority or agency. Requests must also comply with existing state and federal limitations on sharing education and unemployment wage data.

### ***NEBHE's High Value Credentials for New England***

NEBHE's High Value Credentials for New England initiative was designed to provide individuals, institutions, policymakers, and employers with the tools to compare and evaluate credential programs and understand the skills and competencies obtained by earning a credential. The initiative includes a cloud-based Credential Registry that houses, organizes, and links credential information. The minimum data policy establishes the fields that make up the credential profiles in the registry.

***Credential Engine***

Credential Engine is a nonprofit organization that provides web-based services for creating a centralized credential registry. Its Credential Transparency Description Language provides a common set of terms for defining credentials, credentialing organizations, quality assurance bodies, and competencies.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 3 (03/22/2021)

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 35 Nay 2 (05/03/2021)