

Appropriations Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1525

AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT BOARD'S
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT

Title: SYSTEM STATUTES.

Vote Date: 4/24/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/28/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Appropriations Committee, on behalf of the Teachers' Retirement Board

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill makes several technical changes to statutes effecting the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). In addition, the bill seeks to: 1) sunset participation in TRS by employees of the Children's Center of Hamden on 7/1/2024, as employees of the Children's Center do not meet IRS regulations for eligibility in the retirement system; 2) to align the processes for elections to the Teachers' Retirement Board in order to reduce costs and administrative burdens; and 3) remove participation in TRS as a retirement option for the Executive Director of the Commission for Educational Technology, as the language is outdated.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Helen Sullivan, Administrator, Teachers' Retirement Board](#) – Ms. Sullivan summarized the proposed changes, stating that the bill "establishes qualified entities, benefit commencement, eligibility for account settlements, and aligns the administrative process for board elections".

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Sandra Bove and Cathy D'Agostino, Legislative Co-Chairs, Association of Retired Teachers of Connecticut \(ARTC\)](#) – Ms. Bove and Ms. D'Agostino submitted testimony expressing ARTC's support of proposed language in Section 5, which calls for the election of Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) teacher and retired teacher representatives to take place in July.

They added that the ARTC membership were pleased that in 2023 legislation passed that allows for two additional retired teacher representatives on the TRB, who are elected and voted on by retired teachers. They shared that ARTC continues to advocate for all four retired teacher representatives elected to the TRB solely by retired teachers.

[Rita McDougald-Campbell, Retired Public School Administrator](#) – Ms. McDougald-Campbell wrote in support of Section 5, which aligns the election of all TRB active and retired teacher representatives. She recommended additional language to require elections for these positions be held during late spring, not in July when many active and retired prospective voters are vacationing. She believes that conducting the election in late spring would maximize participation by both active and retired members. Ms. McDougald-Campbell also suggested adding language that would require that all four active teacher representatives would be elected solely by active teachers, and that all four retired teacher representative would be elected solely by their retired colleagues. She offered that this change would ensure that each group is represented by those who have knowledge of the issues relevant to their specific constituent group.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Rep. Josh Elliott, 88th District](#) – Rep. Elliott submitted testimony against the sunset provisions regarding the Children's Center of Hamden. He expressed concern that preventing new hires of the organization from participating in the Teachers' Retirement System could jeopardize the Center's ability to recruit and retain certified educators who serve some of the state's most vulnerable students.

[Sterling Cochran, Labor Representative, United Professional and Service Employees Union, \(UPSEU\), Local 1222](#) – Mr. Cochran expressed his opposition to the provisions regarding the Children's Center of Hamden and the negative implications of the proposed change. He wrote of the critical role the Children's Center plays in serving students with significant specialized needs who cannot thrive in a traditional public-school setting. He shared that due to the nonprofit status of the Children's Center and the specialized demographic it serves, the organization cannot compete with the salaries or benefits packages provided by the public sector or other private general educational institutions. He added that eliminating pension benefits through the Teachers' Retirement System for new hires would "place an unjust burden on the educators, the students, and their families".

[Thomas Laudadio, VP of Education, The Children's Center of Hamden](#) – Mr. Laudadio submitted testimony opposing the sunset provisions. He wrote of the inability of programs like The Children's Center of Hamden to offer the same salaries that public schools are able to offer their certified teachers. He shared that having the ability to offer certified staff the opportunity to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System has allowed the Children's Center to attract, hire and retain certified teachers, related services professionals and administrators.

Additional staff of The Children's Center of Hamden submitted testimony in support of allowing new hires of the Center to participate in TRS:

Filomena Zuba, Special Education Teacher
Michael Peckham, Special Education Teacher

Reported by: Susan Keane

Date: 4/30/25