

Commerce Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1090

AN ACT CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN MINORS AS

Title: YOUTH CAMP STAFF MEMBERS AND LIFEGUARDS.

Vote Date: 3/14/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/2/2023

File No.: 295

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Commerce Committee

[Rep. Mark W Anderson, 62nd Dist.](#)

[Rep. Henry J. Genga, 10th Dist.](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

Various businesses and non-profit organizations in the state have struggled to find adequate employment for lifeguard and youth camp staffer positions, specifically during the summertime when high school students are not in school. As a result, summer camps and community pools have been forced to limit their attendance to correspond with the limited staffing. SB-1090 aims to eliminate the workforce shortage in these positions and improve youth engagement. By allowing 15-year-olds the opportunity to work in these positions, they can earn a solid wage, gain work experience, and develop valuable social skills.

Substitute Language (LCO 5983)

Amended the repeal of Section 31-18 of the general statute to repeal Subsection (b) of Section 31-23 of the general statute instead. Removed the requirement of a person of at least eighteen years of age shall supervise any person who is fifteen years of age and is employed as a lifeguard, or in a position providing access to persons under eighteen years of age. Specified where minors of the age of fourteen can be employed. Specified where minors of the age of fifteen can be employed and the positions they are permitted to be employed in. Added the requirement of a certificate stating such minor is fifteen years or older to be kept on file at the place of employment and to be available during business hours.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Dante Bartolomeo, Commissioner, CT Department of Labor – Supports with some concerns.

Mr. Bartolomeo and the CT Department of Labor support the portion of the bill that allows for fifteen-year-old minors to be employed as lifeguards, consistent with the applicable child labor provisions outlined within the FLSA. However, they believe it is premature to pursue a reduction in age requirements for certain occupations from sixteen to fifteen without detailed research and exploration for potential impacts such as rates of injury and academic outcomes as well as on the developmental differences of maturity and capacity with the younger age group. Additionally, they do not believe SB-1090 meets the thresholds of occupational safety and welfare of minors set forth in the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Eric Bethel, State Senator, Senate Republican Caucus, Supports

Mr. Bethel believes SB-1090 addresses the significant worker shortage faced by amusement park operators in the state and enables more young people to enter the workforce and gain invaluable “soft” skills to serve them throughout their career.

John Cattelan, VP of Government Relations, CT Alliance of YMCA’s, Supports

Mr. Cattelan believes SB-1090 addresses the YMCA’s staffing shortages across the state. Due to these shortages, hundreds of children were not able to attend summer camp because of the lack of staff available.

Sean Doherty, Executive Director & CEO, Wallingford Family YMCA, Supports

Mr. Doherty believes SB-1090 addresses the Wallingford Family YMCA’s staffing shortage of both lifeguards and camp counselors.

George Frantzis, Co-Owner, Quassy Amusement and Waterpark, Supports

Mr. Frantzis believes allowing 15-year-olds to work as lifeguards would increase water safety and reduce the recreational workforce shortage in the state. Mr. Frantzis claims with proper supervision and training, the difference between a 15 and 16-year-old is nonexistent.

Jim Rourke, CEO, Greater Waterbury YMCA, Supports

Mr. Rourke believes SB-1090 addresses the Greater Waterbury YMCA’s staffing shortage of lifeguards, camp counselors and child watch program workers.

Garrett Sheehan, President and CEO, GNHCC & QCC, Supports

Mr. Sheehan believes SB-1090 will help businesses fill workforce gaps and expand the workforce. Members of the Greater New Haven & Quinnipiac Chambers of Commerce have echoed this sentiment as well.

Valerie Stolfi Collins, Executive Director, Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, Supports with Amendment

Ms. Collins supports the intent to the bill but believes the requirement stating 15-year-olds can only work during school vacations of five days or longer should be removed. She claims municipal afterschool programs and aquatics facilities would like to hire 15-year-olds for a few hours a day to fill gaps in the workforce shortage during the school year.

Ashley Zane, Government Affairs Associate, CBIA

Ms. Zane believes SB-1090 would be a positive step towards keeping businesses open and maintaining a high quality of life, would give young adults the ability to earn income at an earlier age and would give them the opportunity to develop soft skills such as how to interview, professionally dress, time manage, and other social-emotional skills.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Colin DeCure

Date: 4/3/2023