



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 30

January Session, 2025

Senate Bill No. 1218

Senate, March 3, 2025

The Committee on Children reported through SEN. MAHER, C. of the 26th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING WATER SAFETY AND SWIM INSTRUCTION.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) For the purposes of this
2 section, "eligible participant" means any individual under seventeen
3 years of age who (1) resides in a qualified census tract, as defined in
4 section 4-66c of the general statutes, (2) is eligible for the supplemental
5 nutrition assistance program administered by the Department of Social
6 Services pursuant to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and
7 section 17b-2 of the general statutes, or (3) is eligible for the federal
8 Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children
9 administered by the Department of Public Health pursuant to section
10 19a-59c of the general statutes.

11 (b) The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall,
12 within available appropriations, establish and administer an annual
13 program to provide swimming lessons free of charge to eligible
14 participants during the summer months. The department may contract
15 with one or more nonprofit entities that provide swimming lessons and

16 water safety skills instruction to provide swimming lessons under the
17 program.

18 (c) The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection may
19 accept gifts, grants and donations, from any source, public or private,
20 for the purpose of establishing and administering such program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2025	New section

KID *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Cost	Approx. \$1 million/6,000 lessons	

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in a significant cost to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) associated with requiring the department to establish and administer a free swim program to certain children who qualify. It is estimated that every 6,000 lessons administered by DEEP will result in an additional cost of approximately \$1 million.¹

It is estimated that there are approximately 228,620 SNAP households and 28,442 WIC children who could qualify under the program.² The exact number of eligible participants would be dependent upon where the children reside, as only families who reside in a qualified census tract are eligible.

In addition to the \$1 million cost for each 6,000 lessons, DEEP would require up to \$50,000 annually for consulting and administrative costs

¹ The cost estimate is based on an existing free swim program administered by DEEP, which provides free swim lessons at various state parks. This program was funded with \$1 million in ARPA funds allocated to DEEP (\$500,000 in FY 22 and \$500,000 in FY 23).

²<https://www.fns.usda.gov/data-research/data-visualization/program-participation>

associated with administering the program.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of lessons provided.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 1218*****AN ACT CONCERNING WATER SAFETY AND SWIM INSTRUCTION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), within available appropriations, to establish and administer an annual program to provide free swimming lessons throughout the summer to children under age 17 who meet certain criteria. To qualify, participants must live in a qualified census tract (see BACKGROUND) or be eligible for either the supplemental nutrition assistance program administered by the Department of Social Services, or the federal Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children administered by the Department of Public Health.

The bill also allows DEEP to (1) contract with non-profit organizations that provide swimming lessons and water safety skills instruction to provide swimming lessons through the program and (2) accept public and private gifts, grants, and donations to create and administer the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***Qualified Census Tract***

A “qualified census tract” is any census tract, during a given year, where either (1) 50% or more of the households had an income less than 60% of the area median gross income or (2) the poverty rate is at least 25%. Qualified census tracts are designated by the U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (26 U.S.C. § 42(d)(5)(B)(ii); see CGS § 4-66c).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 12 Nay 5 (02/18/2025)