

Committee on Children

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6841

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSAL BASIC

Title: INCOME PILOT PROGRAM.

Vote Date: 3/6/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/13/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to establish a universal basis income pilot program and directs the Department of Social Services to convene a working group to study the state-wide implementation of a universal basic income program.

This bill looks to assist lower income families with direct cash payments to help alleviate the ongoing costs of early childcare. The bill is a study to get more information and data on how to implement a universal basic income program that is effective.

The S language defines the makeup of the working group and directs it to identify funding sources for programs that might reduce rates of poverty.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Social Services, Commissioner, Ms. Andrea Barton Reeves:](#) does not support this bill requires that the Department of Social Services design and implement an unrestricted cash transfer pilot program for residents in 5 Connecticut communities. There are numerous pilot programs that are in operation in the state or that are planning to start operations that are designed to explore the impact of direct case transfers within various population groups. Because this proposal would require additional staff and system resources to implement and would also require the state to fund the program operations and benefits, none of which are currently funded in the Governor's budget.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Legal Services, Attorney, Mr. James Haslam: supports this bill. They are supportive of a program such as the one described here but they are concerned with the unintended harm to the existing or future benefits of recipients of basic income programs. They have attached suggested substitute language to implement with the bill in their testimony.

4-CT, CEO, Ms. Sarah Blanton: supports this legislation. The term universal basic income has faced significant political and public pushback often misconstrued as a form of socialism. This is not true. This appears to be a strategically designed and targeted program for a limited number of people. It is hardly universal.

Connecticut Voices for Children, Research & Policy Associate, Ms. Ruchi Sheth: support this bill because it would assist both expectant and parent/guardian of at least one child through an additional infusion of cash that is needed for families to move out of poverty. We would ask that this pilot be called a guaranteed basic income pilot rather than a universal basic income pilot to reflect the population more accurately it would serve.

YWCA - Greenwich, President, and CEO, Ms. Mary Lee Kiernan: Their comments were offered in support of this bill. It takes thoughtful research driven approach by incorporating input from experts in economics, housing, child welfare, labor, workforce development, and social services across diverse regions of Connecticut.

Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative, Elaine Mintz: They offered their comments in support of this proposal. They support the bill to study the impact of direct cash assistance for families across 5 Connecticut municipalities. A state-led pilot would contribute to the growing evidence of the positive impacts of direct cash assistance and offer valuable insights for effective program implementation.

4-CT,Community Engagement and Advocacy Fellow, Mr. Abraham Santiago: supports this legislation and describes his own experience as a recipient of 4-CT's reentry program. He received \$500 a month for a year after spending two decades in prison. That support was more than financial, it was the foundation that allowed him to rebuild his life. He asks the committee to refine the language of the bill to ensure targeted cash assistance programs are accurately represented and not mistaken for Universal Basic Income.

Connecticut Cradle to Career Coalition, Director of Policy and Civic Engagement, Ms. Kathleen Callahan: They presented their comments in support of this bill. Universal Basic Income aligns with their long-term policy strategy, including efforts to establish a permanent, fully refundable child tax credit. They believe that the state can take a critical step toward ensuring all families have the resources they need to thrive.

Ms. Michelle Noehren: Her comments were in support of this proposal saying that is a bold and necessary step in addressing economic insecurity people and families with the stability necessary to meet their basic needs and pursue opportunities for upward mobility.

Mr. Ryan Soller: He supports this bill and indicates that as someone with a disability, without benefits, he believes that a person should not be dependent on being able to work to have access to basic needs.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Anonymous:](#) offers his comments in opposition to this legislation. He believes that the bill undermines work ethic and economic growth, is a step towards economic dependency, is a costly and misguided experiment, that social equity should not mean equal poverty, and that the American dream is built on opportunity and not handouts.

[Rev. Peter Haddad, West Haven:](#)

[Ms. C Marcella Kur, Wallingford:](#)

[Ms. Mona Colwell:](#)

[Mr. James Damon, Fairfield:](#)

[Anonymous:](#)

[Anonymous:](#)

[Anonymous:](#)

[L Barrow-Rossi:](#)

[Ms. Jackie Homan, Greenwich Patriots:](#)

[Dr. Linda Dalessio:](#)

[Anonymous:](#)

[Ms. Susan Bradford:](#)

expressed their opposition for the bill. Their reasons included that it represents wealth redistribution, communism, socialism, creation of a welfare state, increased taxes on working families and others.

Reported by: Richard Ferarri, Asst. Clerk

Date: 3/18/2025