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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 5399**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING PROJECT LONGEVITY.***

#### **SUMMARY**

By law, the Project Longevity Initiative is a comprehensive, community-based initiative to reduce gun violence that operates in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. This bill requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary, or any entity awarded funding to coordinate the program's four sites (i.e., coordinating entity), to maximize the educational, employment, and career services offered to Project Longevity's clients.

Specifically, the bill requires the OPM secretary or coordinating entity to (1) coordinate with certain workforce development, higher education, and labor groups, among others, and (2) implement specified initiatives to expand the initiative's educational and employment opportunities. The bill also eliminates an obsolete provision that required OPM, by February 1, 2022, to create a plan to implement the initiative statewide and submit it to the legislature.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **PLANNING AND COORDINATION**

Under the bill, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), Governor's Workforce Council, and regional workforce development board serving each applicable city must coordinate with the secretary or coordinating entity, as appropriate, to develop strategies for delivering educational, employment, and career services to the initiative's clients. The secretary or coordinating entity must also consult with:

1. trade unions and other entities that can assist in offering employment opportunities and career pathways for program clients and

2. private providers and the Department of Motor Vehicles on the availability of commercial driver's license training for the clients.

### **EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The bill requires the OPM secretary or coordinating entity to supplement the initiative's programs and services by:

1. helping clients' career development by increasing connections to nonprofit and public agencies with a primary mission of vocational education and workforce development;
2. expanding employment services to meet client needs and align with in-state job opportunities;
3. increasing the use of the job training programs operated by regional workforce development boards and community providers specializing in vocational education and workforce development services for people facing employment barriers (e.g., criminal record or lack of, or inconsistent, work history);
4. increasing client participation in the Technical Education and Career System and higher education;
5. developing partnerships with the judicial branch's Court Support Services Division, Department of Correction, and other criminal justice agencies to coordinate programs for people who may become clients after release from incarceration or supervision;
6. expanding connections to social service and other community-based service organizations;
7. identifying business and training programs committed to hiring or providing services to clients;
8. increasing coordination with the motor vehicles and social services departments to increase clients' access to driver's licenses and other supports;

9. developing relationships with local chambers of commerce to coordinate community reentry services and expand training and employment opportunities with businesses;
10. supporting the development of short- and long-term public and private investments in clients;
11. improving coordination with federal, state, and local violence reduction strategies and programs;
12. including providers and employers who have successfully helped clients reach other prospective clients; and
13. analyzing program and service delivery to ensure that it is coordinated and aligned with the initiative's goals.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Project Longevity***

Project Longevity was first launched in 2012 in New Haven and subsequently expanded to Hartford and Bridgeport in 2013 and Waterbury in 2021. Since October 2021, the nonprofit The Justice Education Center, Inc. has served as the program administrator, provided statewide coordination and technical assistance, and supervised personnel and fiduciary responsibilities at the four program sites.

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23    Nay 0    (03/22/2022)