

# Banking Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6689

AN ACT CONCERNING A CONNECTICUT HIGHER EDUCATION  
SUPPLEMENTAL LOAN AUTHORITY REFINANCE LOAN SUBSIDY FOR

**Title:** CERTAIN HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.

**Vote Date:** 3/7/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

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

**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:**

Banking Committee.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

There is shortage of health care workers. This bill aims to help alleviate that shortage.

## **Substitute language:**

Requires CHESLA to maintain the account for the program (rather than just having it within the General Fund).

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

[Jeanette W. Weldon, Executive Director, CHESLA](#) submitted written testimony stating that CHESLA supports the intent of the bill, but they do "not have the funds necessary to offset the fiscal impact of the program outlined in the underlying bill. Accordingly, CHESLA's ability to provide such a program is contingent on identifying a supplemental funding mechanism to offset the fiscal impact on CHESLA."

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[John Brady AFTCT Executive Vice President](#) submitted written testimony in support of this bill. Mr. Brady stated "It will assist recruitment by lessening the financial burden on healthcare workers and assist in retention because continued work in the clinical setting is a condition of eligibility."

[Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut](#) submitted written testimony in support of this bill indicating that it will help address the health care worker shortage.

[Kimberly Sandor, MSN, RN, FNP, Executive Director, Connecticut Nurses' Association](#) submitted written testimony in support. Ms. Sandor stated " The suggested debt refinancing option might make a nursing education more affordable for prospective nursing students and early career nurses. Another potential benefit, is that the debt refinancing option may ease some of the financial burden for currently practicing nurses to continue their education. It is critical that we support the development of nurse faculty, which requires nurses to continue their education to attain a master's degree and their preferred terminal degree."

[Ben Shaiken, Director of Government Relations, The Alliance](#) submitted written testimony. He stated "The nationwide exodus from the healthcare industry has been well-documented, but it has hit Connecticut's nonprofits hard. Staff are leaving for higher paying jobs in private industry and private practice, where they can deliver behavioral health services remotely from their homes, and school districts are hiring clinical staff away from community-based nonprofit providers. The Cost of Living Adjustments in the last state budget, while appreciated, have been completely enveloped by sixteen percent inflation." This bill will help relieve this burden.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Jeanie Phillips, Clerk**

**Date: March 9, 2023**