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## OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6894 (as amended by House "A")\*

### ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes an interagency council on homelessness in statute (see BACKGROUND) and charges it with advising and assisting the Department of Housing (DOH) commissioner to improve homelessness prevention and response efforts. The council has 25 regular members (13 ex officio and 12 appointed) and up to eight more ad hoc members as determined by its chairperson (the DOH commissioner). The bill requires the council to convene by October 1, 2025, and to meet at the request of the DOH commissioner or a majority of the regular members.

The bill also requires the council, starting by July 1, 2026, to annually report its recommendations to the governor and the Appropriations, Housing, and Human Services committees.

\*House Amendment "A" (1) increases the council's membership by adding as regular members the Office of Health Strategy executive director, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and 12 appointed members and (2) eliminates a provision requiring the council to meet at least quarterly.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **COUNCIL DUTIES**

The bill specifically charges the council with doing the following:

1. considering ways to improve existing homelessness programs by coordinating policies across state agencies, including those that improve health and human services for people experiencing homelessness, increase housing stability, and create more affordable housing;

2. improving state programs in the homelessness response system, including immediate assistance for people experiencing homelessness, support for emergency shelters, and investments in housing stability; and
3. meeting the state's housing demands by maximizing funding for housing assistance, increasing the permanent supportive housing supply, improving rapid rehousing programs, and evaluating and finding solutions for expanded access to safe and affordable housing with an interagency approach designed to support the needs of people in the state.

### COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The table below describes the council membership under the bill. Ad hoc members and regular ex officio members, with the exception of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, may be designees.

**Table: Interagency Council on Homelessness Membership**

<i>Regular Members</i>	
<i>Ex Officio</i>	<i>Appointments</i>
DOH commissioner (chairperson)	DOH commissioner: two appointments
Department of Aging and Disability Services commissioner	Senate president pro tempore: two appointments; one who is a person experiencing (or that has previously experienced) homelessness and one who represents a continuum of care organization
Department of Children and Families commissioner	House speaker: two appointments; one who represents an organization advocating for domestic violence victims or prevention and one who represents an organization providing shelters or housing for people experiencing homelessness
Department of Correction commissioner	Senate majority leader: one appointment who is a representative of a public housing authority
Department of Labor commissioner	House majority leader: one appointment with expertise in mental health or addiction treatment
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services commissioner	Senate minority leader: two appointments; one who represents local government and one who represents a philanthropic organization

Regular Members	
Ex Officio	Appointments
Department of Social Services commissioner	House minority leader: two appointments; one who represents a faith-based organization and one who represents a group advocating for housing developers
Department of Veterans Affairs commissioner	
Office of Policy and Management secretary	
Judicial Department Court Support Services Division executive director	
Office of Health Strategy executive director	
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority chief executive officer	
Long-Term Care Ombudsman	
Optional Ad Hoc Members	
Department of Developmental Services commissioner	
Department of Economic and Community Development commissioner	
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection commissioner	
Department of Public Health commissioner	
Office of Early Childhood commissioner	
State Department of Education commissioner	
Department of Transportation commissioner	
Office of Higher Education commissioner	

## BACKGROUND

### ***Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness***

In January 2024, Governor Lamont announced the establishment of the Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness, with a charge similar to the council codified under the bill.

## COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18    Nay 0    (02/20/2025)