

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-1492

AN ACT CONCERNING LAW ENFORCEMENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection	GF - Cost	7.5 - 15 million	7.5 - 15 million
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection	GF - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Appropriation	500,000	None
Constituent Units of Higher Education	GF - Revenue Loss	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
Higher Ed., Off.	GF - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
CHFA	CHFA - Potential Cost/Revenue Impact	Minimal	Minimal
Comptroller	GF - Cost	50,000	None
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund; CHFA=Resources of CHFA

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Hartford; New Haven; Waterbury; Bridgeport; Stamford; Greenwich; Norwalk; Danbury; New Britain; West Hartford	Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below

¹The 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 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

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Reviewer: PR

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Various Municipalities	Grand List Reduction	None	See Below
Various Municipalities	Potential Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below
Various Municipalities	Potential Savings	See Below	See Below
Various Municipalities	Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill makes various changes regarding the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers, resulting in the various impacts described below.

Section 1 requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to develop a state-wide campaign to promote the law enforcement profession. Section 21 appropriates \$500,000 in FY 26 to DESPP for this purpose.

Section 2 requires DESPP to employ a full-time cadet or explorer program coordinator, resulting in an estimated total cost of \$115,533 annually beginning in FY 26. The starting salary of the program coordinator is approximately \$75,000, with associated fringe benefits of \$30,533. There is also an estimated cost of \$10,000 for other expenses, including educational supplies and promotional materials.

This section also requires DESPP to allocate \$5,000 to each municipal police department that operates or plans to operate a cadet or explorer program each year, resulting in a potential cost to the state of up to \$475,000² in FY 26 and FY 27. There is a corresponding potential revenue gain of \$5,000 to each municipal police department that operates or plans to operate a cadet or explorer program each year.

Section 3 requires DESPP to establish a grant program to reimburse municipal police departments for the cost of basic training for police officers, resulting in a cost to the state and savings to municipalities

² As of October 2023, Connecticut had 95 municipal police departments.

ranging from about \$5,000 to \$70,000 per officer.³ Costs will vary widely because the bill does not specify which expenses the grant covers. For every 100 officers that attend basic training, the cost can range from \$500,000 to \$7 million each year.

Section 4 requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) to examine criminal justice courses offered by colleges and universities in the state, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state because POST has the expertise to meet the requirements of the section.

This section also requires POST to establish a pilot program with the University of New Haven to permit an individual who attends the academy for basic training to complete a portion such training at the university, which results in no fiscal impact to the state.

Section 5 prohibits POST from denying police officer certification and law enforcement units from denying someone employment as a police officer solely because they are a lawful permanent resident noncitizen, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

Section 6 requires DESPP to provide a grant to each of the top ten most populous municipalities in the state to increase the salaries of police officers serving such municipalities, resulting in a cost to the state ranging from \$7.3 million to \$14.6 million in FY 26 and FY 27. It is estimated that each of these approximately 2440 officers⁴ will receive an additional \$3,000 to \$6,000 annually to make their salaries competitive with surrounding communities. The cost may be reduced if these grants are only applied to starting salaries. The following table shows the estimated revenue gain by municipality:

Municipality	Officers ⁴	Revenue Gain Estimate \$
Hartford	382	1,146,000 - 2,292,000
New Haven	352	1,056,000 - 2,112,000
Waterbury	293	879,000 - 1,758,000
Bridgeport	289	867,000 - 1,734,000

³ The cost of tuition and fees for a police officer to attend basic training may potentially be as low as \$5,000 per student, while including the cost of uniforms, equipment, and salary while attending training can result in a cost of up to \$70,000 per student.

⁴ From Office of Legislative Research Report 2023-R-0265.

Stamford	273	819,000 - 1,638,000
Greenwich	182	546,000 - 1,092,000
Norwalk	179	537,000 - 1,074,000
Danbury	178	534,000 - 1,068,000
New Britain	162	486,000 - 972,000
West Hartford	150	450,000 - 900,000
Total:	2440	7,320,000 - 14,640,000

Section 7 requires DESPP and POST to jointly submit a report to the Public Safety and Security Committee with recommendations on giving bonuses to encourage people to begin and continue careers as police officers, resulting in no fiscal impact because the agencies have the expertise to meet the requirements of the section.

Section 8 has no fiscal impact. It requires the constituent units of higher education, and POST to develop a pathway to help police officers earn higher education degrees. It is anticipated that the agencies have the expertise to meet the requirements of the section.

Sections 9-11 result in a potentially significant revenue loss annually beginning in FY 26 to the constituent units of higher education. The sections waive tuition for: (1) certain police officers, and (2) dependent children of certain police officers. There are an estimated 8,092 state and local police officers in Connecticut.

The revenue loss to the constituent units will vary based on the number of waivers and the institution waiving tuition. The table below shows the per student value of a tuition waiver from the University of Connecticut (UConn), the Connecticut State Universities (CSUs), and CT State. It also shows what the potential revenue loss would be in FY 26 if an additional 500, 1,000, and 1,500 students received the waiver at each institution.

Examples of Tuition Waiver Value, FY 26			
FY 26 Per Student Waiver Value	17,012	6,998	4,608
# Addt'l Students Receiving Waiver	UConn Est. Revenue Loss \$	CSUs Est. Revenue Loss \$	CT State Est. Revenue Loss\$
500	8,506,000	3,499,000	2,304,000

1,000	17,012,000	6,998,000	4,608,000
1,500	25,518,000	10,497,000	6,912,000

Section 12 results in a potential significant cost to the Office of Higher Education (OHE) annually beginning in FY 26. It establishes a student loan reimbursement program for individuals employed as police officers in Connecticut for at least ten years. Eligible participants may receive an annual grant for up to ten years. The grant may equal up to 10% of their loans and is capped at \$5,000 per year.

The costs will vary based on the number of grants awarded, and level of award provided, and could be significant. It is not known how many police officers would be eligible for the program, or the amount of student loans they have. If five percent of sworn police officers in the state received grants of \$5,000 annually as a result of the bill, the total cost would be approximately \$2 million annually.

Given the potential scope of the new program, it is anticipated that OHE will need to hire a Program Manager for administration. This results in annual costs of approximately \$100,000 in salary and \$40,700 in fringe benefits (for a total of \$140,700). Costs in FY 26 would likely be \$105,500 (\$75,000 salary and \$30,500 fringe benefits), given an October 1 start date.

Section 13 exempts \$10,000 in property taxes on property belonging to or held in trust for a police officer who resides in a distressed municipality. This results in a grand list reduction to distressed municipalities beginning in FY 26. A grand list reduction results in a revenue loss given a constant mill rate, however it is likely that a municipality will adjust its mill rate to offset any predicted revenue loss.

According to a 2023 report, 18 of the 2024 distressed municipalities had municipal police departments. If every one of these police officers received the full exemption, it would result in a cumulative grand list reduction of approximately \$20 million. There would be an additional grand list reduction for any state police that also qualified for the

exemption.

Section 14 requires the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to enhance assistance available to police officers purchasing a home, which results in costs to CHFA from the quasi-public's own resources beginning in FY 26 associated with developing and administering the program.⁵

Costs or revenue loss for providing other forms of assistance would depend on: (1) the number of police officers assisted and (2) the type of enhancement developed. Given the low utilization rate of CHFA's Police Officer Homeownership Program, the bill is not anticipated to materially change the rate of spending.⁶

Section 15 results in a cost of approximately \$50,000 to the Office of the State Comptroller in FY 26 in consulting fees to study retirement options and make police health care coverage recommendations.

Section 16 directs the Governor to enter negotiations to amend any collective bargaining agreement with state police officers to establish conditions for retired officers to return to service, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

Section 17 requires collective bargaining agreements between municipalities and municipal police officers to allow retired, POST certified officers to return to part or full-time employment, while collecting a pension, resulting in an indeterminate fiscal impact to municipalities beginning in FY 26. The fiscal impact is dependent on the extent the costs associated with the reemployment of retirees (including wages, fringe benefits and additional pension liability), offset current overtime costs incurred by the municipalities.

Section 18 creates a task force to study the volunteer police auxiliary

⁵ CHFA is a quasi-public authority that issues its own federally tax-exempt and taxable mortgage revenue bonds. The authority pays its operating expenses using funds derived from the excess of interest income from loans over bond interest expenses.

⁶ In 2024, 2 utilized the existing Police Officer Homeownership Program.

force resulting in no fiscal impact to the state because the task force has the expertise to meet the requirements of the bill.

Section 19 requires DESPP to develop a pilot program to provide law enforcement units with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), resulting in a one-time cost in FY 26 that will vary widely depending on the scale of the program and number of participating law enforcement units. To administer the program, DESPP will need to hire one emergency management program specialist, resulting in a total cost of \$122,000 (\$83,000 salary, \$34,000 fringe benefits, \$5,000 other expenses). UAVs used by law enforcement typically cost approximately \$10,000 each but may range in price from \$5,000 to over \$50,000. There are also additional training, software, and equipment expenses that are incidental to purchasing a UAV. The bill does not limit which law enforcement units are eligible to participate in this program, but should ten law enforcement units participate, it is estimated to cost the state at least \$500,000.

Section 20 requires DESPP, in consultation with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and several other law enforcement organizations, to investigate and report on ways to develop and enhance programs and initiatives that address the mental health needs of police officers. This results in no fiscal impact because DESPP has the expertise to meet the requirements of the section

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of grants administered, tuition waivers granted, property tax exemptions granted, employee wage increases, and inflation.

The impacts identified in sections 15, 19 and 21 are one-time costs and have no out years effect.