
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7131 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDENTS IN PARAMEDIC CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the chief workforce officer, by September 1, 2025, to evaluate Department of Public Health (DPH)-approved paramedic certificate programs and identify those that qualify as high-value certificate programs. It makes students in programs identified as high-value certificate programs eligible for loans from the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA), if they are otherwise eligible for student loans.

The bill requires CHESLA, within available funding, to create a high-value certificate loan program to provide loans to students in high-value certificate programs, including students in the paramedic certificate programs identified as high-value certificate programs.

It requires the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS), starting by October 1, 2025, to annually identify, post on its website, and provide to DPH-approved paramedic certificate programs a list of public or private financial aid sources for their students.

*House Amendment "A" refers to paramedic programs approved by DPH rather than the Office of Emergency Medical Services and replaces the provision requiring OWS to develop and implement a financial aid program for paramedic students with requirements for (1) the chief workforce officer to determine which programs are high-value certificate programs and (2) CHESLA to create a high-value certificate loan program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

High-Value Certificate Programs

By law, a high-value certificate program is a noncredit, sub-baccalaureate certificate program that is (1) offered by a higher education institution or private career school and (2) identified by the chief workforce officer as meeting the needs of employers.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 1 (03/13/2025)