

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-193

AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION RELATED TO THE INSURANCE

Title: INDUSTRY.

Vote Date: 3/22/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/18/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

SEN. KELLY, 21st Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

To conduct a study related to job opportunities and programs available at institutions of higher education regarding the insurance industry.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Sean Bradbury, Senior Director of Government Relations and External Affairs Connecticut State Colleges & Universities \(CSCU\):](#)

Submitted written testimony. Mr. Bradbury recognizes the insurance sector as vital to Connecticut's economy. He says, "We support the premise of this bill but would like to work with the sponsors and our colleagues at the University of Connecticut and the Governor's Workforce Council to find ways to incorporate this study into a broader analysis of our workforce development efforts. With the rise of the insurtech sector in Hartford, and the evolving nature of the industry, we must work together to find ways to make sure that our workforce development efforts in this sector are not siloed."

[Jeffrey Shoulson, Senior Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Connecticut \(UConn\):](#)

Submitted written testimony in support. Mr. Shoulson says, "UConn offers a variety of academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that contribute significantly to the Connecticut insurance industry." He elaborates on existing academic programs that cater to the insurance industry in Mathematics, Law, Business, Computer Science, Digital Media and Design, and Pharmacy.

Kelli Vallieres, Executive Director of the Office of Workforce Strategy and the Vice Chair of the Governor's Workforce Council:

Submitted written testimony. Dr. Vallieres says OWS and GWC are tasked with developing the state's workforce from Pre-K through retirement. With this in mind, part of the GWC's 2020 strategic plan highlights aligning higher education with employer needs. She says the GWC has created a team to understand employer demands, create programs to align with those demands, and promote those programs across the state. Dr. Vallieres says this work closely aligns with their existing work, and "our team would appreciate the opportunity to work with you to refine the concept that is being introduced."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Sen. Kevin Kelly, 21st District, Senate Republican Leader:

Submitted written testimony and delivered oral testimony in support. Sen. Kelly says Hartford is the "Insurance Capital" and that the "key ingredient" to the industry's success is "the men and women who choose these rewarding insurance career paths." To meet the industry's future workforce needs, he says, we should rely on our institutions of higher education to conduct a study of workforce development issues with regard to the insurance industry.

Ashley Zane, Government Affairs Associate, Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA):

Submitted written testimony in support. Ms. Zane says, "CBIA supports this bill due to the impact the insurance industry has in our state." "With an aging workforce," she says, "the state's higher education system should be looking to create a workforce development plan for this sector, and work with companies across the state to help address their needs."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Jeremy Salyer

Date: 04/05/2021