

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sHB-5506

AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILIES WITH SERVICE NEEDS.

## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 25 \$	FY 26 \$
Judicial Dept. (Probation); Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	Significant	Significant
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF - Cost	Significant	Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill allows parents to file a family with service needs (FWSN) petition with the juvenile court, including referrals for children who are truant or who are habitually defiant of school rules. The FWSN program was eliminated in 2020. This bill results in a significant cost to the Judicial Department, to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and to the Office of the State Comptroller.

DCF and the Judicial Department would likely need to hire Juvenile Probation Officers, Court Liaisons, Social Workers, Social Work Supervisors, Children and Families Program Supervisors, and a Children and Families Program Director. The number of staff required, and the corresponding fringe benefit cost for staff, would be predicated on the volume of FWSN referrals to DCF and the Judicial Department. Ensuring availability of appropriate services for the referred FWSN

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<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.25% of payroll in FY 25.

population will vary based on the needs of the population and the number of referrals.

It is anticipated that the services that would be impacted, and require additional funding, are in the following domains within DCF: behavioral health services, in-home services, and residential services. In the Judicial Department, referrals would largely be made to community based services and contracted providers and the cost would be significant.

The bill also eliminates the option of a police officer to hold a child who has run away from home in protective custody. This is not anticipated to have a fiscal impact to the state or to municipalities as officers may exercise other options.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of qualifying FWSNs and referrals, assessed needs of the population, and inflation.

*Sources: Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division Program Inventory for Fiscal Year 2022  
Judicial Branch Families with Service Needs Reports FY 2008-FY 2020  
<https://www.jud.ct.gov/statistics/juvenile/default.htm>*