

# Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6563

AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR THE  
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE

**Title:** DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

**Vote Date:** 2/28/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 2/23/2023

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

To raise the age limit for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) postsecondary education funding program from 21 to 26 years old, and to extend the age at which a postsecondary education program must be completed from 23 to 28 years old. The completion of college education among foster youth is reported to be significantly low. Additionally, based on public feedback and accounts, it is evident that foster youth require more financial assistance and time to finish their higher education. To address this issue, the proposed bill aims to provide foster care individuals with extended access and utilization of DCF programs, with the hope of increasing their completion rates in postsecondary education programs.

### SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The amendment removes Section 2, which removes language raising the age to 28.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Children and Families, Commissioner, Vanessa Dorantes](#); offers comments on this bill clarifying that existing state statutes and DCF policies allow youth turning 18 to continue receiving support for postsecondary education programs until they are 21. It is stated that extending the age of eligibility to 28 would result in a significant unbudgeted cost to the agency and would require DCF to continue supporting adults up to the age of 28

which raises concerns about expectations and liabilities for the agency. *\*The adopted amendment addresses the agency's concern.*

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Connecticut Voices for Children, Chief of Staff, Sana Shah](#); supports this bill stating that foster youth in the United States have a significantly lower college attendance rate and completion rate compared to their non-foster youth peers due to various challenges such as trauma and financial strain. It is stated that this could provide support to individuals, who were previously under the care of DCF, to continue their education.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None stated.

**Reported by: Lukas Houle**

**Date: 3/3/2023**