



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Committee Bill No. 2

LCO No. 4301



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS OF CHILDREN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
2 2024, the Department of Public Health shall hire, on or before January
3 1, 2024, a full-time employee to assist in the licensure of social workers
4 pursuant to chapter 383b of the general statutes.

5 Sec. 2. Section 11-24a of the general statutes is repealed and the
6 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

7 (a) As used in sections 11-24b, as amended by this act, 11-24c and
8 11-31a:

9 (1) "Board" means the State Library Board.

10 (2) "Public library" means a library that serves its residents through
11 its outlet or outlets without charging a borrower's card fee and which
12 receives its financial support in whole or in part from local tax funds.

13 (3) "Principal public library" means the public library which has

14 been so designated by the local municipal governing board.

15 (4) "Local funds" means moneys received by a public library from
16 any source, public or private, excluding state or federal grants.

17 (5) "General library purposes" means all functions of a public
18 library, including the purchase of land or the construction, alteration
19 or remodeling of buildings.

20 (6) "Sanctuary public library" means a principal public library that
21 makes available and lends any book that has been banned, censored or
22 challenged by a person, organization or entity and any related library
23 materials and does not prohibit or otherwise limit the availability of
24 any book or related library materials by banning, censoring or
25 challenging such book or related library materials at such library.

26 (b) A municipality may have more than one public library, but may
27 designate only one library as its principal public library. A principal
28 public library may be designated for more than one town if it meets
29 conditions established and approved by the State Library Board. In
30 any town or municipality where there are multiple libraries, there shall
31 be a separate board or governing body and a different library director
32 and staff for each public library. Each public library shall be a separate
33 library facility and there shall be a separate town appropriation to each
34 public library.

35 (c) Any public library not designated as a principal public library
36 shall be a "nonprincipal public library". A nonprincipal public library
37 in a municipality may be eligible to receive a state grant, construction
38 cost grant, emergency repair grant or Connecticard grant provided it
39 meets the following conditions: There is a separate board of trustees or
40 governing body for each such nonprincipal public library; there is a
41 different library director and staff for each such library; there is a
42 separate library facility; and there is a separate town appropriation to
43 each such library.

44 Sec. 3. Section 11-24b of the general statutes is repealed and the

45 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

46 (a) Each principal public library, as defined in section 11-24a, as
47 amended by this act, shall be eligible to receive a state grant in
48 accordance with the provisions of subsections (b) [] and (c) [and (d)] of
49 this section provided the following requirements are met:

50 (1) An annual statistical report which includes certification that the
51 grant, when received, shall be used for library purposes is filed with
52 the State Library Board in such manner as the board may require. The
53 report shall include information concerning local library governance,
54 hours of service, type of facilities, library policies, resources, programs
55 and services available, measurement of levels of services provided,
56 personnel and fiscal information concerning library receipts and
57 expenditures;

58 (2) Documents certifying the legal establishment of the principal
59 public library in accordance with the provisions of section 11-20 are
60 filed with the board;

61 (3) The library is a participating library in the Connecticard program
62 established pursuant to section 11-31b;

63 (4) Except for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2010, to June 30, 2015,
64 inclusive, the principal public library shall not have had the amount of
65 its annual tax levy or appropriation reduced to an amount which is
66 less than the average amount levied or appropriated for the library for
67 the three fiscal years immediately preceding the year of the grant,
68 except that if the expenditures of the library in any one year in such
69 three-year period are unusually high as compared with expenditures
70 in the other two years, the library may request an exception to this
71 requirement and the board, upon review of the expenditures for that
72 year, may grant an exception;

73 (5) State grant funds shall be expended within two years of the date
74 of receipt of such funds. If the funds are not expended in that period,
75 the library shall submit a plan to the State Librarian for the

76 expenditure of any unspent balance;

77 (6) Principal public libraries shall not charge individuals residing in
78 the town in which the library is located or the town in which the
79 contract library is located for borrowing and lending library materials,
80 accessing information, advice and assistance and programs and
81 services which promote literacy; and

82 (7) Principal public libraries shall provide equal access to library
83 service for all individuals and shall not discriminate upon the basis of
84 age, race, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin,
85 handicap or place of residency in the town in which the library is
86 located or the town in which the contract library is located.

87 (b) Within the limits of amounts appropriated and subject to the
88 provisions of subsection (d) of this section, the amount each principal
89 public library shall be eligible to receive annually as a state grant shall
90 be determined by the State Library Board as follows:

91 (1) Principal public libraries, as defined in section 11-24a, as
92 amended by this act, shall receive a base grant of one thousand two
93 hundred dollars for each fiscal year.

94 (2) Of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section less the
95 amount distributed as base grants, sixty per cent shall be set aside and
96 paid in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section
97 to principal public libraries. [pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.]

98 (3) Of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section less the
99 amount distributed as base grants, forty per cent shall be set aside and
100 paid in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section
101 to principal public libraries [pursuant to subsection (d) of this section]
102 that receive a grant under this subsection and subsection (c) of this
103 section and that are sanctuary public libraries.

104 (c) The principal public library for each town shall be eligible to
105 receive an equalization grant in an amount determined as follows:

106 (1) The adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as defined in
107 subsection (a) of section 10-261, for all towns in the state shall be
108 ranked from highest to lowest.

109 (2) The adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as ranked for all
110 towns in the state from highest to lowest shall be divided into the
111 following four classes: Class A, towns ranked from one to forty-two,
112 inclusive; class B, towns ranked from forty-three to eighty-four,
113 inclusive; class C, towns ranked from eighty-five to one hundred
114 twenty-six, inclusive; and, class D, towns ranked from one hundred
115 twenty-seven to one hundred sixty-nine, inclusive. Funds available for
116 purposes of this subsection pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection
117 (b) of this section shall be distributed among the four classes so that
118 principal public libraries for class B, C, and D towns, respectively, shall
119 receive two times, three times and four times as much on a per capita
120 basis as principal public libraries for class A towns.

121 (3) Grants to the principal public library for each town shall be
122 determined as follows: Said funds available for purposes of this
123 subsection shall be multiplied by the per cent of funds for each class to
124 determine an appropriation per class; the appropriation per class shall
125 be divided by the total population per class to determine an amount
126 per capita; the grant for the principal public library for each town shall
127 be the town's total population multiplied by the amount per capita. For
128 purposes of this subdivision, "total population" of a town means that
129 enumerated in the most recent federal decennial census of population.

130 (d) [The] A principal public library [for each town] that receives a
131 grant under subsections (b) and (c) of this section and is a sanctuary
132 public library shall be eligible to receive an incentive grant in an
133 amount to be determined as follows:

134 (1) The State Library Board shall, in such manner as prescribed by
135 the board, determine for each fiscal year, a state-wide average for per
136 capita library expenditures and each town's individual per capita
137 library expenditure based on the annual statistical report filed in

138 accordance with subsection (a) of this section.

139 (2) The per capita library expenditure of each town shall be ranked
140 from highest to lowest and the ranked expenditures shall be divided
141 into the following classes: Class A, towns which meet or exceed the
142 state-wide average for per capita library expenditures; class B, towns
143 which meet seventy-five to ninety-nine per cent, inclusive, of the state-
144 wide average; class C, towns which meet fifty to seventy-four per cent,
145 inclusive, of the state-wide average; and, class D, towns which fall
146 below fifty per cent of the state-wide average. Funds available for
147 purposes of this subsection pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection
148 (b) of this section shall be distributed among the four classes so that
149 such principal public libraries for class A and B towns, respectively,
150 shall receive three times and two times as much on a per capita basis
151 as such principal public libraries for class C towns.

152 (3) Grants to [the] such principal public [library for each town]
153 libraries under this subsection shall be determined as follows: Said
154 funds available for purposes of this subsection shall be multiplied by
155 the per cent of funds per class to determine an appropriation per class;
156 the appropriation per class shall be divided by the total population per
157 class to determine an amount per capita; the grant for [the] each such
158 principal public library [for each town] shall be the town's total
159 population multiplied by the amount per capita. For purposes of this
160 subdivision, "total population" of a town means that enumerated in the
161 most recent federal decennial census of population.

162 (e) Application for grants under this section shall be made to the
163 State Library Board in such form and at such time as the board
164 designates. The grant may be used for general library purposes and no
165 portion of the grant money shall revert to the general fund of the town
166 or towns normally served by such library.

167 (f) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall make
168 available, upon the request of the State Library Board, such
169 information as is needed by the board to determine grant payments in

170 accordance with the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of this
171 section.

172 (g) The State Library Board shall report triennially to the joint
173 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
174 matters relating to education on the impact of the state grants
175 distributed pursuant to this section.

176 (h) The State Library Board shall, in accordance with the provisions
177 of chapter 54, adopt regulations to implement the provisions of this
178 section.

179 Sec. 4. Subsection (h) of section 17a-248g of the general statutes is
180 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
181 *1, 2023*):

182 (h) For the fiscal [years] year ending June 30, 2023, and [June 30,
183 2024] each fiscal year thereafter, the commissioner shall make a general
184 administrative payment to providers in the amount of two hundred
185 dollars for each child with an individualized family service plan on the
186 first day of the billing month and whose plan accounts for less than
187 nine hours of service during such billing month, provided at least one
188 service is provided by such provider during such billing month.

189 Sec. 5. Section 17a-248 of the general statutes is repealed and the
190 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

191 As used in this section, [and] sections 17a-248b to 17a-248g,
192 inclusive, as amended by this act, 38a-490a and 38a-516a and section 7
193 of this act, unless the context otherwise requires:

194 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Early Childhood.

195 (2) "Council" means the State Interagency Birth-to-Three
196 Coordinating Council established pursuant to section 17a-248b.

197 (3) "Early intervention services" means early intervention services,
198 as defined in 34 CFR Part 303.13, as from time to time amended.

199 (4) "Eligible children" means children (A) (i) from birth to thirty-six
200 months of age, who are not eligible for special education and related
201 services pursuant to sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive, and (ii) thirty-
202 six months of age or older, who are receiving early intervention
203 services and are eligible or being evaluated for participation in
204 preschool services pursuant to Part B of the Individuals with
205 Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1411 et seq., until such children are
206 enrolled in such preschool services, and (B) who need early
207 intervention services because such children are:

208 [(I)] (i) Experiencing a significant developmental delay as measured
209 by standardized diagnostic instruments and procedures, including
210 informed clinical opinion, in one or more of the following areas:
211 Cognitive development; physical development, including vision or
212 hearing; communication development; social or emotional
213 development; or adaptive skills; or

214 [(II)] (ii) Diagnosed as having a physical or mental condition that
215 has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

216 (5) "Evaluation" means a multidisciplinary professional, objective
217 assessment conducted by appropriately qualified personnel in order to
218 determine a child's eligibility for early intervention services.

219 (6) "Individualized family service plan" means a written plan for
220 providing early intervention services to an eligible child and the child's
221 family.

222 (7) "Lead agency" means the Office of Early Childhood, the public
223 agency responsible for the administration of the birth-to-three system
224 in collaboration with the participating agencies.

225 (8) "Parent" means (A) a biological, adoptive or foster parent of a
226 child; (B) a guardian, except for the Commissioner of Children and
227 Families; (C) an individual acting in the place of a biological or
228 adoptive parent, including, but not limited to, a grandparent,
229 stepparent, or other relative with whom the child lives; (D) an

230 individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; or (E) an
231 individual appointed to be a surrogate parent.

232 (9) "Participating agencies" includes, but is not limited to, the
233 Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, Children
234 and Families and Developmental Services, the Office of Early
235 Childhood, the Insurance Department and the Department of Aging
236 and Disability Services.

237 (10) "Qualified personnel" means persons who meet the standards
238 specified in 34 CFR Part 303.31, as from time to time amended, and
239 who are licensed physicians or psychologists or persons holding a
240 state-approved or recognized license, certificate or registration in one
241 or more of the following fields: (A) Special education, including
242 teaching of the blind and the deaf; (B) speech and language pathology
243 and audiology; (C) occupational therapy; (D) physical therapy; (E)
244 social work; (F) nursing; (G) dietary or nutritional counseling; and (H)
245 other fields designated by the commissioner that meet requirements
246 that apply to the area in which the person is providing early
247 intervention services, provided there is no conflict with existing
248 professional licensing, certification and registration requirements.

249 (11) "Service coordinator" means a person carrying out service
250 coordination services, as defined in 34 CFR Part 303.34, as from time to
251 time amended.

252 (12) "Primary care provider" means physicians and advanced
253 practice registered nurses, licensed by the Department of Public
254 Health, who are responsible for performing or directly supervising the
255 primary care services for children enrolled in the birth-to-three
256 program.

257 Sec. 6. Subsection (b) of section 17a-248e of the general statutes is
258 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
259 *1, 2023*):

260 (b) The individualized family service plan shall be in writing and

261 contain: (1) A statement of the child's present level of physical
262 development, cognitive development, language and speech
263 development and self-help skills, based on acceptable objective criteria;
264 (2) a statement of the family's priority, resources and concerns relating
265 to enhancing the development of the eligible child; (3) a statement of
266 the major outcomes expected to be achieved for the child and the
267 family and the criteria, procedures and timelines used to determine the
268 degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes are being
269 made, and whether modifications or revisions of the outcomes are
270 necessary; (4) a statement of specific early intervention services
271 necessary to meet the unique needs of the eligible child and the family,
272 including the frequency, intensity and the method of delivering
273 services; (5) a statement of the natural environments in which the
274 services shall be provided; (6) the projected dates for initiation of
275 services and the anticipated duration of such services; (7) the name of
276 the approved comprehensive service provider that will provide or
277 procure the services specified in the individualized family service plan;
278 (8) the name of the individual service coordinator from the profession
279 most immediately relevant to the eligible child's or the family's needs
280 who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan and
281 coordination with the other agencies and providers or an otherwise
282 qualified provider selected by a parent; and (9) the steps to be taken to
283 support the transition of the child who is eligible for participation in
284 preschool programs under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities
285 Act, 20 USC 1471 et seq., as appropriate. The individualized family
286 service plan shall be translated into and provided in Spanish for any
287 family whose primary language is Spanish.

288 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) On and after July 1, 2023, an
289 eligible child whose primary language is Spanish shall be entitled to
290 receive early intervention services from Spanish-speaking qualified
291 personnel and a Spanish-speaking service coordinator.

292 Sec. 8. Section 31-57r of the general statutes is repealed and the
293 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

294 As used in this section and sections 31-57s to 31-57w, inclusive:

295 (1) "Child" means a biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild,
296 legal ward of a service worker, or a child of a service worker standing
297 in loco parentis, who is (A) under eighteen years of age; or (B) eighteen
298 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or
299 physical disability;

300 (2) "Day or temporary worker" means an individual who performs
301 work for another on (A) a per diem basis, or (B) an occasional or
302 irregular basis for only the time required to complete such work,
303 whether such individual is paid by the person for whom such work is
304 performed or by an employment agency or temporary help service, as
305 defined in section 31-129;

306 (3) "Employee" means an individual engaged in service to an
307 employer in the business of the employer;

308 (4) "Employer" means any person, firm, business, educational
309 institution, nonprofit agency, corporation, limited liability company or
310 other entity that employs fifty or more individuals in the state, which
311 shall be determined based on such person's, firm's, business',
312 educational institution's, nonprofit agency's, corporation's, limited
313 liability company's or other entity's payroll for the week containing
314 October first, annually. "Employer" does not include: (A) Any business
315 establishment classified in sector 31, 32 or 33 in the North American
316 Industrial Classification System, or (B) any nationally chartered
317 organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the
318 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
319 internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time
320 amended, that provides all of the following services: Recreation, child
321 care and education;

322 (5) "Family violence" has the same meaning as provided in section
323 46b-38a;

324 (6) "Mental health wellness day" means a day during which a

325 service worker attends to such service worker's emotional and
326 psychological well-being in lieu of attending a regularly scheduled
327 shift;

328 [(6)] (7) "Retaliatory personnel action" means any termination,
329 suspension, constructive discharge, demotion, unfavorable
330 reassignment, refusal to promote, disciplinary action or other adverse
331 employment action taken by an employer against an employee or a
332 service worker;

333 [(7)] (8) "Service worker" means an employee primarily engaged in
334 an occupation with one of the following broad or detailed occupation
335 code numbers and titles, as defined by the federal Bureau of Labor
336 Statistics Standard Occupational Classification system or any successor
337 system: (A) 11-9050 Food Service Managers; (B) 11-9110 Medical and
338 Health Services Managers; (C) 21-1020 Social Workers; (D) 21-1093
339 Social and Human Service Assistants; (E) 21-1094 Community Health
340 Workers; (F) 21-1099 Community and Social Service Specialists, All
341 Other; (G) 25-4020 Librarians; (H) 29-1050 Pharmacists; (I) 29-1070
342 Physician Assistants; (J) 29-1120 Therapists; (K) 29-1140 Registered
343 Nurses; (L) 29-1150 Nurse Anesthetists; (M) 29-1160 Nurse Midwives;
344 (N) 29-1170 Nurse Practitioners; (O) 29-2020 Dental Hygienists; (P) 29-
345 2040 Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics; (Q) 29-2050
346 Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians; (R) 29-2060
347 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; (S) 31-1011 Home
348 Health Aides; (T) 31-1012 Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants;
349 (U) 31-1013 Psychiatric Aides; (V) 31-9091 Dental Assistants; (W) 31-
350 9092 Medical Assistants; (X) 33-9032 Security Guards; (Y) 33-9091
351 Crossing Guards; (Z) 35-1010 Supervisors of Food Preparation and
352 Serving Workers; (AA) 35-2010 Cooks; (BB) 35-2020 Food Preparation
353 Workers; (CC) 35-3010 Bartenders; (DD) 35-3020 Fast Food and
354 Counter Workers; (EE) 35-3030 Waiters and Waitresses; (FF) 35-3040
355 Food Servers, Nonrestaurant; (GG) 35-9010 Dining Room and Cafeteria
356 Attendants and Bartender Helpers; (HH) 35-9020 Dishwashers; (II) 35-
357 9030 Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge and Coffee Shop; (JJ)
358 35-9090 Miscellaneous Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers;

359 (KK) 37-2011 Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping
360 Cleaners; (LL) 37-2019 Building Cleaning Workers, All Other; (MM)
361 39-3030 Ushers, Lobby Attendants and Ticket Takers; (NN) 39-5010
362 Barbers, Hairdressers, Hairstylists and Cosmetologists; (OO) 39-6010
363 Baggage Porters, Bellhops and Concierges; (PP) 39-9010 Child Care
364 Workers; (QQ) 39-9021 Personal Care Aides; (RR) 41-1010 First-Line
365 Supervisors of Sales Workers; (SS) 41-2011 Cashiers; (TT) 41-2021
366 Counter and Rental Clerks; (UU) 41-2030 Retail Salespersons; (VV) 43-
367 3070 Tellers; (WW) 43-4080 Hotel, Motel and Resort Desk Clerks; (XX)
368 43-4170 Receptionists and Information Clerks; (YY) 43-5020 Couriers
369 and Messengers; (ZZ) 43-6010 Secretaries and Administrative
370 Assistants; (AAA) 43-9010 Computer Operators; (BBB) 43-9020 Data
371 Entry and Information Processing Workers; (CCC) 43-9030 Desktop
372 Publishers; (DDD) 43-9040 Insurance Claims and Policy Processing
373 Clerks; (EEE) 43-9050 Mail Clerks and Mail Machine Operators, Except
374 Postal Service; (FFF) 43-9060 Office Clerks, General; (GGG) 43-9070
375 Office Machine Operators, Except Computer; (HHH) 43-9080
376 Proofreaders and Copy Markers; (III) 43-9110 Statistical Assistants; (JJJ)
377 43-9190 Miscellaneous Office and Administrative Support Workers;
378 (KKK) 51-3010 Bakers; (LLL) 51-3020 Butchers and Other Meat, Poultry
379 and Fish Processing Workers; (MMM) 51-3090 Miscellaneous Food
380 Processing Workers; (NNN) 53-3010 Ambulance Drivers and
381 Attendants, Except Emergency Medical Technicians; (OOO) 53-3020
382 Bus Drivers; (PPP) 53-3040 Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs; or (QQQ) 29-
383 2034 Radiologic Technologists, and is (i) paid on an hourly basis, or (ii)
384 not exempt from the minimum wage and overtime compensation
385 requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and the
386 regulations promulgated thereunder, as amended from time to time.
387 "Service worker" does not include day or temporary workers;

388 [(8)] (9) "Sexual assault" means any act that constitutes a violation of
389 section 53a-70b of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to
390 January 1, 2019, or section 53a-70, 53a-70a, 53a-71, 53a-72a, 53a-72b or
391 53a-73a;

392 [(9)] (10) "Spouse" means a husband or wife, as the case may be; and

393 [(10)] (11) "Year" means any three-hundred-sixty-five-day period
394 used by an employer to calculate employee benefits.

395 Sec. 9. Subsection (a) of section 31-57t of the general statutes is
396 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
397 *October 1, 2023*):

398 (a) An employer shall permit a service worker to use the paid sick
399 leave accrued pursuant to section 31-57s:

400 (1) For (A) a service worker's illness, injury or health condition, (B)
401 the medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's mental
402 illness or physical illness, injury or health condition, [or] (C)
403 preventative medical care for a service worker, or (D) a mental health
404 wellness day;

405 (2) For (A) a service worker's child's or spouse's illness, injury or
406 health condition, (B) the medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a
407 service worker's child's or spouse's mental or physical illness, injury or
408 health condition, or (C) preventative medical care for a child or spouse
409 of a service worker; and

410 (3) Where a service worker is a victim of family violence or sexual
411 assault (A) for medical care or psychological or other counseling for
412 physical or psychological injury or disability, (B) to obtain services
413 from a victim services organization, (C) to relocate due to such family
414 violence or sexual assault, or (D) to participate in any civil or criminal
415 proceedings related to or resulting from such family violence or sexual
416 assault.

417 Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Commissioner of Social
418 Services shall provide Medicaid reimbursement, to the extent
419 permissible under federal law, for suicide risk assessments and other
420 mental health evaluations and services provided at a school-based
421 health center or public school.

422 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall (1) amend the

423 Medicaid state plan, if necessary, to provide reimbursement for the
424 suicide risk assessments and mental health evaluations and services
425 described in subsection (a) of this section, and (2) set reimbursement at
426 a level that ensures an adequate pool of providers for such suicide risk
427 assessments and mental health evaluations and services.

428 Sec. 11. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) There is established an
429 Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate which shall be within the
430 Insurance Department for administrative purposes only.

431 (b) The Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate may:

432 (1) Assist mental and behavioral health care providers, who are
433 licensed, certified or registered in the state, with receiving payments
434 for claims submitted to health carriers for services provided to covered
435 patients;

436 (2) Provide information to the public, agencies, legislators and
437 others regarding the problems and concerns of mental and behavioral
438 health care providers and make recommendations for resolving such
439 problems and concerns;

440 (3) Analyze and monitor the development and implementation of
441 federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies relating to mental
442 and behavioral health care providers and recommend changes as
443 necessary;

444 (4) Facilitate public comment by mental and behavioral health care
445 providers on laws, regulations and policies, including, but not limited
446 to, the policies and actions of health carriers;

447 (5) Coordinate services with the Healthcare Advocate to assist
448 individuals with obtaining access to and coverage for mental and
449 behavioral health care services and to fulfill the duties set forth in
450 subsections (e) and (g) of section 38a-1041 of the general statutes;

451 (6) Ensure that mental and behavioral health care providers have
452 timely access to the services provided by the office;

453 (7) Establish a toll-free number, or any other free calling option, to
454 allow access to the services provided by the Behavioral Health
455 Advocate;

456 (8) Pursue administrative remedies on behalf of and with the
457 consent of any mental and behavioral health care providers;

458 (9) Adopt regulations, pursuant to chapter 54 of the general statutes,
459 to carry out the provisions of this section; and

460 (10) Take any other actions necessary to fulfill the purposes of this
461 section.

462 (c) The Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate shall make a
463 referral to the Insurance Commissioner if the Behavioral Health
464 Advocate finds that a health carrier may have engaged in a pattern or
465 practice that is in violation of any provision of section 38a-476a or
466 sections 38a-488a to 38a-489, inclusive, of the general statutes.

467 (d) All state agencies shall comply with reasonable requests of the
468 Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate for information and
469 assistance.

470 (e) Not later than January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the
471 Behavioral Health Advocate shall submit, in accordance with the
472 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
473 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
474 relating to children, public health, and insurance and real estate a
475 report concerning the activities of the Behavioral Health Advocate. The
476 report shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the subject matter,
477 disposition and number of claims processed by the Behavioral Health
478 Advocate on behalf of mental and behavioral health care providers, (2)
479 common problems and concerns discerned by the Behavioral Health
480 Advocate from mental and behavioral health care providers or other
481 relevant sources, and (3) the need, if any, for administrative, legislative
482 or executive remedies to assist mental and behavioral health care
483 providers.

484 Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Office of the Behavioral
485 Health Advocate shall be under the direction of the Behavioral Health
486 Advocate who shall be appointed by the Governor, with the approval
487 of the General Assembly. The Behavioral Health Advocate shall be an
488 elector of the state with expertise and experience in the fields of mental
489 or behavioral health care, health insurance and advocacy for parity in
490 mental and behavioral health access and outcomes. In addition to the
491 Behavioral Health Advocate, the Office of the Behavioral Health
492 Advocate shall consist of a staff of not more than three persons, which
493 staff may be increased as the requirements and resources of the office
494 permit.

495 (b) If the General Assembly is not in session at the time of the
496 Governor's designation of a candidate for Behavioral Health Advocate,
497 the candidate shall serve as the acting Behavioral Health Advocate
498 until the General Assembly meets and confirms the candidate as
499 Behavioral Health Advocate. A candidate serving as acting Behavioral
500 Health Advocate is entitled to compensation and has all the powers,
501 duties and privileges of the Behavioral Health Advocate. A Behavioral
502 Health Advocate shall serve a term of four years, not including any
503 time served as acting Behavioral Health Advocate, and may be
504 reappointed by the Governor or shall remain in the position until a
505 successor is confirmed.

506 (c) Upon a vacancy in the position of the Behavioral Health
507 Advocate, the most senior attorney in the Office of the Behavioral
508 Health Advocate shall serve as the acting Behavioral Health Advocate
509 until the vacancy is filled pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of this
510 section. The acting Behavioral Health Advocate has all the powers,
511 duties and privileges of the Behavioral Health Advocate.

512 Sec. 13. Subsection (a) of section 20-195o of the general statutes is
513 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
514 *1, 2023*):

515 (a) Application for licensure shall be on forms prescribed and

516 furnished by the commissioner. Each applicant shall furnish evidence
517 satisfactory to the commissioner that he or she has met the
518 requirements of section 20-195n. The application fee for a clinical social
519 worker license shall be [~~three hundred fifteen~~] two hundred dollars.
520 The application fee for a master social worker license shall be [two
521 hundred twenty] one hundred fifty dollars.

522 Sec. 14. Subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (e) of section 19a-88 of
523 the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in
524 lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

525 (e) (1) Each person holding a license or certificate issued under
526 section 19a-514, 20-65k, 20-74s, 20-185k, 20-185l, 20-195cc or 20-206ll
527 and chapters 370 to 373, inclusive, 375, 378 to 381a, inclusive, 383, [to
528 383c, inclusive] ~~383a, 383c~~, 383g, 384, 384a, 384b, 385, 393a, 395, 399 or
529 400a and section 20-206n or 20-206o shall, annually, or, in the case of a
530 person holding a license as a marital and family therapist associate
531 under section 20-195c on or before twenty-four months after the date
532 of initial licensure, during the month of such person's birth, apply for
533 renewal of such license or certificate to the Department of Public
534 Health, giving such person's name in full, such person's residence and
535 business address and such other information as the department
536 requests.

537 (2) Each person holding a license or certificate issued under section
538 19a-514, and chapters ~~383b~~, 384a, 384c, 384d, 386, 387, 388 and 398 shall
539 apply for renewal of such license or certificate once every two years,
540 during the month of such person's birth, giving such person's name in
541 full, such person's residence and business address and such other
542 information as the department requests.

543 Sec. 15. Section 24 of public act 22-81 is repealed and the following is
544 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

545 (a) There is established a task force to continue to study the
546 comprehensive needs of children in the state and the extent to which
547 such needs are being met by educators, community members and local

548 and state agencies. The task force shall (1) address subdivisions (1) to
549 (6), inclusive, of subsection (a) of section 30 of public act 21-46, (2)
550 provide recommendations to meet the demand for infant and toddler
551 care in the state by increasing access to and enrollment in child care
552 centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, and
553 identify resources to assist such centers and homes in meeting such
554 demand, [and] (3) study the feasibility of adjusting school start times
555 to improve students' mental and physical well-being, and (4) review
556 and analyze the efficacy of those programs designed to assist and
557 support the needs of children and their families that have received and
558 expended federal funds received pursuant to the Coronavirus Aid,
559 Relief, and Economic Security Act, P.L. 116-136, as amended from time
560 to time, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental
561 Appropriations Act, P.L. 116-260, as amended from time to time, and
562 the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from
563 time to time, and, based on such analysis, make recommendations
564 about which of those programs should receive a more permanent
565 funding structure from the state.

566 (b) The task force shall consist of the members appointed to the task
567 force to study the comprehensive needs of children pursuant to
568 subsection (b) of section 30 of public act 21-46, except that if any
569 member declines such appointment, a new appointee shall be selected
570 by the appointing authority pursuant to said subsection.

571 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivisions (1)
572 to (6), inclusive, of subsection (b) of section 30 of public act 21-46 may
573 be a member of the General Assembly.

574 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
575 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy
576 shall be filled by the appointing authority not later than thirty days
577 after the vacancy occurs. If a vacancy is not filled by the appointing
578 authority, the chairpersons of the task force may fill such vacancy.

579 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president

580 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force
581 from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall
582 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not
583 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

584 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
585 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
586 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

587 (g) Not later than January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024, the task force
588 shall update the report issued pursuant to subsection (g) of section 30
589 of public act 21-46, and submit such updated report and any additional
590 findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the
591 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, in
592 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.
593 The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or
594 January 1, 2024, whichever is later.

595 Sec. 16. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
596 2024, the Department of Social Services shall hire temporary and part-
597 time employees who will be responsible for collaborating with
598 nonprofit organizations to identify and enroll eligible children in the
599 HUSKY Health program.

600 Sec. 17. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
601 2024, the Department of Education shall hire one full-time employee
602 who will be responsible for awarding a grant to and collaborating with
603 a nonprofit organization that specializes in identifying and providing
604 services for at-risk teenage students who are experiencing depression,
605 anxiety, substance abuse struggles and trauma and conflict-related
606 stresses, for the purpose of training school behavioral health providers
607 to be able to identify and provide services for such at-risk teenage
608 students.

609 Sec. 18. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of one hundred fifty
610 thousand dollars is allocated, in accordance with the provisions of
611 special act 21-1, from the federal funds designated for the state

612 pursuant to the provisions of Section 602 of Subtitle M of Title IX of the
 613 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to
 614 time, to the Department of Social Services, for the fiscal year ending
 615 June 30, 2024, for the purpose of hiring temporary and part-time
 616 employees who will be responsible for collaborating with nonprofit
 617 organizations to identify and enroll eligible children in the HUSKY
 618 Health program, in accordance with the provisions of section 16 of this
 619 act.

620 Sec. 19. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of fifteen thousand dollars is
 621 appropriated to the Department of Education from the General Fund,
 622 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, for the purpose of awarding a
 623 grant to a nonprofit organization described in section 17 of this act, for
 624 the training of school behavioral health providers to identify and
 625 provide services for at-risk teenage students who are experiencing
 626 depression, anxiety, substance abuse struggles, and trauma and
 627 conflict-related stresses.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	11-24a
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	11-24b
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248g(h)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248e(b)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	31-57r
Sec. 9	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	31-57t(a)
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 13	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	20-195o(a)
Sec. 14	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	19a-88(e)(1) and (2)
Sec. 15	<i>from passage</i>	PA 22-81, Sec. 24
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 17	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

Sec. 18	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 19	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

KID *Joint Favorable*