

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7131

AN ACT CONCERNING FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDENTS IN PARAMEDIC

Title: CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS.

Vote Date: 3/13/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/7/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would establish financial aid sources for those training to become paramedics. The emergency medical services (EMS) field is currently having issues with recruiting and retaining paramedics, and this bill could lessen the financial burden of becoming a paramedic, thus strengthening the workforce.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language changes the date that the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) shall identify several sources of financial aid, and post and distribute the list of sources to October 1, 2025. The substitute language also requires OWS to develop and implement a financial aid program for students enrolled in a paramedic program, approved by the Office of Emergency Medical Services. It lastly requires that the OWS submit a report to the higher education and employment advancement committee on the program, including the allocation of aid for each student and any legislative recommendations for the implementation of the program.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Office of Workforce Strategy, Chief Workforce Officer, Dr. Kelli-Marie Vallieres:](#) Supports. States that the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) is working on similar studies. Dr. Vallieres states that OWS is supportive of the committee's efforts to identify ways to support paramedics, and hopes that the efforts align with their research initiatives as well as the Governor's budget.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Association of Connecticut Ambulance Providers, President, Greg Allard](#): Supports. States that recruitment and retainment of emergency medical service (EMS) personnel is a challenge. The Association of Connecticut Ambulance Providers appreciates the committee's attention to the matter believing that establishing financial aid sources and making them easily accessible will strengthen the EMS profession by removing some financial barriers. Clarifies that "Paramedic program graduates are licensed healthcare professionals, not recipients of a certificate". Suggests that if financial aid is made available, that it be easily accessible on the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services website.

[The Connecticut Hospital Association](#): Supports. States that the ongoing shortage of healthcare workers was exacerbated by the pandemic, and that Connecticut needs an "all-hands-on-deck approach" to address it. Suggests that the committee review the Comptroller's 2025 Healthcare Cabinet Report and its workforce recommendations.

[Shyhiem Jones](#): Supports.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Megan Villanova

Date: 3/26/25