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## OLR Bill Analysis

### HB 7098 (as amended by House "A")\*

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING TUITION REFUNDS FOR FORMER STONE ACADEMY STUDENTS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes new eligibility criteria for former Stone Academy students to receive tuition refunds from the private career school student protection account. It makes these students eligible if they were enrolled in, but did not graduate from, Stone Academy's practical nurse education program between November 1, 2021, and February 28, 2023, and did not:

1. receive credit for a Stone Academy course or unit at another practical nurse education program;
2. receive a tuition refund from this account already;
3. participate in a teach-out (instruction that completes a course or program after a private school closes); or
4. after the bill's effective date, take a proctored comprehensive predictor examination given by an Office of Higher Education (OHE)-identified institution (this exam assesses a student's readiness for the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses).

The bill allows these students to apply for a tuition refund until June 30, 2026. A student who receives a tuition refund under the bill is not eligible to participate in a teach-out or proctored comprehensive predictor examination.

Previously, students who were enrolled in Stone Academy's practical nurse program but did not graduate during this same time period were eligible for tuition refunds if they completed a course or unit that did

not comply with legal requirements. Students eligible under these criteria had two years after Stone Academy closed to apply for tuition reimbursement and this application period recently expired.

\*House Amendment "A" adds the provision making students who receive tuition refunds under the bill ineligible to participate in teach-outs or proctored comprehensive predictor examinations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Private Career School Student Protection Account***

This General Fund account is generally used to refund tuition to students unable to complete a course at a private career school because the school became insolvent or ceased operation. It is funded by quarterly assessments on private career schools and certain other fees (CGS § 10a-22u).

By law, OHE may also use up to \$150,000 from the fund to pay stipends to former Stone Academy students (PA 23-204, § 67).

### ***Application for Private Career School Tuition Refund***

When a private career school becomes insolvent or closes abruptly, preventing a student from finishing a course or unit of instruction, state law allows the student to apply to OHE for a tuition refund. OHE reviews the applications and determines the validity of the student's claim and the amount of the refund.

Tuition refunds are financed by the private career school student protection account. The student or any person or organization who paid tuition on the student's behalf receives a refund from the state to the extent the account has the necessary funds (CGS § 10a-22v).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18    Nay 0    (03/11/2025)