

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7094

AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY TO
CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXPAND PAID WORK-BASED LEARNING

Title: OPPORTUNITIES.

Vote Date: 3/11/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/4/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Raised Bill HB-7094 seeks to create a working group invested in expanding the paid work-based learning initiatives active in the state of Connecticut.

This bill fills a need for increased work experience in the population engaged in higher education. Paid work-based learning programs prepare students well for retention of employment post-education, and promotes economic and employment growth in our state, hence addressing the employment deficit in our state.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language offers general grammatical changes and edits throughout.

In particular, the substitute language, in Section 1, adds subsection (7) adding nonprofit organizations who offer Work-Based Learning (WBL) to the purview of the statutes, subsection (8) adding the allowance for one or more workplace development boards, and subsection (9) a separate entity from the previous subsection (6) making any entity or group deemed germane by the Chief Workforce Officer.

In addition, in line 20 the substitute language dictates that the working group will solicit feedback from individuals currently or formerly involved in such WBL programs for their further edification.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Office of Workplace Strategy, Chief Workforce Officer, Kelli-Marie Vallieres](#): Supports this bill because it exposes students to novel forms of education, forms a better work experience portfolio for those students enrolled in Work-Based Learning initiatives, and creates a new choice for students to exploit when it comes to higher education.

In addition, the New England Board of Higher Education, authorized by Section 10a-61 of the general statutes, is now beginning a study on work-based learning initiatives and aligns well with this proposed legislation.

Though, they urge they urge that this measure be aligned with the Governor's proposed budget when it comes to resources necessary to execute this legislation.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Connecticut Education Association, President, Kate Dias](#): Supports this bill because it will act as a remedy to the over 1,200 vacant teaching positions in our state, therefore benefiting our state's student's education. In addition, the cost relief of internships provided in this legislation would also greatly help our state's new educators and professionals entering the extremely stressful and fraught nature facing teachers in today's world.

[Hartford Foundation, Sr. Public Policy Officer, Chris Senecal](#): Supports this bill because it will assist in the reversal of a historic trend among disenfranchised groups not being able to attend post-secondary education due to financial need. This group also espouses support for representatives of nonprofit organizations be advisors to the workforce board based on their expertise and knowledge of the given situation.

[Connecticut Business and Industry Association, Public Policy Associate, Jenna Grasso](#): Supports this bill because it gives students of Connecticut institutions of higher education a greater ability to enter the workforce, and thus benefit their employers, themselves, and the state.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Tom Atwood

Date: 3/18/2025