

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5858

AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
**Title:** FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT PROGRAM FOR CHILD CARE EXPENSES.

**Vote Date:** 3/21/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/7/2023

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill is intended to create a study on the feasibility of implementing a flexible spending account for childcare expenses. This would create an opportunity for parents of young children to save pre-tax money on childcare, which many have pointed out to be a significant cost.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Dante Bartolomeo, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Labor:** Opposes this bill because the Department of Labor would not be the right agency to establish this program. Also comments that no state funding has been allocated to the CTDOL to run such a program, and that the agency would need to design new technology to prevent the mixing of information with confidential unemployment insurance data.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Elizabeth Fraser, Policy Director, CAHS:** Supports this bill because it will limit the negative effects of high costs of care and education for parents with young children. Comments that more families will have greater buying power due to the implementation of flexible spending accounts

**Merrill Gay, Executive Director, CT Early Childhood Alliance:** Supports this bill because it is a good way to help families with childcare costs without much cost to the state. Comments

that the burden of childcare expenses is one of the major barriers for mothers with young children participating in the workforce.

**Tanya Hughes, Executive Director, CHRO:** Supports this bill because it will give families a better choice between work and childcare and help reduce sexism in the workplace. Comments that this helps create more opportunities for women in the workplace by making it easier for mothers to pay for childcare expenses.

**Jim Perras, CEO, HBRA of CT:** Supports this bill because it may provide support for young mothers and minorities to enter the residential workforce. Comments that this will help with attracting and retaining employees which has been difficult as of late.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

No sources of opposition were provided.

**OTHER TESTIMONY:**

**Garrett Sheehan, President & CEO, GNHCC-QCC:** Neither supports nor opposes this bill, but comments that the affordability of childcare is one of the greatest barriers to entering the workforce. Also comments that they appreciate and understand the intent of the bill but would need to learn more about the program before fully supporting the bill.

**Reported by: Gabriel Marques, Assistant Clerk      Date: 3/24/23**