

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5698

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE COLLECTION OF

Title: ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES DATA.

Vote Date: 3/15/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/2/2021

File No.: 198

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would require the Department of Education, in coordination with the Office of Early Childhood and local boards of Education, to collect and report data regarding adverse experiences suffered by children.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

CHARLENE RUSSEL-TUCKER, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION submitted testimony on the bill. This bill establishes a new data collection for the department that is not currently collected. New data collections for districts may be difficult given all the additional reporting they are currently doing. The potential re-traumatization of students is a concern to us. With additional resources the department could convene a taskforce to study this issue and develop recommendations to move forward. Adverse childhood experiences are linked to chronic health problems and negatively impact educational outcomes.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Alexandre Bostick, Legal Intern, Center for Children's Advocacy submitted testimony in support of the bill. The bill would require consistent and comprehensive collection and reporting of data that concerns childhood experiences by the Department of Education and other local and state agencies. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention lists adverse childhood experiences as an urgent threat and prolonged stress can physically affect

children. Data collection is an essential first step in assessing the goals and outcomes of our state's programs that assist with the after-effects of childhood trauma.

Paul Dworkdin and Kimberly Martini-Carvell, Connecticut Children's Medical

Center submitted testimony supporting the bill. We recognize the critical importance of access to data on children's health, development, and wellbeing to ensure effective interventions. Few states have the capacity to gather data from different child-serving sectors. We support the importance of collection information on the social, environmental and behavioral drivers of children's behavior. Many parents reported it would be either very or somewhat helpful for their health provider to assess child development and social-emotional development as part of their healthcare visit.

Jessie Gleckel, Director, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence spoke on the bill. Studying and understanding childhood experience is critical for preventing and responding to traumatic childhood experiences. The bill as written needs clarifications.

1. How will these efforts align with any future efforts of the Department of Public Health and their own collection of data.
2. Will SDE be held accountable for using the data and will they engage with other sectors when responding to the data.

Childhood experiences data needs to be analyzed and acted on thru multi-sectorial approaches.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

ACLU does not support the bill. The bill with its data tracking infringes on the civil liberties of young people. We support providing services to children who have lived through adverse childhood experiences, but this bill requires an enormous amount of data and could be too sensitive to be recorded and accessed by anyone who can access the information system. The information could get into the wrong hands and lead to harmful bias. Police in one country in Florida used sensitive information about children and determined that they were more likely to becoming criminals. Data breaches are a risk and have occurred over 8.5 million times in the last 6 year period. The risk of harmful unintended consequences are too many and too great in this bill.

Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Public

School Superintendents does not support the bill, but we do support establishing a task force to study the proposed data collection. The bill has the potential to seriously impact student wellbeing as well as district and school budgets.

Reported by: Jalmar Dos Dios

Date: April 8th 2021