

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6774

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

Vote Date: 3/7/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/2/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was a Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee contingency reserve bill to direct the Office of Higher Education to conduct a study on post-secondary education in the State, with the aim of identifying practical legislative measures that would facilitate the expansion and diversification of offerings within the post-secondary education system.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Central Connecticut State University, Adjunct instructor of History, Dr. Virginia Mitchell:](#) supports this bill because, as an adjunct professor, she works more than a full-time teaching load and still is not eligible for benefits or paid at the same rate as her full-time colleagues. It is stated that this bill should address providing health insurance for contingent employees like herself and for the expansion of full-time positions. It is also stated that job applicants with ties to the CSU system should be given precedence in the hiring of fulltime employees. It is further stated a study of best practices from other states regarding these issues be included in this bill.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Professor of History and Connecticut State Universities American Association of University Professors \(CSU-AAUP\), President, Louise Blakeney Williams:](#) supports this bill because adjunct faculty will always be needed in the

CSCU system due to their specialized expertise and dedication to teaching. It is stated that part-time faculty have provided inestimable service, particularly during the pandemic where they have put in a great deal of unpaid time and effort to serve the new needs of students learning. It is also stated that the CSCU system has not done enough for part-time faculty members and that providing health insurance to adjunct faculty in the CSCU system is crucial, especially in the face of likely recurrences of similar pandemics. It is further stated that this bill should incorporate and study ideas to provide health insurance to adjunct faculty, like the "Healthcare Cost Assistance Program" or similar programs created for workers in other states recently.

[Gateway Community College, Associate Professor and Faculty Advisory Committee to CT Board of Regents for Higher Ed, Chair, Dr. Colena Sesanker](#): supports this bill and recommends that the study include the topic of health benefits for adjuncts since there will always be a role for adjuncts at colleges and universities. It is further stated that recent surveys suggest t the number of adjuncts without access to healthcare benefits elsewhere is smaller than previously estimated, making the cost of providing coverage less daunting. It is recommended to use examples of how other states have addressed these issues in the study.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Connecticut Resident, James McGovern](#): opposes this bill unless the study is amended to examine the needs of corporations and degrees generally sought by students in Connecticut, political biases in public schools, the impact of social justice and woke cultures, incentives offered by Connecticut corporations to hire in-state graduates, and parental frustrations with universities before providing funding next year.

Reported by: Lukas Houle

Date: 3/13/2023