

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1410

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO SUPPORT PROMISE

Title: PROGRAMS IN THE STATE.

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 establishes a task force that would explore the expansion of promise programs in the state. These programs are scholarship initiatives that provide not only financial aid to students, but also additional support services and resources to ensure the post-secondary success of recipients. The task force will assess existing programs, identify potential gaps within programs, and advise strategies for statewide implementation of comprehensive programs. By examining ways to improve access to higher education, expand professional development opportunities, address financial challenges, and support student success, this initiative seeks to identify approaches that could enhance educational outcomes in the state.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language changes the qualifications of the task force member appointed by the Senate minority leader from a school guidance counselor at a high school in a rural alliance district to an individual that represents Waterbury's promise program, and removes a requirement that the Minority Leader of the House appoint a school guidance counselor at a high school in an alliance district in an urban or suburban area of the state, just requiring that the Minority Leader of the House appoint a school guidance counselor at a high school in an alliance district.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[University of Connecticut, Vice President for Student Life & Enrollment, Nathan Fuerst:](#)

States that the University of Connecticut (UConn) has formal memorandums with Promise Programs in Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury, and as a result combined with the state's flagship university, the enrollment for students from those cities has doubled in some cases. They state that important work still remains and other cities, especially those deemed to be Alliance Districts, would benefit from the impact of a promise program. States that UConn is willingly to work with the General Assembly if there were to be a committee to identify Promise Programs opportunities across the state.

[Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Senior Public Policy Officer, Chris Senecal:](#)

States that the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving appreciates the effort to ensure students have access to affordable higher education and recognizes the importance of comprehensive support services to help students complete their degrees. The Foundation highlights the role of scholarships, advising, and mentoring in improving college persistence and graduation rates, particularly for students facing financial and systemic barriers. They emphasize the value of public-private partnerships in expanding these programs and recommends that the task force build on existing research and best practices to maximize impact.

[Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority, Executive Director, Jeanette W. Weldon:](#)

States that Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHEFA) looks forward to collaborating on efforts that expand educational opportunities.

[Hartford Promise, President, Sivan Hines:](#)

States that they have provided scholarships but want to highlight that there are many more students that require financial support in order to attend and complete college. States that establishing this task force could help find gaps in our current programs and look into how to create a "statewide, coordinated approach to college access and success". States that since all current Promise Programs are separate organizations, it would be helpful to examine their processes and consider a private partnership model which could "help scale the benefits of Promise Programs" and ensure that more students attend and finish college.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Maya Uyar

Date: 3/28/25