

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7098

AN ACT CONCERNING TUITION REFUNDS FOR FORMER STONE ACADEMY

Title: STUDENTS.

Vote Date: 3/11/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/4/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:

On February 15th, 2023, Stone Academy, located in East Hartford, Waterbury, and West Haven, CT, was forced to close its doors, leaving almost one thousand aspiring nursing students, many of whom come from low-income and/or historically marginalized groups. These exiled students face much hardship, both educationally and economically due to this closure.

A great multitude of these affected students have invested at or surpassing \$30,000 into their collegiate career, and since the closure, they have been unable to either a.) recoup on the personal costs expended, or b.) find institutions who would be willing to educate them at the level they had achieved, pursuant to the fact that all credits gained at Stone Academy, and, in many cases, the hours spent in residency through Stone Academy, remain null and void.

Raised Bill HB-7098 aims to address this issue and assist these aspiring students with the funds they have lost in the closure of Stone Academy to restart or carry on their collegiate careers into the vital healthcare industry in our state, which is in desperate need of new nurses and other accredited and educated medical practitioners.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[State of Connecticut, Attorney General, William Tong](#): Supports this bill because it helps bring justice to these students who have suffered greatly, both financially and educationally, from the abrupt closure of Stone Academy, and the alleged gross mistreatment of students, primarily of low-income or marginalized backgrounds, as discovered by the Attorney General

in the ongoing investigation and litigation against those previously in control of Stone Academy at the time of its closure.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg & Knuff, LLC, Class Council, David Slossberg](#): Supports this bill as it pertains to his clients, those former students affected by the closure of Stone Academy. It is important to note, according to this informant, that this bill neither needs, nor calls for, new funds to be allotted to the students who desire restitution, as all funding shall come from existing funds within the Student Protection Account. In addition, this bill (as amended compared to the original 2023 bill), recognizes the tough situation faced by students bereft of opportunity to continue their careers elsewhere due to the inability of other schools to accept their previously gained credits at Stone Academy, and residential hours at places such as Griffin Hospital. In short, this bill gives students who were affected by this closure to receive restitution for their expenses they paid in tuition to Stone Academy in good faith.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Folasade Adebambo](#): Supports this bill because it would provide him, and other students caught up in the closure, to recover financially from the loss caused to them. He also believes that this bill provides justice for those who felt the effects of the school's closure both financially and educationally, giving them a chance to get the degree they have worked tirelessly to achieve.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Amy Otis](#): Supports this bill because it will decrease financial burden on former students, help career growth, and grow the healthcare sector in Connecticut. Though, she wishes that there would be another accredited institution that would be willing to take credits and clinical hours already completed by students at Stone Academy as to prevent them from having to complete said work over again.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Ileana Reyes](#): Supports this bill, as a commuter, mother, and night school student, because she finds this bill because it would allow her to continue her education elsewhere with the refund of invested funds.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Katrina Wain](#): Supports this bill because it would allow her to recoup costs from her education that she had completed the PN program at Stone Academy and taking my exit exam yet was unable to receive her transcripts from the school or take the NCLEX.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Carolina Glordano](#): Supports this bill because it would address a gross mismanagement seen by this petitioner, and many of their classmates, made by the Connecticut Office of Higher Education, who were unable to address their financial inquiries after the closing of Stone Academy. In addition, with the increased cost this petitioner had to invest in a totally new university, unable to accept credits and residency hours attained through Stone Academy, it has become extremely difficult for them to complete their education without this legislation and the adequate restitution there enclosed.

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Samantha Martinez](#): Supports this bill citing the aid it will bring her given personal family loss suffered in early 2020. She posits that with the reduction of out-of-pocket costs for the former students of the Academy, it would benefit the state's

healthcare sector greatly having many more accredited and educated RN's and other medical practitioners in the field.

Several individuals professed similar support to the bill, citing especially reimbursement of out-of-pocket tuition invested into their collegiate careers, and furtherance of their career goals, assisting many of those former students of the institution who are of lower income get a degree, and the support the bill will bring to the deficiencies present when it comes to lack of healthcare providers in Connecticut.

These persons include:

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Caylia Cardona.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Kenisha Ferguson.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Resa Humphrey.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Eddiesha Knot.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Gladys Midy.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Roxanne Rivera.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Amanda Sherwood.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Denise Thompson.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Angela Aurora.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Setina Fleder.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Jeanette Howard.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Tina Kabeya.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Jessica Laudano.](#)

[Stone Academy, Former Student, Cassandra Miller.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Jasmine Rogers.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, K'wya Stafford.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Jelitza Pena.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Wisal Ahmad.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Franchesca Quiles.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Tyrique Harts.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Suzzett Johns.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Yesmary Carela.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Tyisha Wallace.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Guerdie Dorelien.](#)
[Stone Academy, Former Student, Alyssa Ryder.](#)

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Tom Atwood

Date: 3/19/2025