

Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-231

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER.

Vote Date: 3/25/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference to Appropriations

PH Date: 3/4/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill will require the Department of Education to conduct a review of teacher certification statutes and regulations, focusing on studying impediments to recruitment and retention and making recommendations regarding the elimination of obsolete requirements. Also, the bill allows a local or regional board of education or a regional educational service to issue a career and technical pathways instructor permit in manufacturing, allied health, computer technology, engineering, and any of the construction trades

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, Department of Education](#)

"The Department fully supports the intent of this raised bill, however at current staffing levels we do not have the capacity to conduct the robust review necessary. That said, with funding to support new positions targeting this work, and extended timeline beyond January 1, 2023, we would welcome this charge. We must note, funding for these positions is not included in the Governor's mid-term budget."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Joslyn DeLancey, Vice president, Connecticut Education Association

"CEA generally supports SB 273 and the idea of reviewing our certification system to ensure that we have a diverse and strong population of educators who represent the students and classrooms we have across the state. However, as you go forward with this work, CEA cautions the committee against diminishing standards and value of certification as a means of simplifying the process or attracting more teachers. We need to ensure that our standards remain high while also removing unnecessary, complicated, and sometimes biased barriers to certification. Under current law, a teacher can receive their 092 certification, become an administrator, and even a building principal with only 5 years of experience. CEA asks to consider moving the requirements for 092 administrator's certification to 6 years of school experience and increasing the number of years of experience needed to become a school principal to 10."

Amy Dowell, State Director, Education Reform Now (ERN)

"We support the intent of this bill—namely, to address the important need to streamline Connecticut's overly complicated and prescriptive certification processes so that we can recruit, train, and retain the high-quality educators that students need. Nevertheless, we also believe that studies of the certification statutes and regulations are already underway in this state—albeit too slowly—and should therefore not be duplicated or derailed."

Subira Gordon, Executive Director, ConnCAN

"For years, Connecticut policymakers have discussed the complexity and incoherence of our teacher certification regulations. The State Department of Education has begun to look at overhauling the certification standards, and this bill provides an additional platform to focus on the issue. ConnCAN believes that by putting all the best minds on teacher certification together, we will be better situated to make the necessary changes. Also, we will be able to pressure test 3 ideas with individuals most impacted by the issue, namely teachers, principals, administrators, students, and families."

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE-CT)

"They support this legislation. There is definitely a need to update and modernize the educator preparation statutes and regulations, many of which are more than 20 years old. The AACTE-CT wants to continue to be a part of the discussions and be able to participate in making recommendations to modernizing our laws because of the key role we play in the state's education systems."

Steven Hernández, Executive Director, CGA Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity (CWCSEO)

"Connecticut is currently experiencing a statewide teacher shortage in many subject areas". In order for our future students to remain competitive with neighboring students in neighboring states we must consider the importance of having sufficient number of teachers to allow our students to receive the education they deserve. In combination with many measures of Senate Bill 1, and the reconsideration of obsolete certification requirements the Commission believes these initiatives will have a positive effect on the teacher workforce. We urge passage of these proposals."

Pastor William McCullough, Senior Pastor of Russell Temple CME Church

"Today we are engaged on Senate Bills 1, 273 and 274, and House Bill 5465. We support passage of all four and pledge to work with you to see them become law. Let's imagine all four of these proposals are the law. Our child will attend a pre-K that's safe, loving, and well-staffed with early childhood educators devoted to getting her ready for elementary school. She then will enter a K-12 system that is well funded, in buildings that are well-equipped with technology and with classrooms that are bright, well-ventilated, and conducive to learning. And in front of that classroom, she will see a teacher who looks like her, who grew up in her neighborhood – and maybe still lives there. Who knows her life and her family's experiences – because that's her experience too. She will see a person who has overcome those same challenges and achieved a position of leadership, accomplishment, respect, and responsibility. As a teacher in her public school. Is there a job more important for our children?"

Sheryl McNamee, Director of Public Affairs & General Counsel, ReadyCT

"ReadyCT strongly supports S.B. 273 and is pleased to share that an innovation cohort has been working on this issue since fall 2021. In order to keep pace with what students need to

learn and do in order to be successful in their postsecondary career, the state needs to cast a wide net to capture the best teaching talent. This can be done with much-needed teacher certification reform in ways that can maintain, and even enhance, a high bar of excellence and preparation for the state's public-school teachers".

Daniel Pearson, State Director, Educators for Excellence - Connecticut

"Today I submit testimony on behalf of our members who are current classroom teachers and educators who work tirelessly to ensure that their students have access to the best possible education and support inside of the classroom. Teachers spend their days working in the classroom trying to ensure that students are receiving the best possible education. However, they are being greatly affected by current staffing shortages and many teachers are beginning to experience burnout. Schools need to be adequately staffed so teachers can work to their fullest potential, and school staff needs to reflect the diversity of their classrooms. We urge you to implement infrastructure that will both increase staffing in our schools, while also increasing teacher diversity. Districts across Connecticut are suffering from a current teacher shortage that is negatively affecting both teachers and students."

Jennifer, Widness, President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges

"CCIC supports this bill as the state's teacher certification regulations are long overdue for an update. Institutions of higher education are often hampered in their ability to be nimble and responsive in adjusting their curriculum and programs to support the needs of the state in creating innovative programs because of outdated, highly prescriptive regulations that remain in place"

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION

David Godbout, Testimony

"In Opposition to all bills put forward wherein public testimony is being taken because the process by which we hold public hearings violates the 4th amendment, as stated in the testimony."

Reported by: Christian Mateo

Date: 3/28/22

