
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 7288

Emergency Certification

AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE AND CONCERNING GRANT PROGRAMS, STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS, REVISIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS STATUTES AND VARIOUS PROVISIONS REVISING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027.

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SUMMARY

§§ 1-38, 55, 105-107, 111, 119 & 120 — NEW BOND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR STATE AGENCY PROJECTS AND GRANTS

Authorizes new state GO bonds for FYs 26 and 27 for various capital improvements, grant programs, and other initiatives

§§ 39-50 — SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION BONDS

Authorizes new STO bonds in FYs 26 and 27 for DOT projects

§§ 51-54, 56, 59, 61-65, 71-73, 78-81 & 83 — BOND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR STATUTORY PROGRAMS AND GRANTS

Increases bond authorizations for various statutory grants and purposes and authorizes new bonding for these purposes in FYs 26 and 27

§ 57 — CSCU 2020 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Reduces authorizations under the CSCU 2020 infrastructure program for land and property acquisition and increases, by the amount of the reductions, authorizations for supplemental project funding

§ 58 — SCHOOL AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Reduces the current bond authorization for funding school air quality improvement grants and consolidates several earmarks into a single, smaller one; allows the funds to be used for additional projects, such as to repair fire damage or correct safety violations

§ 60 — TAR GRANT REDUCTION TRIGGER

Requires a 10% TAR program grant reduction if a town or district fails to timely submit its annual report on use of program funding

§ 66 — INNOVATION CORRIDOR AND CONNECTICUT COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE PROGRAMS

Makes changes to the Innovation Corridor and Connecticut Communities Challenge programs, including eliminating sunset dates

§ 67 — COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND 2030

Reduces overall and FY 26 and FY 27 authorizations; makes qualifying projects in distressed municipalities eligible for funding from the CIF 2030 program and moves out the due date for the CIF board's annual report

§ 68 — BROWNFIELD MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM

Makes several changes to the Brownfield Municipal Grant Program, including increasing the possible maximum award from \$4 million to \$6 million and expanding opportunities for participants to receive additional program awards under certain circumstances

§ 69 — TARGETED BROWNFIELD DEVELOPMENT LOAN PROGRAM

Increases the program's maximum annual loan amount from \$4 million to \$6 million, gives the DECD commissioner discretion on prioritizing applications for certain proposed projects, and adds an additional exemption for certain loan recipients from having to enter a property remediation program

§§ 70, 74, 82, 85-90, 92-101, 103 & 104 — BOND CANCELLATIONS AND REDUCTIONS

Cancels or reduces all or part of prior bond authorizations for specified projects and grants

§ 71 — SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Authorizes \$10 million in new state GO bonds for FY 26

§§ 75 & 76 — HOUSING RECEIVERSHIP REVOLVING FUND

Modifies the types of funds available to compensate certain receivers and types of expenses that are covered by the funds; increases by \$5 million per year the amount that may be spent from the Housing Receivership Revolving Fund in any single municipality

§ 77 — UCONN FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PROGRAM

Changes one of the purposes of the UConn Faculty Recruitment and Hiring Program so that it develops laboratories for faculty instead of supporting their compensation and restricts related bonds to that purpose

§ 84 — TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM TRAINING PROGRAMS

Transfers from SDE to CTECS the responsibility for handling bond proceeds dedicated to certain technical high school system training programs

§ 91 — STATE CAPITOL AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Broadens the acceptable use of an existing bond authorization to include construction work on the State Capitol and Legislative Office Building

§ 102 — DOH HEALTH CARE WORKER HOUSING PROGRAM REPORTING

Requires DOH and CHFA to submit a report on increasing health care worker housing options

§§ 109 & 110 — DOH REPORTING ON BOND-FUNDED HOUSING PROGRAMS

Eliminates current law's requirement for DOH reporting to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on specified bond-funded programs and replaces it with a similar requirement; requires CHFA to post certain information on its website

§§ 112 & 113 — GREYFIELD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Principally requires DECD to create a grant or loan program to facilitate the repurposing of commercial retail and office space; authorizes the use of \$50 million in bond funds for the program

§§ 114 & 137 — DECD GRANT PROGRAM FOR CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITE NONPROFITS

Requires DECD's commissioner, within available resources, to establish a grant program for cultural and historic site nonprofits and to file an annual report on these applications; authorizes the department to require a lien on certain properties as a condition for these nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 or less

§ 115 — STRATEGIC SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM

Authorizes DECD to create a strategic supply chain program to provide financial assistance to help develop the supply chains of major and emerging industries in Connecticut; allows the use of up to \$50 million in bond funds for program projects

§ 116 — DECD RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM

Authorizes up to \$30 million in GO bonds and requires DECD to use the proceeds to provide grants for infrastructure projects in rural areas

§ 117 — DOH AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOND PROGRAM

Authorizes up to \$50 million in GO bonds for DOH to finance projects to create employment opportunities in the construction industry by developing affordable housing

§ 118 — ELECTRIC GRID BENEFITS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUNDING

Authorizes up to \$500 million in GO bonds for OPM to benefit the electric grid, promote energy efficiency, and benefit ratepayers

§ 121 — CHILD CARE FACILITIES GRANTS

Requires OEC to establish a competitive grant program for child care facilities' design, construction, and renovations projects; authorizes up to an aggregate \$80 million in state GO bonds with a cap of \$11.5 million for each fiscal year FY26-FY32 and requires OEC to use the proceeds to fund the child care facilities competitive grant program

§ 122 — OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD LIEN

Exempts child care centers that are recipients of grants-in-aid of \$50,000 or less from OEC's authority to place a lien on the property to ensure repayment to the state

§ 123 — DOH PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Broadens the programs for which administrative expenses can be paid for with bond proceeds; caps the allowable use of proceeds for these purposes at \$1 million per year per program

§§ 124-130 — HOMES FOR CT LOAN PROGRAM

Generally requires CHFA to administer a loan program that helps owners or developers get funding to build new residential buildings by guaranteeing loan repayment, up to certain thresholds, for participating banks and credit unions that give loans to these borrowers

§ 131 — DISTRICT REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (DRIP)

Creates the DRIP program to provide financial assistance to local and regional boards of education and other public school operators for constructing, renovating, repairing, and enlarging public school buildings, grounds, and infrastructure; sets allocation requirements and an allocation formula for allocating assistance under the program; authorizes \$60 million in GO bonds for OPM to administer the program

[§§ 132-136 — NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS](#)

Requires assorted reports by state agencies to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and others

[§ 138 — BRIDGEPORT’S CONSULTATION WITH MUNICIPAL FINANCE ADVISORY COMMISSION](#)

Requires Bridgeport to submit and present a corrective action plan to MFAC before receiving certain bond-funded grants

[§ 139 — MUNICIPAL REFERRAL TO OPM SECRETARY FOR DISCUSSION OF FISCAL CONDITION](#)

Requires certain municipalities to discuss with the OPM secretary actions the municipality can take to reduce the municipality's reliance on state funding in the future

[§§ 140 & 144 — HVAC GRANTS](#)

Repeals the existing school construction heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC) grant and instead merges it with an existing school construction grant law

[§§ 140, 144 & 146 — REMOVAL OF CTECS FROM SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM](#)

Removes Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) from the school construction grant program

[§ 141 — SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PRIORITY LIST GRANT COMMITMENTS](#)

Authorizes 8 school construction state grant commitments totaling \$172.4 million toward total project costs of \$265.7 million; reauthorizes one project with an additional estimated cost of \$50.7 million

[§§ 142 & 143 — BONUS REIMBURSEMENT RATES](#)

Applies the 15 point reimbursement rate bonus for certain elementary and early childhood projects to the entire project, not just the early childhood space; establishes a new 15 percentage point bonus for buildings used exclusively for special education program space

[§§ 144 & 145 — REPEALED PROVISIONS](#)

Repeals four provisions related to priority-list school construction grants

[§ 147 — CHARTER SCHOOL GRANTS PRIORITY](#)

Requires the education commissioner to give preference to charter school capital improvements grant applications when the school’s accountability index score meets or exceeds the state-wide average

[§ 148 — INDOOR AIR QUALITY INSPECTIONS](#)

Broadens the window, to start July 1, 2022, rather than July 1, 2026, when a school board’s school HVAC inspection can count as a state-required inspection

[§§ 149-176 — SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT EXEMPTIONS, WAIVERS, AND MODIFICATIONS](#)

Exempts school construction projects in 18 towns and one regional school district from statutory and regulatory requirements to allow these projects to, among other things, qualify for state reimbursement grants, receive higher grant reimbursement percentages, or have their projects reauthorized due to a change in scope or cost

[§§ 177-180, 182 & 224 — BUDGET PROVISIONS](#)

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of these sections

[§ 181 — PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATION FUND](#)

Beginning FY 26, requires any probate fund balance on June 30 exceeding 20%, rather than 15%, of the authorized expenditures in the coming fiscal year to be transferred from the probate court Administration Fund to the General Fund

[§§ 183-185 — CONNECTICUT MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM](#)

Creates a new benefit tier in the CMERS named MERS 2.0 and sets its parameters; requires CMERC to create and administer a MERS defined contribution retirement plan by July 1, 2026; authorizes CMERC to set up and implement an annuity plan as an alternative to CMERS for nonparticipating municipalities, subject to certain requirements

[§ 186 — STATE EMPLOYEE RETIREE LIFE INSURANCE](#)

Changes the service criteria used to determine a retired state employee's eligibility for certain life insurance benefits

[§§ 187 & 188 — PARAMEDIC LICENSE FEE](#)

Eliminates the \$150 application fee for a paramedic license

[§§ 189 & 190 — SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS TO SPECIFIED TOWNS](#)

Makes certain grant payments to specified towns (Branford, Bridgeport, New London, and Voluntown) from the MRSF payable as supplemental grants rather than PILOT payments

[§§ 191-194 — BOTTLE BILL REGISTRATION, REPORTING, AND CONTAINER ACCEPTANCE REQUIREMENTS](#)

Requires redemption centers to be approved to operate by, and annually register with DEEP, rather than just register once; establishes reporting requirements for centers that accept more than 2,500 containers from a person in one day and generally prohibits anyone from redeeming more than 5,000 containers in any day; sets new reporting and record retention requirements; generally prohibits redemption centers from removing containers from their premises prior to distributors removing them; further limits the number of containers a person may redeem at reverse vending machines or dealers per day; prohibits dealers from collecting or charging a refund value for beverage containers that are not purchased in Connecticut; exempts THC-infused beverages and hard cider from the bottle bill's provisions

[§ 195 — STUDY AND PILOT PROGRAM ON SUBSTITUTING COLLEGE COURSES FOR POLICE BASIC TRAINING](#)

Requires POST to (1) study whether college-level criminal justice courses can be substituted for its police basic training courses and (2) create a related pilot program at the University of New Haven

[§ 196 — RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLICE BONUSES](#)

Requires DESPP and POST to create a report with recommendations on awarding bonuses to new and existing police officers

[§ 197 — HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES PATHWAY](#)

Requires the Board of Regents, UConn Board of Trustees, and POST to take specific actions towards helping police officers earn higher education degrees

[§ 198 — STATE POLICE OFFICER RETIREES RETURNING TO SERVICE STUDY](#)

Requires DESPP, in conjunction with SBLR, to study the feasibility of the state entering into negotiations with the State Police officers union to set conditions for retired officers to return to service

[§ 199 — POLICE MENTAL HEALTH](#)

Requires DESPP to investigate ways to develop and enhance programs addressing police officer mental health

[§ 200 — TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS DURING CODIFICATION](#)

Requires the Legislative Commissioners' Office to make necessary technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes when codifying the bill

[§ 201 — LIMITED PURPOSE TRUST COMPANIES STUDY](#)

Requires DOB to study and report to the Banking Committee on the establishment of limited purpose trust companies in the state

[§ 202 — BUDGET PROVISION](#)

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section

[§ 203 — MUNICIPAL GRANTS](#)

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section

[§ 204 — TAX EXEMPTION FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ON CERTAIN RESERVATION LANDS](#)

Delays the effective date of a property tax exemption that HB 7287, as amended by House Amendment "A," establishes for property located on reservation land that is held in trust for a federally recognized Indian tribe

[§ 205 — INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PARTNERS](#)

Allows, rather than requires as under SB 1, school boards to hire or designate a current employee to be an instructional support partner

[§§ 206-208 — STATE HISTORICAL COMMISSION](#)

Creates a 12-member State Historical Commission to examine and make recommendations on questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history; requires the commission to develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol's exterior; requires installation of historical placards around the exterior

[§§ 209 & 210 — TRIBE APPLICATIONS TO CONVERT LAND TO FEDERAL TRUST STATUS](#)

Removes a requirement for the state to oppose Native American tribe applications to convert fee interest land to federal trust status

[§§ 211 & 212 — PREVAILING WAGE FOR OFFSITE CUSTOM FABRICATION](#)

Extends the state's prevailing wage law to cover off-site custom fabrication for a public works project

[§ 213 — FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT WORKING GROUP](#)

Establishes a family entertainment working group to study and make recommendations on family entertainment in the state

§§ 214 & 215 — OHE STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Makes various changes to the OHE student loan reimbursement program, including expanding eligibility and revising certain qualification criteria related to the volunteer hour requirement

§§ 216 & 217 — HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE AND REPEAL OF WORKING GROUP

Establishes a subcommittee of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board to monitor Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) expenditures and sustainability plans and requires the board to make recommendations to the General Assembly on these plans; repeals a budget bill provision creating a working group on CSCU reserve funds

§ 218 — CHANGES TO ECS GRANT PHASE-IN SCHEDULE

Delays by two years the start of an ECS schedule to phase in grant reductions for overfunded towns; holds these towns harmless for FYs 26 and 27

§ 219 — POSTING CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

Requires each school board to post approved curriculum objectives and scope on the board's website

§ 220 — SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR NURSING HOMES

Replaces HB 7287 (§ 358), as amended by House A, and requires DSS to distribute up to \$55 million in supplemental funding to nursing homes and proportionally distribute it to support wage increases for nursing home employees

§§ 221 & 222 — DDS PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS

Requires DDS to (1) distribute up to \$5 million in supplement funding to residential services providers in FY 27 and (2) from an available \$105 million pool, increase provider rates in FY 28 to support wage increases

§ 223 — REPEAL OF ASSIGNED MUNICIPAL LIEN INTEREST RATE AND FEE PROVISIONS

Repeals §§ 245 & 246 of the 2025 budget implementer, which generally (1) reduces the annual interest rate on assigned municipal property tax liens; (2) for these and municipal sewer assessment liens, requires a written contract for the assignment to be valid; and (3) caps attorney's fees for the disposition of these assigned liens at 15% of the judgment involved

§ 225 — BRIDGEPORT ELECTION MONITOR

Requires SOTS to hire and install an election monitor for Bridgeport and conduct a town-wide bilingual public awareness campaign to educate the public on their rights under the state's election laws

§§ 226 & 227 — SEEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

Repeals provisions passed during the 2025 legislative session regarding SEEC Executive Director appointments, including that they receive legislative approval, and instead requires that (1) any reappointment be limited to a single term of up to four years and (2) before any reappointment, the executive director must appear at a joint legislative public hearing to discuss SEEC's efforts and the CEP program

§§ 228-232 — SOUTH MEADOWS SITE REVISIONS

Modifies provisions in the budget and implementer bill (HB 7287) related to the South Meadows site by, among other things, (1) requiring the state to include the site in the basis for state PILOT payments to Hartford until the site is redeveloped and (2) removing the Brainard Airport exclusion; specifies that no power or action of the South Meadows Development District

established under the budget and implementer bill supersedes or authorizes conflicts with federal law or aviation regulations concerning Brainard

§ 233 — PAID SICK LEAVE INCREMENTS

Allows boards of education and municipal employers to require that certain employees use their accrued paid sick leave in the increments set in their applicable collective bargaining agreements, rather than in one-hour increments, as long as they meet certain conditions

§§ 234-237 — PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE FOR CERTAIN SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Extends the state's Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program to cover school employees whose position does not require a professional certification; correspondingly extends the state's FMLA to cover these employees

§ 238 — BRIDGEPORT SOCCER STADIUM STUDY

Requires the DECD commissioner to assess the proposed Connecticut United Football club stadium's anticipated economic impact on Connecticut and the city of Bridgeport

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes new state general obligation (GO) and special tax obligation (STO) bonds and adjusts several current bonds and bond programs. It also creates new bond programs and reporting requirements. Additionally, the bill makes several technical and conforming changes to bonding statutes, including removing a cross reference to a bill that was not enacted and instead specifying the purposes (§ 108).

The bill (1) authorizes new school construction state grant commitments, (2) exempts specified school construction projects from statutory and regulatory requirements to allow these projects to qualify for state reimbursement grants, among other things, and (3) makes various statutory changes to the school construction statutes.

The bill also makes various other changes, summarized in the section-by-section analysis that follows.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, for FY 26 bond authorizations, and July 1, 2026, for FY 27 bond authorizations; remaining bonding sections are effective July 1, 2025, unless otherwise noted. For other provisions, see below.

§§ 1-38, 55, 105-107, 111, 119 & 120 — NEW BOND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR STATE AGENCY PROJECTS AND GRANTS

Authorizes new state GO bonds for FYs 26 and 27 for various capital improvements, grant programs, and other initiatives

The bill authorizes new GO bonds for FYs 26 and 27 for the state projects and grant programs listed in the table below. The bonds are subject to standard issuance procedures and have a maximum term of 20 years.

The bill includes a standard provision requiring that, as a condition of bond authorizations for grants to private entities, each granting agency include repayment provisions in its grant contract in case the facility for which the grant is made stops being used for the grant purposes within 10 years of the grantee receiving it. The required repayment is reduced by 10% for each full year that the facility is used for the grant purpose.

The bill repeals an annual reporting requirement to the Department of Transportation (DOT) related to municipal grants-in-aid, and the corresponding penalty for failing to do so (§ 55).

Table: GO Bond Authorizations for State Projects and Grant Programs for FYs 26 and 27

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
STATE CAPITAL PROJECTS				
2(a), 21(a)	Office of Policy and Management (OPM)	Information technology capital investment program	\$75,000,000	\$75,000,000
		Statewide flood and resiliency mapping	5,000,000	0
2(b), 21(b)	Department of Veterans Affairs	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds, and land acquisition	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Expansion of the Middletown State Veterans Cemetery	7,500,000	0
2(c), 21(c)	Department of Administrative Services (DAS)	Upgrades and modernization of the Capitol Area System	42,000,000	0
		Installation of solar photovoltaic systems on state property, excluding state forests, parks, open spaces, farmland, and	40,000,000	20,000,000

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
		natural area preserves		
		Infrastructure repairs and improvements, including (1) fire and safety improvements, and improvements in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); (2) improvements to state-owned buildings and grounds, including energy conservation and off-site improvements; (3) preservation of unoccupied buildings and grounds, including office development, acquisition, and renovations for additional parking; and (4) security improvements at state-occupied buildings	0	10,000,000
		Purchase of equipment, minor improvements, and other associated costs for a new data center	0	16,000,000
2(d), 21(d)	Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP)	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds, including utilities, mechanical systems, and energy conservation projects	10,000,000	50,000,000
2(e), 21(e)	Department of Motor Vehicles	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds	15,000,000	2,500,000
		Alterations, including relocation, of the Wethersfield office	15,000,000	0
2(f), 21(f)	Military Department	State matching funds for anticipated federal reimbursable projects	5,000,000	3,000,000
		Alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds, including utilities, mechanical systems, and energy conservation	1,000,000	1,000,000
		Construction of a Medical Readiness Center	5,000,000	0
		State matching funds for the anticipated federal reimbursable project at the Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group	17,000,000	0

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
		in Groton		
2(g)	Department of Agriculture (DoAg)	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to existing state-owned buildings	5,000,000	0
2(h), 21(g)	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)	Recreation and natural heritage trust program for recreation, open space, resource protection, and resource management	3,000,000	3,000,000
		Alterations, renovations, and new construction at state parks and other recreation facilities, including ADA improvements	40,000,000	30,000,000
		Water pollution control projects at state facilities and engineering reports for regional planning agencies	500,000	500,000
		Renewable energy or combined heat and power projects in state buildings or projects in state buildings and assets to decrease environmental impacts, including those that (1) improve energy efficiency; (2) reduce greenhouse gas emissions from building heating and cooling, including by installing renewable thermal heating systems; (3) expand electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support charging on state property; (4) reduce water use; and (5) reduce waste generation and disposal	5,000,000	5,000,000
		Dam repairs, including state-owned dams	2,500,000	2,500,000
		Design costs and purchase of a research vessel	500,000	7,000,000
2(i), 21(h)	Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA)	Alterations, renovations, and improvements at the Connecticut Convention Center and Rentschler Field	17,000,000	17,000,000
		Alterations, renovations, and improvements to parking garages in Hartford	5,000,000	5,000,000
2(j)	Connecticut Agricultural Experiment	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to existing state-owned buildings, including	1,200,000	0

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
	Station	predesign costs		
2(k)	Department of Public Health	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to existing state-owned buildings	500,000	0
2(l), 21(i)	Department of Developmental Services	(1) Fire, safety, and environmental improvements to regional facilities and intermediate care facilities for client and staff needs, including compliance with current codes, and (2) site improvements, handicapped access improvements, utilities, repair or replacement of roofs, air conditioning, and other building renovations and additions at all state-owned facilities	7,000,000	7,000,000
2(m), 21(j)	Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services	(1) Fire, safety, and environmental improvements to regional facilities and intermediate care facilities for client and staff needs, including compliance with current codes, and (2) site improvements, handicapped access improvements, utilities, repair or replacement of roofs, air conditioning, and other building renovations and additions at all state-owned facilities	20,000,000	40,000,000
		Design and installation of sprinkler systems, including related fire safety improvements, in direct patient care buildings	10,000,000	15,000,000
		Planning and design for replacement of Whiting Forensic Hospital at Connecticut Valley Hospital in Middletown	50,000,000	0
2(n), 21(k)	Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS)	District-wide facility infrastructure upgrades, security improvements, vehicle and equipment purchases, and emergency repairs	30,000,000	30,000,000
		Information technology and support equipment	8,000,000	8,000,000
		Design and construction of a new Windham Technical High School	113,705,019	0
		Capital improvement projects at E.C. Goodwin Technical High	0	35,000,000

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
		School		
2(o), 21(l)	UConn Health Center	System telecommunications infrastructure upgrades, improvements, and expansions	3,000,000	3,000,000
		Equipment, library collections, and telecommunications	25,000,000	10,000,000
		Deferred maintenance, code compliance, and infrastructure improvements	0	30,000,000
2(p), 21(m)	Connecticut State Colleges and Universities	All community colleges: deferred maintenance, code compliance, and infrastructure improvements	30,000,000	0
		All universities: deferred maintenance, code compliance, and infrastructure improvements	30,000,000	0
		All state colleges and universities: energy-efficiency program	5,000,000	0
		Gateway Community College: acquisition, design, and construction of facilities for workforce development programs, including such programs for the transportation, alternative energy, advanced manufacturing, and health sectors	1,000,000	0
		Naugatuck Valley Community College: design for the renovation of Kinney Hall	1,000,000	0
		Norwalk Community College: alterations, renovations, and improvements to the B wing building	1,000,000	0
		System telecommunications infrastructure upgrades, improvements, and expansions	0	5,000,000
2(q), 21(n)	Department of Correction	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to existing state-owned buildings for inmate housing, programming and staff training space, and additional inmate capacity, and for support facilities and off-site improvements	50,000,000	55,000,000
2(r), 21(o)	Department of Children and	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to existing state-	5,000,000	5,000,000

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
	Families	owned buildings		
2(s), 21(p)	Judicial Department	Alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds at state-owned and maintained facilities	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Security improvements at various state-owned and maintained facilities	2,000,000	2,000,000
		Alterations and improvements in compliance with the ADA	5,000,000	5,000,000
		Implementation of the Technology Strategic Plan Project	10,000,000	5,000,000
		Development of new courthouses, including land acquisition and parking	25,000,000	25,000,000
		Renovations to juvenile courts and juvenile residential centers	5,000,000	5,000,000
2(t)	UConn	Equipment, library collections, and telecommunications	5,000,000	0
		Improvements to digital learning infrastructure at a regional campus	3,000,000	0
106	Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority	Capitalization	0	30,000,000
111	Office of Workforce Strategy	Supporting workforce innovation and sustainability	30,000,000	0
HOUSING PROJECTS				
9, 28	Department of Housing (DOH)	Housing development and rehabilitation, including improvements to certain kinds of state-assisted affordable housing and housing-related financial assistance programs, including administrative expenses	200,000,000	200,000,000
105		Time to Own program	60,000,000	60,000,000
107		Grants or forgivable loans to Time to Own program participants for capital improvements to residential properties purchased with program assistance	0	5,000,000
119		Middle housing development grant program for housing authorities	50,000,000	50,000,000

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
		that expand middle housing availability in towns with 50,000 people or less		
120		Grants to landlords who provide housing to formerly incarcerated people	6,000,000	6,000,000
GRANTS				
13(a), 32(a)	OPM	Grants to distressed municipalities	7,000,000	7,000,000
		Grants to support municipalities, homeowners, and small businesses that have been impacted by a catastrophic event	15,000,000	0
		Grants to state-licensed acute care hospitals for construction of facilities for adult inpatient psychiatric beds	2,500,000	2,500,000
55		Grants to municipalities (specifies the grant amounts for each municipality)	150,000,000	150,000,000
13(b), 32(b)	DEEP	Grants to contain, remove, or mitigate identified hazardous waste disposal sites	7,600,000	17,000,000
		Grants to municipalities for improvements to incinerators and landfills, including bulky waste landfills	6,800,000	2,900,000
		Grants to identify, investigate, contain, remove, or mitigate contaminated industrial sites in urban areas	20,000,000	20,000,000
		Grants to municipalities for (1) providing potable water and (2) assessment and remedial action to pollution from perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances	5,000,000	5,000,000
		Various flood control improvements, flood repair, erosion damage repairs, and municipal dam repairs	2,500,000	2,500,000
		Grants to municipalities for open space land acquisition and development for conservation or recreational purposes	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Grant for the removal of Kinneytown Dam	25,000,000	0

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
		Grants to municipalities for renovations and expansion of, and equipment for, solid waste facilities	15,000,000	0
		Microgrid and resilience grant and loan pilot program	0	25,000,000
13(c), 32(c)	Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)	Brownfield Remediation and Revitalization program	40,000,000	40,000,000
		Connecticut Manufacturing Innovation Fund	20,000,000	25,000,000
		Greyfield Revitalization Program (see §§ 112 & 113 below)	20,000,000	30,000,000
		Alterations, renovations, and improvements at the Tweed-New Haven Airport	10,000,000	0
13(d), 32(d)	State Department of Education (SDE)	Grants to regional educational service centers and Goodwin University Education Services for capital expenses at interdistrict magnet schools	20,000,000	0
		Grants to support in-district programming for students with disabilities	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Grants to support boards of education in cities with populations over 140,000, on condition the city appears before the Municipal Finance Advisory Commission and SDE determines use of proceeds (see § 138, below)	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
13(e), 32(e)	CRDA	Grants to encourage development according to CRDA's statutory purposes	31,000,000	25,000,000
		Grants to East Hartford for general economic development activities, including the development of the infrastructure and improvements to the riverfront; the creation of housing units through rehabilitation and new construction; the demolition or redevelopment of vacant buildings; and redevelopment	20,000,000	20,000,000
13(f), 32(f)	DOT	Grants to municipalities for the Town Aid Road (TAR) program	40,000,000	40,000,000

§§	Agency	For	FY 26	FY 27
13(g)	DoAg	Grants to hold land for agricultural preservation purposes	10,000,000	0
13(h)	Department of Aging and Disability Services	Grants to aid for aging in place	5,000,000	0
13(i)	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities	Acquisition, design, construction, and renovation of a facility for a civil rights museum	5,000,000	0
13(j), 32(g)	DOH	Grants to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) for administering the Homes for CT loan program	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Affordable Housing Real Estate Investment Trust pilot program	2,000,000	0

§§ 39-50 — SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION BONDS

Authorizes new STO bonds in FYs 26 and 27 for DOT projects

The bill authorizes new STO bonds in FYs 26 and 27 for DOT projects, as shown in the table below.

Table: STO Bond Authorizations for DOT Projects

Authorized Program Areas	FY 26	FY 27
<i>Bureau of Engineering and Highway Operations</i>		
Interstate highway program	\$31,326,000	\$12,000,000
Urban systems projects	27,400,000	27,500,000
Intrastate highway program	90,000,000	85,000,000
Environmental compliance, soil and groundwater remediation, hazardous material abatement, demolition, salt shed construction and renovation, storage tank replacement, and environmental emergency response at or near state-owned properties or related to DOT operations	23,695,000	23,559,000
State bridge improvement, rehabilitation, and replacement projects	70,600,000	40,600,000
Capital resurfacing and related reconstruction	175,000,000	185,000,000
Fix-it-First program to repair the state's bridges	220,000,000	238,600,000
Fix-it-First program to repair the state's roads	159,600,000	193,000,000
Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program	80,000,000	80,000,000
Grants to municipalities for the TAR Program	40,000,000	40,000,000
Local Bridge Program	20,000,000	20,000,000

Authorized Program Areas	FY 26	FY 27
Highway and bridge renewal equipment	41,035,214	41,035,214
Community connectivity and alternative mobility program	15,000,000	15,000,000
Transportation Rural Improvement Program	10,000,000	10,000,000
Purchase, installation, and implementation of advanced wrong-way driving technology and other wrong-way driving countermeasures	20,000,000	20,000,000
Automated Work Zone Speed Control Program	5,000,000	5,000,000
Renovations and improvements to service plazas along highways	11,750,000	11,750,000
Bureau of Public Transportation		
Bus and rail facilities and equipment, including rights-of-way, other property acquisition, and related projects	277,430,000	284,850,000
Northeast Corridor Modernization Match Program	100,000,000	100,000,000
Commercial Rail Freight Lines	10,000,000	10,000,000
Waterways Program	6,000,000	11,000,000
Bureau of Administration		
Department facilities	140,880,000	127,060,000

§§ 51-54, 56, 59, 61-65, 71-73, 78-81 & 83 — BOND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR STATUTORY PROGRAMS AND GRANTS

Increases bond authorizations for various statutory grants and purposes and authorizes new bonding for these purposes in FYs 26 and 27

The bill increases bond authorizations for various statutory grants and purposes and authorizes new bonding for these purposes for FYs 26 and 27, as shown in the table below. The bill also makes a technical correction and removes a reference to a fulfilled earmark (§ 51).

Table: Statutory Bond Authorizations for FYs 26 and 27

§	Agency	Purpose/Fund	FY 26	FY 27
51	OPM	Urban Action (economic and community development project grants)	\$200,000,000	\$200,000,000
52	OPM	Small Town Economic Assistance Program	0	40,000,000
53	OPM	Capital Equipment Purchase Fund	40,000,000	40,000,000
54	OPM	Local Capital Improvement Program	45,000,000	45,000,000
56	DOH	Housing Trust Fund; caps at \$330 million amount for CHFA to administer a revolving loan fund for workforce housing projects	150,000,000	150,000,000

§	Agency	Purpose/Fund	FY 26	FY 27
59	DAS	School construction projects	550,000,000	550,000,000
61	DEEP	Clean Water Fund grants	133,000,000	175,000,000
62	DEEP	Clean Water Fund loans (revenue bonds)	50,000,000	500,000,000
63	DEEP	Connecticut bikeway, pedestrian walkway, recreational trail, and greenway grant program	10,000,000	10,000,000
64	DESPP	Nonprofit security infrastructure competitive grant program	10,000,000	10,000,000
65	DECD	Manufacturing Assistance Act; earmarks up to \$50 million for supporting strategic defense initiatives	100,000,000	100,000,000
72	DEEP	Financing and awarding grants for certain projects for multi-family residences	0	100,000,000
83	SDE	School security infrastructure competitive grant program	10,000,000	10,000,000

Crumbling Foundations Assistance Fund (§ 71)

The bill increases the existing authorization for the Crumbling Foundations Assistance Fund by \$100 million, in the amounts of \$25 million per year for FYs 27-30.

UConn 2000 Infrastructure Program (§§ 78-81)

The bill increases the authorization for the Greer Field House by \$4 million (from \$160 million to \$164 million), as part of Phase III of the UConn 2000 program (FYs 05-31).

§ 57 — CSCU 2020 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Reduces authorizations under the CSCU 2020 infrastructure program for land and property acquisition and increases, by the amount of the reductions, authorizations for supplemental project funding

The bill changes the purpose of the Phase II authorization for the CSCU 2020 infrastructure program by reducing the Board of Regents' (BOR) land and property acquisition authorization by approximately \$2.4 million (from \$2.6 million to \$192,756), and increasing the supplemental project funding authorization by the same amount (from \$0 to \$2,407,222). Phase II covers FYs 12-14.

The bill similarly alters the project's Phase III authorization (covering FYs 15-21) by reducing BOR's land and property acquisition authorization by approximately \$3.9 million (from \$4 million to \$100,592), and increasing the supplemental project funding authorization by the same amount (from \$16 million to approximately \$19.9 million).

§ 58 — SCHOOL AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Reduces the current bond authorization for funding school air quality improvement grants and consolidates several earmarks into a single, smaller one; allows the funds to be used for additional projects, such as to repair fire damage or correct safety violations

Existing law authorizes state GO bonds for DAS to fund certain school air quality improvement grants. The bill allows them to be used for other school projects, such as to repair damage after a fire or correct safety violations. It reduces the current bond authorization by \$138.5 million (from \$375 million to \$236.5 million).

The bill also modifies earmarks that, under current law, are up to \$15 million of the authorization for grants to purchase equipment and materials for constructing and installing individual classroom air purifiers, with up to \$11.5 million of that amount for UConn as part of the Supplemental Air Filtration for Education program and the remainder for an organization or organizations that provide equipment and materials for individual classroom air purifiers to schools. The bill reduces these to a single earmark of up to \$11.5 million for grants for the above purchases by UConn under the program.

§ 60 — TAR GRANT REDUCTION TRIGGER

Requires a 10% TAR program grant reduction if a town or district fails to timely submit its annual report on use of program funding

The bill requires the OPM secretary to reduce a grant to a town or district under the TAR program by 10% in any fiscal year that the town or district fails to timely submit its annual report to the DOT commissioner by September 1 detailing how the program funds it received were used during the previous fiscal year. However, the bill requires the secretary to waive a reduction if the town or district submits its report after the due date and gives him proof of its submission.

§ 66 — INNOVATION CORRIDOR AND CONNECTICUT COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE PROGRAMS

Makes changes to the Innovation Corridor and Connecticut Communities Challenge programs, including eliminating sunset dates

Current law authorizes DECD, until June 30, 2024, and as part of implementing the state's Economic Action Plan, to (1) establish the Innovation Corridor program to provide grants for (a) major projects in Connecticut and (b) the Connecticut Communities Challenge program to, in turn, provide community development grants, and (2) use bond funds, federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, and available resources to provide grants under these programs. The bill eliminates the sunset date on these authorizations and the department's ability to use ARPA funding. Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, total funding for grants under these programs is capped at \$200 million (\$100 million each).

The bill also makes several changes related to the Innovation Corridor program. Specifically, the bill (1) renames it as the Innovation Clusters program, (2) exempts financial assistance awarded through it from existing law's cap on financial assistance from DECD given without specific legislative approval (see *Background – Cap on Financial Assistance*), and (3) allows the DECD commissioner (or his designee) to serve on the board of directors for an organization that is awarded financial assistance through the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Background — Cap on Financial Assistance

By law, DECD and Connecticut Innovations, Inc. are generally prohibited from awarding more than \$10 million of total financial assistance during any two-year period to an applicant or for a business project unless the assistance is specifically authorized by an act of the legislature (or more than \$20 million in the case of biotechnology business projects) (CGS § 32-462).

§ 67 — COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND 2030

Reduces overall and FY 26 and FY 27 authorizations; makes qualifying projects in distressed municipalities eligible for funding from the CIF 2030 program and moves out the due date for the CIF board's annual report

The bill makes several changes related to the Community Investment Fund (CIF) 2030 program, which is generally a five-year, state bond-funded program for financing qualifying economic and community development projects in eligible municipalities. First, it reduces the program bond authorization by \$108 million (\$875 million to \$767 million). The bill specifies that in FYs 26 and 27, the maximum bonding authorized is \$121 million each year, rather than \$175 million as under current law (a \$54 million difference).

The bill also extends CIF project eligibility beyond public investment communities and alliance districts to also include distressed municipalities (see *Background – Distressed Municipalities*). It also moves out the due date for the CIF board's annual report from August 31 to October 15.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Background — Distressed Municipalities

DECD annually ranks municipalities based on their relative economic and fiscal distress and designates the top 25 as “distressed municipalities” (CGS § 32-9p(b)). Most recently, in 2024, DECD designated the following municipalities as distressed: Ansonia, Bridgeport, Chaplin, Derby, East Hartford, Griswold, Hartford, Lisbon, Mansfield, Meriden, Montville, Naugatuck, New Britain, New London, Norwich, Plainfield, Plymouth, Putnam, Sprague, Sterling, Torrington, Waterbury, West Haven, Winchester, and Windham.

§ 68 — BROWNFIELD MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM

Makes several changes to the Brownfield Municipal Grant Program, including increasing the possible maximum award from \$4 million to \$6 million and expanding opportunities for participants to receive additional program awards under certain circumstances

Under current law, DECD administers a Brownfield Municipal Grant Program that gives grants of up to \$4 million to municipalities, Connecticut brownfield land banks, and economic development agencies for eligible costs of brownfield remediation or assessment

projects and reasonable administrative expenses of up to 5% of the grant awarded.

The bill specifies that these grants may also cover eligible costs for distinct phases of brownfield remediation and assessment projects and makes related conforming changes. It also specifically conditions awards on eligible participants properly applying for them. Additionally, the bill increases the maximum grant award to \$6 million, but it allows for additional awards over that amount to related but distinct phases of a project (or project addresses) if separate applications are submitted.

The bill also makes other changes to the program. It allows, rather than requires, as under current law, the DECD commissioner to give priority to grant applications for brownfields located in federally designated opportunity zones. It also exempts grant recipients from having to enter a remediation program for the property if (1) the grant funds are used for remediation actions that are not site-wide and (2) the property will not benefit from being in a remediation program.

Additionally, the bill modifies current law's allowance for awarding additional grants to a participant. By law, the DECD commissioner may award an additional grant if he and the DEEP commissioner identify the project as a priority for remediation and the grant will be used to cover unexpected cost overruns or cleanup activities that increase the project's environmental benefits. Under current law, the additional grant also cannot (1) exceed 50% of the original grant or (2) increase the project's total grant funding under the program to more than \$4 million. The bill eliminates the former provision and increases the cap to \$6 million, while specifying that the allowance includes grants toward a project site or distinct project phase.

Lastly, if the projected need for additional funding identified in project implementation exceeds 50% of the original grant award or \$6 million, the bill allows for a new application if there is proof to the DECD commissioner's satisfaction that (1) new parcels were added to the original project, (2) the budget required to complete the remediation

actions increased due to issues identified during remediation work, or (3) the initial scope of remediation action was altered or expanded.

§ 69 — TARGETED BROWNFIELD DEVELOPMENT LOAN PROGRAM

Increases the program's maximum annual loan amount from \$4 million to \$6 million, gives the DECD commissioner discretion on prioritizing applications for certain proposed projects, and adds an additional exemption for certain loan recipients from having to enter a property remediation program

The bill makes several changes to DECD's Targeted Brownfield Development Loan Program, including:

1. increasing the maximum loan a recipient may receive from \$4 million to \$6 million;
2. allowing, rather than requiring, as under current law, the DECD commissioner to give priority to loan applications for proposed projects in federally designated opportunity zones; and
3. exempting loan recipients from having to enter a remediation program for the property if (a) the funds are used for remediation actions that are not site-wide and (b) the property will not benefit from being in a remediation program.

§§ 70, 74, 82, 85-90, 92-101, 103 & 104 — BOND CANCELLATIONS AND REDUCTIONS

Cancels or reduces all or part of prior bond authorizations for specified projects and grants

The bill cancels or reduces all or part of current bond authorizations for the projects and grants shown in the table below.

Table: Cancellations and Reductions

§	Agency and Purpose	Current Authorization	Amount Cancelled
70	DOH: Homelessness prevention and response fund and its statutory purposes	\$18,329,993	\$7,875,000
74	DECD & CTNext: CTNext Fund and its statutory purposes	20,200,000	20,000,000
82	OPM: Design and implement the consolidation of higher education systems with the state's CORE system	5,000,000	3,000,000
86	OPM: Developing and implementing databases	3,000,000	350,000

§	Agency and Purpose	Current Authorization	Amount Cancelled
88	in the CORE financial system associated with results-based accountability	3,500,000	850,000
90	DAS: Grants to alliance districts for general improvements to school buildings	18,000,000	18,000,000
93	DAS: Grants to priority school districts for projects (including expenditure reimbursements) that are ineligible for school building project grants	30,000,000	30,000,000
94	Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority: Grants for capitalizing the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Trust Fund	25,000,000	8,980,265
96	DAS: Grants to priority school districts for projects (including expenditure reimbursements) that are ineligible for school building project grants	25,000,000	25,000,000
97	Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority: Grants for capitalizing the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Trust Fund	25,000,000	15,000,000
99	DECD: CareerConneCT workforce training programs	20,000,000	10,000,000
101	DECD: CareerConneCT workforce training programs	20,000,000	20,000,000
104	DAS: EV purchases and charging infrastructure construction and installation at state facilities	35,000,000	10,000,000

§ 71 — SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Authorizes \$10 million in new state GO bonds for FY 26

The bill authorizes \$10 million in new GO bonds for FY 26 for a DOH grant program for supportive housing for people with an intellectual disability or other developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder. It also makes a technical change to update a cross reference.

§§ 75 & 76 — HOUSING RECEIVERSHIP REVOLVING FUND

Modifies the types of funds available to compensate certain receivers and types of expenses that are covered by the funds; increases by \$5 million per year the amount that may be spent from the Housing Receivership Revolving Fund in any single municipality

By law, apartment buildings in serious disrepair may be placed in receivership when the owner fails to comply with an order to abate a nuisance. Existing law establishes the Housing Receivership Revolving

Fund, administered by the DOH commissioner, and authorizes the Superior Court to allow the fund to be used to cover a receiver's expenses. The law also allows receivers' expenses to be covered by the rents they or the municipality in which the building is located collect (CGS §§ 47a-56 to 47a-56i).

The bill modifies the type of collections available to compensate receivers by replacing "rents" with "revenue." It also adds expenses managing a property according to a receiver appointment for associations, communities, and corporations in which members are dependent for support as expenses that may be covered by the revenue collections and the Housing Receivership Revolving Fund.

The bill also increases, from \$1 million to \$6 million per year, the amount that may be spent from the fund in any single municipality.

§ 77 — UCONN FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PROGRAM

Changes one of the purposes of the UConn Faculty Recruitment and Hiring Program so that it develops laboratories for faculty instead of supporting their compensation and restricts related bonds to that purpose

Existing law requires UConn's Board of Trustees to biennially develop a plan for recruiting and hiring research faculty and implement a faculty recruitment and hiring program in accordance with its plan. Relatedly, existing law authorizes \$46.1 million in GO bonds over a five-year period, from FY 22 to FY 26, for this program (CGS § 10a-110n).

The bill changes one of the program's purposes by requiring it to be used to develop laboratories for hired faculty, including related construction, renovation, and equipment costs, instead of supporting their compensation. The bill relatedly restricts the use of authorized bonds to this purpose.

§ 84 — TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM TRAINING PROGRAMS

Transfers from SDE to CTECS the responsibility for handling bond proceeds dedicated to certain technical high school system training programs

Current law requires SDE to use proceeds from an \$8.5 million GO bond authorization for (1) a technical high school system pilot program to provide expanded educational opportunities for academic

enrichment and trades training for secondary and adult learners by extending hours at technical high schools in Hamden, Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury, and (2) grants to technical high schools to provide evening training programs in skilled trades, including manufacturing, masonry, electrical, plumbing, and carpentry, that prepare participants to earn a credential or degree recognized by employers or trade associations.

The bill transfers the responsibility for handling these bond proceeds from SDE to CTECS.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 91 — STATE CAPITOL AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Broadens the acceptable use of an existing bond authorization to include construction work on the State Capitol and Legislative Office Building

Existing law authorizes \$1.8 million in GO bonds for the Office of Legislative Management to replace, repair, and repave the State Capitol Complex's roads and sidewalks. The bill broadens the acceptable use of these bonds to include altering, renovating, and restoring the State Capitol and Legislative Office Building, including interior and exterior restoration and compliance with the ADA.

§ 102 — DOH HEALTH CARE WORKER HOUSING PROGRAM REPORTING

Requires DOH and CHFA to submit a report on increasing health care worker housing options

Existing law requires the DOH commissioner and the CHFA executive director to seek to partner with one or more hospitals in the state to increase workforce housing options. It also authorizes up to \$20 million in state GO bonds for DOH to fund the costs associated with the partnership and develop housing for health care workers.

The bill requires, by January 1, 2026, DOH and CHFA to report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding and Housing committees on the partnership's status, their activities to increase workforce housing options, and recommendations on other ways to increase these housing options.

§§ 109 & 110 — DOH REPORTING ON BOND-FUNDED HOUSING PROGRAMS

Eliminates current law's requirement for DOH reporting to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on specified bond-funded programs and replaces it with a similar requirement; requires CHFA to post certain information on its website

Since September 1, 2024, and until September 1, 2026, current law requires DOH to report biannually to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee specified information on bond funds the department received for (1) the Housing Trust Fund and (2) housing development and rehabilitation under the FY 24-25 bond act or any similar public act. The bill eliminates this requirement (§ 110) and instead creates a new, but similar, reporting requirement (§ 109).

Under the bill's new reporting requirement, DOH must report by September 1, 2025 (and every six months after that). The reports must be done in consultation with CHFA, and be submitted to both the Finance, Revenue and Bonding and Housing committees. Under this new reporting requirement, DOH (in consultation with CHFA) must report the following for the prior fiscal year and prior six months:

1. the amount from each bond authorization used for the Build for CT program and other DOH-administered programs that address affordable housing, supportive housing, homelessness, and workforce development housing (excluding the Time to Own and Down Payment Assistance programs);
2. for the above-mentioned projects, a list of the number of projects that are approved, underway, and completed, itemized by municipality;
3. a description of DOH's programs that address affordable housing, supportive housing, homelessness, and workforce development housing; and
4. the number of applications received, loans granted, and applications denied for the Time to Own and Down Payment Assistance programs and the reasons for denials under these programs.

Additionally, under the bill, CHFA must maintain on its website information about the Time to Own and Down Payment Assistance programs. Specifically, it must post information regarding the race, ethnicity, income, and property location of these programs' borrowers.

§§ 112 & 113 — GREYFIELD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Principally requires DECD to create a grant or loan program to facilitate the repurposing of commercial retail and office space; authorizes the use of \$50 million in bond funds for the program

The bill allows the DECD commissioner, in coordination with the DOH commissioner, Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority, and CRDA, to create a greyfield revitalization program. Under the bill, a “greyfield” is any previously developed commercial retail or office property that (1) is economically nonviable in its current state and exhibits conditions that significantly complicate its redevelopment or reuse, as determined by the DECD commissioner, and (2) is not currently eligible for any brownfield remediation and development program.

The bill requires the greyfield revitalization program to provide grants or loans to facilitate the repurposing of greyfields and to provide grants to the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority or CRDA to provide grants or loans to facilitate the same. The DECD commissioner may use bond funds and available resources to provide up to \$50 million in the aggregate for program grants and loans. (Other sections of the bill authorize \$50 million in GO bonds for the program; see the table above listing GO bond authorizations.)

Under the bill, the DECD commissioner must develop a competitive application process and criteria to evaluate applications submitted and select projects for funding. He may contract with nongovernmental entities, including nonprofit organizations, economic and community development organizations, lending institutions, and technical assistance providers, to administer the program.

Eligible uses of grant or loan funds include:

1. architectural and engineering assessment of buildings and site

- readiness to determine suitability for conversion to multi-family housing,
2. demolition,
 3. remediation and abatement of building materials that were used according to the State Building Code when the structure was constructed,
 4. renovation or conversion construction costs,
 5. planning studies to assess the viability of one or more potential future project sites under the program, and
 6. reasonable administrative expenses not to exceed 5% of any grant awarded.

The bill exempts financial assistance awarded through the program from existing law's cap on financial assistance from DECD given without specific legislative approval (see *Background – Cap on Financial Assistance*).

Relatedly, the bill creates the greyfield revitalization account as a separate, nonlapsing account that must contain (1) the proceeds of bonds issued by the state for deposit into it, (2) interest or other income earned on the investment of money in the account, and (3) any money required by law to be deposited in it. Any balance remaining in the account at the end of any fiscal year must be carried forward in the account for the next fiscal year.

The bill requires all money received in consideration of financial assistance, including payments of principal and interest on any loans made through the greyfield revitalization program, to be credited to the account and become part of its assets. Additionally, regardless of any state statute, the bill allows proceeds of certain Urban Action bond sales to be used to capitalize the account if approved by the governor and the State Bond Commission.

Under the bill, the DECD commissioner may use the account's funds

to provide financial assistance for the greyfield revitalization program and up to 5% of the account's funds for administrative costs.

Background — Cap on Financial Assistance

By law, DECD and Connecticut Innovations, Inc. are generally prohibited from awarding more than \$10 million of total financial assistance during any two-year period to an applicant or for a business project unless the assistance is specifically authorized by an act of the legislature (or more than \$20 million in the case of biotechnology business projects) (CGS § 32-462).

§§ 114 & 137 — DECD GRANT PROGRAM FOR CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITE NONPROFITS

Requires DECD's commissioner, within available resources, to establish a grant program for cultural and historic site nonprofits and to file an annual report on these applications; authorizes the department to require a lien on certain properties as a condition for these nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 or less

The bill requires the DECD commissioner to establish, within available resources, a grant program for nonprofit organizations that own or operate cultural and historic sites in the state for the purposes of making capital improvements. The commissioner must develop eligibility criteria and application forms, and must accept applications on a continuing basis.

By January 1, 2026, and annually after, the commissioner must submit a report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on the (1) number of grant applications it received during the previous calendar year and (2) total amount of funds requested in them.

Separately, the bill (§ 114) authorizes the DECD commissioner to require, for any grant up to \$100,000 to a nonprofit organization sponsoring cultural and historic sites, a lien placed on real or personal property in favor of the state to ensure that the grant amount will be repaid in the event of a change in use of the property. However, the bill does not require DECD to place a lien on property owned by the state, a municipality, or a housing authority. The bill's authorization applies regardless of the terms of specified grants authorized in the past.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the lien provision is

effective July 1, 2025.

§ 115 — STRATEGIC SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAM

Authorizes DECD to create a strategic supply chain program to provide financial assistance to help develop the supply chains of major and emerging industries in Connecticut; allows the use of up to \$50 million in bond funds for program projects

The bill allows the DECD commissioner to create a strategic supply chain program, which may provide grants, loans, subsidies, or tax credits in support of proposed projects to establish, grow, upgrade, or expand companies, facilities, or workforce training efforts within the supply chains of major and emerging industries in Connecticut, as determined by the commissioner. He, in consultation with the OPM secretary, may use bond funds, available authorized bond funds, and available allocated bond funds to give up to \$50 million in the aggregate for the program's projects.

The bill requires DECD to develop a competitive application process and criteria to evaluate applications submitted and select projects for funding. It exempts financial assistance awarded through the program from existing law's cap on financial assistance from DECD given without specific legislative approval (see *Background – Cap on Financial Assistance*).

By June 30, 2029, the DECD commissioner must submit a report to the Commerce Committee on the projects funded through the program.

Background — Cap on Financial Assistance

By law, DECD and Connecticut Innovations, Inc. are generally prohibited from awarding more than \$10 million of total financial assistance during any two-year period to an applicant or for a business project unless the assistance is specifically authorized by an act of the legislature (or more than \$20 million in the case of biotechnology business projects) (CGS § 32-462).

§ 116 — DECD RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM

Authorizes up to \$30 million in GO bonds and requires DECD to use the proceeds to provide grants for infrastructure projects in rural areas

The bill authorizes up to \$30 million in GO bonds and requires DECD

to use the proceeds to provide grants for infrastructure projects necessary to support the development of housing or economic development in rural areas.

These infrastructure projects must include establishing or expanding utility services, such as water, electric distribution, and sewer services. “Rural area” means (1) a municipality with a population of no more than 10,000 (based on the most recent federal decennial census) or with a population density of less than 500 people per square mile, or (2) a census tract or town designated as rural by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

The bonds are subject to standard statutory bond issuance procedures and repayment requirements.

§ 117 — DOH AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOND PROGRAM

Authorizes up to \$50 million in GO bonds for DOH to finance projects to create employment opportunities in the construction industry by developing affordable housing

The bill authorizes up to \$50 million in GO bonds over four years, in amounts of up to \$12.5 million per year from FY 26 through FY 29, for DOH to finance projects to create employment opportunities in the construction industry by developing affordable housing.

If DOH does not use all or part of the capped amount in a fiscal year, that amount is added to the capped amount for the following year. Any issuance costs and capitalized interest may be added to the capped amounts. Subject to the caps, the bill deems the principal amount of the authorized bonds to be an appropriation, allocation, and allotment of the bond amounts. The bonds are subject to standard statutory conditions.

§ 118 — ELECTRIC GRID BENEFITS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUNDING

Authorizes up to \$500 million in GO bonds for OPM to benefit the electric grid, promote energy efficiency, and benefit ratepayers

The bill authorizes up to \$500 million in GO bonds over two years, in amounts of up to \$250 million per year in FY 26 and FY 27, for OPM to make energy-related investments. Specifically, OPM must use the

proceeds to (1) benefit the operation of the electric grid in the state; (2) promote energy efficiency; (3) benefit ratepayers; (4) reduce the annual costs of hardship protection measures and other hardship protections within the systems benefits charge, to their average annual cost in the five years from 2016 to 2020, inclusive, before the COVID-19 pandemic; and (5) fund EV charging programs.

The bonds are subject to standard statutory bond issuance procedures and repayment requirements.

§ 121 — CHILD CARE FACILITIES GRANTS

Requires OEC to establish a competitive grant program for child care facilities' design, construction, and renovations projects; authorizes up to an aggregate \$80 million in state GO bonds with a cap of \$11.5 million for each fiscal year FY26-FY32 and requires OEC to use the proceeds to fund the child care facilities competitive grant program

The bill requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to establish a competitive grant program to assist child care facilities (i.e. child care centers or group or family child care homes that provide child care services) with the costs of planning and designing, constructing, and renovating child care facilities. OEC must establish (1) an application process and (2) eligibility criteria that prioritizes considering a project's scope for the program. The bill allows OEC to (1) contract with a third party to administer the program and provide technical assistance to grant applicants and recipients and (2) use funds from the Early Childhood Education Endowment to pay costs of providing such technical assistance.

The bill (1) authorizes up to an aggregate \$80 million in state GO bonds with a cap of \$11.5 million for each fiscal year starting FY 26 through FY 32, except unused portions may be carried over to the next fiscal year, and (2) requires OEC to use the proceeds to fund the grant program. The bonds are subject to standard statutory bond issuance procedures and repayment requirements.

The bill also requires that the grant contracts must provide that if the premises for which the grant was made ceases, within 10 years after receipt of the grant, to be used as a child care facility, the required repayment to the state is the total grant amount reduced by 10% for each

full year that the facility is used for the grant purpose; and a lien must be placed on the property to ensure repayment to the state. However, if the premises are owned by the state, a municipality, or a housing authority, OEC does not need to place a lien.

§ 122 — OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD LIEN

Exempts child care centers that are recipients of grants-in-aid of \$50,000 or less from OEC's authority to place a lien on the property to ensure repayment to the state

Existing law authorizes state GO bonds for OEC to issue grants for constructing, improving, or equipping child care centers, including paying associated costs for the infant and toddler pilot program's architectural, engineering, or demolition services.

The bill exempts child care centers that receive grants-in-aid of \$50,000 or less from the lien that existing law allows OEC to place on the real property of grant recipients to ensure repayment to the state if the property ceases to be used for grant purposes within certain timeframes.

§ 123 — DOH PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Broadens the programs for which administrative expenses can be paid for with bond proceeds; caps the allowable use of proceeds for these purposes at \$1 million per year per program

Under current law, for certain specified bond-financed DOH housing programs, the program's administrative expenses may be paid for with GO bond proceeds. Use of proceeds for this purpose must be approved by the State Bond Commission and governor. The bill broadens the programs for which bond proceeds may be used for a program's administrative expenses to include any DOH-administered affordable housing program financed in whole or in part with state GO bonds.

The bill also limits the use of bond proceeds for administrative expenses to program expenses that do not exceed \$1 million in any fiscal year.

§§ 124-130 — HOMES FOR CT LOAN PROGRAM

Generally requires CHFA to administer a loan program that helps owners or developers get funding to build new residential buildings by guaranteeing loan repayment, up to certain thresholds, for participating banks and credit unions that give loans to these borrowers

The bill requires the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to administer a loan program that helps owners or developers get funding to build new residential buildings (i.e. single- or multi-family residential units, including condominiums or units in common interest communities, or buildings with one or more of these units). CHFA must do this by guaranteeing loan repayment, up to certain thresholds, for participating banks and credit unions that give loans to these borrowers. It may also, within available resources, make additional subordinate loans.

The bill allows the bank or credit union loans to have loan-to-value ratios exceeding typical underwriting standards and subjects the loans to any conditions or limitations CHFA establishes in consultation with representatives from the banking industry (which must be published on CHFA's website). CHFA's subordinate loans are subject to terms CHFA establishes, including on loan amounts, interest rates, and terms to maturity.

The bill caps the total amount of (1) program loans at \$100 million and (2) claims paid to honor loan guarantees at \$10 million. And among other things, it:

1. limits the use of program loans to expenses (a) needed to complete residential building construction or improve a residential building and (b) that CHFA determines are necessary;
2. establishes requirements for participating in the program and receiving a loan guarantee payment, including making good faith collection efforts;
3. allows CHFA to end a loan guarantee with a bank or credit union if it misrepresents information about the guarantee or fails to comply with the bill's good faith collection requirements;
4. requires CHFA to keep program administration records, including a record of the issued loans and loan guarantee payments made; and

5. authorizes the comptroller, CHFA, and the Department of Banking (DOB) to enter into a memorandum of understanding to carry out the bill's requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Lender Participation

Under the bill, banks and credit unions with a physical presence in Connecticut may participate in the program if they first notify DOB and CHFA of their intent to do so. The bill requires DOB and CHFA to set the process for the notice, which must include the institution's contact information.

The bill requires DOB and CHFA, by October 1, 2025, to publish on their websites a (1) program summary and (2) list of the participating banks and credit unions, with the contact information for each, which DOB and CHFA must update. DOB must also give information about the program to state-licensed mortgage servicers.

The bill allows the participating banks and credit unions to suspend their involvement in or withdraw from the program after notifying DOB and CHFA in writing of the date it will take effect, provided this date is at least five business days after the notice is given. The bill specifies that a suspension or withdrawal does not affect the ability to submit a guarantee claim for a loan that was properly noticed to CHFA before the suspension or withdrawal took effect.

The bill specifies that a bank's or credit union's program participation does not stop it from issuing loans to this same category of borrowers apart from the program.

Program Capacity

The bill requires a bank or credit union that agrees to make a loan to an eligible borrower under the program to notify CHFA in writing within one business day of doing so. The notice must include the loan amount and any other information about the borrower and the loan that CHFA requests. Additionally, these entities must give CHFA (1) a copy

of the loan's promissory note and the mortgage deed securing the note, within seven business days after agreeing to make the loan, and (2) a written report disclosing the loan status, on a monthly basis. These reports must include, at a minimum, the principal amount, outstanding balance, and amount of any funds that the bank or credit union agreed to lend to the eligible borrower but has not yet disbursed.

The bill caps the total amount of loans under the program at \$100 million, including outstanding loans and those that banks or credit unions have agreed to make. CHFA must immediately close participation in the program when this threshold is reached, based on the loan notices it receives, and notify the participating banks and credit unions. Correspondingly, the bill allows banks and credit unions to condition loan agreements on the program's availability.

Loan Requirements

Under the bill, for a participating bank and credit union to make a loan under the program, the borrower must (1) show the bank or credit union that its project meets the standards for a residential building development, which CHFA must set, and (2) give CHFA a covenant that each dwelling unit in these buildings, when offered for sale to the public, will only be sold to participants of a CHFA-administered homebuyer loan program. The bill requires that a mortgage deed on the borrower's residential buildings and all related improvements under development secure the loan.

The bill requires banks and credit unions to follow their underwriting policies and standards when making these loans, other than using a loan-to-value ratio that exceeds typical standards. It caps the loans' interest rates at the applicable rate of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston (FHLBank Boston) for short-term or long-term advances through the New England Fund program. This rate is that which (1) is on FHLBank Boston's website on the date the borrower and bank or credit union lock in the rate and (2) has an advance term that most closely matches the loan's term.

Standard Procedures and Documents

The bill requires CHFA, by October 1, 2025, to develop the following for participating banks and credit unions:

1. reasonable standards to show good faith collection efforts of outstanding loan principal without required efforts for after 90 days' post-delinquency and
2. a readily accessible communication portal to verify the most recently available total amount of program loans of which CHFA has been notified and claims submitted to the comptroller.

It allows CHFA to develop standard promissory note and mortgage deed forms that can be used by the participating banks and credit unions.

Under the bill, the standards and forms must be (1) developed in consultation with banking industry representatives and (2) to the extent feasible, closely aligned with industry standards, except the bill prohibits them from requiring post-delinquency collection efforts that extend beyond 90 days.

Loan Guarantees

Under the bill, a participating bank or credit union may make a claim to CHFA to recover the outstanding principal on a defaulted loan, but only after it demonstrates to CHFA that (1) it has made a good faith effort to collect it from the eligible borrower and any person (other than CHFA) who issued a loan guarantee and (2) the loan has been delinquent for four consecutive months. The collection efforts must be done according to the bank's or credit union's loan servicing and collection policies.

The bill requires CHFA to submit accepted claims to the comptroller for payment, which are paid from the General Fund. It caps the amount of claims that CHFA may process and have paid to honor the program's loan guarantees at \$10 million. When this threshold is met, CHFA must immediately stop processing claims and notify the comptroller and the participating banks and credit unions that it will no longer honor guarantees.

Under the bill, once the comptroller pays the claim, the loan tied to it (including any loan guarantee a person other than CHFA issued) is assigned to the state and CHFA assumes the loan's collection rights. Any funds CHFA receives from collection efforts on these loans must be deposited in the General Fund.

§ 131 — DISTRICT REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (DRIP)

Creates the DRIP program to provide financial assistance to local and regional boards of education and other public school operators for constructing, renovating, repairing, and enlarging public school buildings, grounds, and infrastructure; sets allocation requirements and an allocation formula for allocating assistance under the program; authorizes \$60 million in GO bonds for OPM to administer the program

The bill creates the District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) program to provide financial assistance for constructing, renovating, repairing, and enlarging public school buildings, grounds, and infrastructure. More specifically, the program gives grants to local and regional boards of education and other public school operators (PSOs) for reimbursement and costs associated with these types of school-related capital projects.

Under the bill, the OPM secretary must allocate amounts set for the DRIP program using a formula where, generally, 20% goes to each PSO equally, 50% is proportional to certain student enrollment percentages, and 30% is proportional to specific grand list percentages. The bill imposes various reporting and record keeping requirements on PSOs that get a program grant.

The bill also authorizes up to \$60 million in new general obligation bonds (\$30 million each in FY 26 and FY 27) for OPM to administer the DRIP program. The bonds are subject to standard issuance procedures and have a maximum term of 20 years. The bill relatedly creates the District Repair and Improvement Account as a separate, nonlapsing account that must contain any money required by law to be deposited in it. The account's money must be spent by the OPM secretary for the DRIP program's purposes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Program Purpose

Under the bill, the DRIP program must assist PSOs with the costs of minor capital repairs, improvements, and maintenance; mitigate their need for more costly and extensive future renovations and construction; and improve accessibility to safe and well-maintained school buildings and grounds for students and educators.

Eligible Recipients and Projects

The bill limits DRIP program grants to PSOs for district repair and improvement projects.

Under the bill, a “public school operator” is any (1) local or regional board of education, (2) regional educational service center, (3) endowed academy approved by the State Board of Education, and (4) state charter school. It also includes certain interdistrict magnet school operators. Specifically, this applies to any interdistrict magnet school operator that is (1) the board of governors for a nonprofit, independent higher education institution; (2) the equivalent of such a board, on behalf of the independent higher education institution; or (3) any other third-party nonprofit corporation approved by the education commissioner.

A “district repair and improvement project” is a capital expenditure project approved by a PSO for any of the following purposes:

1. the construction, renovation, repair, or enlargement of school buildings or school grounds, including parking lots, athletic fields, and playgrounds;
2. improvements to school facilities to comply with health, safety, or code requirements; or
3. the purchase, installation, or maintenance of or improvements to fixed school infrastructure, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; plumbing; electrical systems; and roofing.

Allocation Requirements

On February 1 of each year, the bill requires the OPM secretary to allocate amounts from the district repair and improvement account’s resources to each PSO according to the bill’s allocation formula, totaling

no more than the amount the legislature authorizes for the fiscal year. The secretary must credit all allocations to a subaccount for each PSO and make district repair and improvement project grants from the subaccounts. He must also keep records indicating, for each PSO's subaccount, the (1) amount credited to the subaccount each year, (2) amount paid out in district repair and improvement project grants and charged to the subaccount, and (3) balance available for additional district repair and improvement project grants.

On March 1 of each year, the OPM secretary must notify each PSO of the amount allocated to it and post on OPM's website the allocation amounts and the calculations for all PSOs. By June 30 of each fiscal year, allocations credited to PSOs' subaccounts must be issued as grants by the secretary to the PSOs.

The bill requires PSOs to use the grants for reimbursement and costs associated with district repair and improvement projects. It prohibits amounts allocated under the DRIP program from being used (1) to meet a local matching requirement for any state assistance program or (2) for any school building project under DAS's school construction grant program.

Allocation Formula

The bill requires each allocation to a PSO be done according to a formula where 20% of the program's annual amount goes to each PSO equally and the remaining 80% are based on two different percentages.

Student Enrollment Percentage. Under the bill, 50% of the program's annual amount must be allocated proportionally based on the following ratio for the fiscal year prior to the year in which the grant is to be paid: the (1) PSO's total need students enrolled in a school or schools, as applicable, under the PSO's jurisdiction to (2) total need students enrolled in all PSO schools in the state.

"Total need students" are the sum of:

1. the number of students enrolled for the school year;

2. 30% of the number of students eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk;
3. 15% of the number of students eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk that exceeds, presumably, 60% of the total number of enrolled students for the school year (e.g., if the town has 100 enrolled students for a given school year and all of them are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or free milk, six would be the result of this calculation);
4. 25% of the number of students enrolled who are multilingual learners, as defined in state law; and
5. 30% of the number of students enrolled who require special education, as defined in state law.

Under the bill, “number of students enrolled” is the number of all students enrolled in a school or schools, as applicable, under the PSO’s jurisdiction on October 1 or the full school day immediately before that date.

“Number of students eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk” is the number of students enrolled in a school or schools, as applicable, under the PSO’s jurisdiction on October 1 or the full school day immediately before that date, in families that meet the income eligibility guidelines set by the federal Department of Agriculture for free or reduced price meals or free milk under the National School Lunch Program.

Grand List Percentage. Under the bill, 30% of the program’s annual amount must be allocated proportionally based on the following ratio: (1) the PSO’s total need students enrolled in a school or schools, as applicable, under the PSO’s jurisdiction for the fiscal year prior to the year in which the grant is to be paid, multiplied by (2) the inverse of the adjusted equalized net grand list per capita of the PSO (which will be the numerator (upper number) of the fraction) and the sum of the resulting products for all the PSOs (which will be the denominator (bottom number) of the fraction).

The adjusted equalized net grand list per capita of a PSO varies depending on the entity. For local boards of education and charter schools, it is the same as the adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as defined in state law, of the town of the board and town in which the charter school is located, respectively. For regional boards of education, regional educational service centers, interdistrict magnet school operators, and endowed academies, it is based on the entity's rank under the DAS school construction grant program so that its adjusted equalized net grand list per capita will be the same as the adjusted equalized net grand list per capita of a town with the same ranking.

Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements

Starting by September 1, 2027, each PSO issued a DRIP program grant must annually submit a report to the OPM secretary, in a form and way he prescribes, describing each district repair and improvement project for which amounts were expended in the fiscal year and the amounts expended for each project. The report must include a certification by the PSO that (1) the district repair and improvement project was approved by the PSO or a board, council, or other body responsible for overseeing the project and (2) no grant money was used to satisfy a local matching requirement for any state assistance program or for any school building project under the DAS school construction grant program. The secretary must post all reports submitted on the office's website.

The bill also requires each PSO getting a district repair and improvement project grant to keep, for at least three years after the project's completion, detailed accounting records of all expenses incurred for the project. If the OPM secretary determines that the records are not kept or a review of the records shows that the grant, or any portion of it, was used for something other than its intended purpose, the secretary must give written notification to the PSO of his finding. Upon issuing a finding, the secretary may require the PSO to promptly pay the full grant back to the state or may reduce, by that amount, any future DRIP program grant the PSO gets.

§§ 132-136 — NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Requires assorted reports by state agencies to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and others

The bill creates several new reporting requirements for state agencies, as described below.

By October 1, 2025, DAS must submit a report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding and Government Administration and Elections committees on the status of the design, alteration, renovation, and construction of the facilities for the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Then, the department must continue to provide quarterly reports after the initial due date until the construction is completed.

Also by October 1, 2025, and quarterly after, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) chancellor, in consultation with the OEC commissioner, must submit a report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee describing the coordination of efforts between CSCU and OEC to construct, improve, or equip child care centers on or near college and university campuses in the state.

Additionally, by January 1, 2026, and annually after, the CSCU chancellor must submit to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee a five-year capital plan for the CSCU system and a description of the efforts undertaken in the prior year to increase its enrollment.

The bill also requires DAS, by January 1, 2026, to develop a plan to install solar photovoltaic systems on developed state properties and submit the plan to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding and Government Administration and Elections committees.

Lastly, by January 1, 2027, and biennially after, CTECS must develop a five-year capital plan for its system and submit it to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the provision on CSCU's five-year capital plan is effective October 1, 2025, and the provision on the CTECS five-year capital plan is effective January 1, 2026.

§ 138 — BRIDGEPORT'S CONSULTATION WITH MUNICIPAL FINANCE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Requires Bridgeport to submit and present a corrective action plan to MFAC before receiving certain bond-funded grants

The bill supersedes current law's process for the OPM secretary's referral of municipalities to the Municipal Finance Advisory Commission (MFAC) and requires Bridgeport's mayor to submit a corrective action plan to MFAC by September 1, 2025. The mayor must do so before Bridgeport's board of education can receive certain FY 26 and FY 27 bond-funded grants (see §§ 13 & 32).

By December 31, 2025, the mayor must appear before MFAC and present the plan to it. Specifically, the plan must describe the actions each will take to avoid needing supplementary state education funding in future years. These actions must include:

1. proposed cost containment policies;
2. fiscal policy adjustments;
3. collaboration with other municipalities or boards of education, in the form of shared services;
4. ways to maximize federal funding;
5. identifying possible efficiencies in providing services; and
6. prioritizing the provision of core services the city identifies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 139 — MUNICIPAL REFERRAL TO OPM SECRETARY FOR DISCUSSION OF FISCAL CONDITION

Requires certain municipalities to discuss with the OPM secretary actions the municipality can take to reduce the municipality's reliance on state funding in the future

By October 1, 2025, the bill requires municipalities that expect to receive funding under the Municipal Grants-in-Aid program in FY 26 (see § 55, above) in an amount that exceeds 75% of what they received in FY 25, to consult with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary on their fiscal condition. The grant program generally

provides funding for municipal infrastructure, including highways, traffic and parking, and plowing.

Specifically, the bill requires the chief executive officer (CEO) to appear before the OPM secretary and discuss actions the municipality can take to reduce its reliance on state funding in the future. These actions may include:

1. cost containment policies,
2. fiscal policy adjustments concerning revenue and expenditures,
3. collaboration with one or more other municipalities to obtain shared municipal services,
4. identifying possible efficiencies in the provision of municipal services, and
5. prioritizing the provision of core municipal services.

The OPM secretary can require the CEO to submit a written plan to implement these actions. The bill makes municipalities subject to this consultation and corrective planning requirement ineligible for an FY 26 grant until its CEO complies with the bill's requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 140 & 144 — HVAC GRANTS

Repeals the existing school construction heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC) grant and instead merges it with an existing school construction grant law

This bill repeals the existing school construction heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVAC) grant and instead merges it with an existing school construction grant law that provides grants for a broader range of school building projects (such as roof replacements and addressing building code violations). The bill subjects the new HVAC grants to the same application and eligibility criteria as for existing non-priority school building projects (see *Background – Non-Priority List School Building Projects*).

Under current law, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner may approve grants to reimburse school districts for project costs to install, replace, or upgrade HVAC systems or related improvements. Under the bill, the commissioner may approve grants to upgrade HVAC systems or make other improvements to indoor air quality in school buildings. The bill language does not include installing or replacing systems.

While the statute for these grants does not include a dollar limit, the non-priority list projects tend to be smaller than the priority list projects, ranging from \$100,000 to \$5 million. Priority list projects commonly range from \$1 million to, in some cases, \$200 million.

Inspection and Maintenance Requirements

The bill maintains the following current law requirements:

1. prohibiting awarding grants for HVAC or indoor air quality improvements to recipients unless they have certified compliance with the uniform inspection and evaluation of their school buildings' HVAC systems as required by law (CGS § 10-220(d)),
2. deeming the following expenses as ineligible for reimbursement:
 - (a) routine maintenance and cleaning of the HVAC system and
 - (b) work performed at or on a public school administrative or service facility that is not located or housed within a public school building, and
3. requiring grant recipients to (a) be responsible for the routine maintenance and cleaning of the HVAC system and (b) provide training to school personnel and maintenance staff concerning the system's proper use and maintenance.

Repealed HVAC Grant Provisions

The bill repeals the following provisions:

1. grant eligibility for charter schools (although another charter school capital projects grant law is unchanged);

2. specific grant eligibility criteria including (a) the age and condition of the current HVAC system or equipment being replaced or upgraded in the school, (b) current air quality issues at the school, (c) the age and condition of the overall school building, (d) the school district's master plan, (e) the availability of maintenance records, (f) the school's routine HVAC maintenance contract or plan, and (g) the applicant's ability to finance the remaining costs;
3. requiring DAS to reconsider grant applications it has denied through the end of FY 26 and provide technical assistance to the denied school board to help the board gain approval of the grant;
4. requiring DAS, if there is not enough grant funding, to prioritize schools with the greatest need based on the eligibility criteria; and
5. requiring an HVAC project to be completed by the end of the next calendar year after the grant was awarded unless extended by DAS for good cause.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon Passage

Background — Non-Priority List School Building Projects

The law authorizes the DAS commissioner to award grants on a case-by-case basis without going through the annual priority list process, which requires legislative approval. Non-priority list projects include:

1. assisting school building projects to remedy damage from fire and catastrophe;
2. correcting safety, health, and other code violations;
3. replacing roofs, including the replacement or installation of skylights as part of the project;
4. remedying a certified school indoor air quality emergency;
5. installing insulation for exterior walls and attics; and

6. purchasing and installing a limited use and access elevators, windows, photovoltaic panels, wind generation systems, building management systems, a public school administrative or service facility or, within certain limitations, portable classroom buildings.

Once a grant is approved, projects must also get approval from DAS architects for each biddable project stage.

Under the law, school boards and towns may receive a reimbursement grant for 20%-80% of eligible expenses, based on the town's ranking among all Connecticut towns as generally measured by their grand list (CGS § 10-285a).

§§ 140, 144 & 146 — REMOVAL OF CTECS FROM SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROGRAM

Removes Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) from the school construction grant program

The bill removes Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) from the school construction grant program. Under current law, CTECS projects must undergo the school construction process, including being on the construction priority list that DAS submits to the legislature each year for approval to have the project's cost fully covered by the state. As a state agency, CTECS projects are already 100% state-funded and do not require the local approval and funding match that the school construction grant program requires of school boards and towns. (Chapter 60 of the General Statutes governs the state building construction project process.)

The bill also repeals a related requirement for DAS to submit a biennial status report on all current and pending CTECS school construction projects and their costs to the Education Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 141 — SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PRIORITY LIST GRANT COMMITMENTS

Authorizes 8 school construction state grant commitments totaling \$172.4 million toward total project costs of \$265.7 million; reauthorizes one project with an additional estimated cost of \$50.7 million

Under the state school construction grant program, the state reimburses towns and local districts for a percentage of eligible school construction costs through state general obligation bonds (with less wealthy municipalities receiving a higher reimbursement). The municipalities pay the remaining costs. For the state-operated Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, also known as the technical high schools, the state pays 100% of the project costs.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

School Construction Grant Commitments

The bill authorizes school construction state grant commitments totaling \$172.4 million toward total estimated project costs of \$265.7 million. For each project the bill authorizes, the table below shows the district, school, project type, estimates for total cost and state grant commitment, and state reimbursement rate.

Table: 2025 School Construction Grant Commitments

<i>District</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Project Type</i>	<i>Estimated Project Cost</i>	<i>Estimated Grant</i>	<i>Reimbursement Rate</i>
Fairfield	Osborne Hill Elementary School	Alteration	\$597,500	\$155,768	26%
Fairfield	North Stratfield Elementary School	Alteration	652,500	170,107	26%
Fairfield	Fairfield Woods Middle School	Alteration	769,500	200,609	26%
Greenwich	Old Greenwich School	Extension/Alteration/ Roof Replacement	48,124,812	9,624,962	20%
Norwich	John M. Moriarty Elementary School	New	74,065,026	59,252,021	80%

District	School	Project Type	Estimated Project Cost	Estimated Grant	Reimbursement Rate
Norwich	Uncas Elementary School	New	76,468,605	61,174,884	80%
Plainville	Middle School of Plainville	Renovation	61,915,000	40,467,644	65%
Regional District 5	Amity Regional High School	Alteration	3,152,596	1,351,203	43%
Totals			265,745,539	172,397,198	

Reauthorized Projects

The bill reauthorizes one school construction project with a change in cost and scope, resulting in a \$50.7 million additional state grant commitment. The table below describes the changes to the project.

Table: Reauthorized School Construction Project

District	School	Current Law		Bill	Reimbursement Rate
Connecticut Technical High School	Platt Technical High School	Estimated project costs	\$124,566,000	\$175,231,500	100%
		Estimated state grant	124,566,000	175,231,500	

§§ 142 & 143 — BONUS REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Applies the 15 point reimbursement rate bonus for certain elementary and early childhood projects to the entire project, not just the early childhood space; establishes a new 15 percentage point bonus for buildings used exclusively for special education program space

Early Childhood Space in Elementary Schools

By law, the state gives a 15-percentage-point reimbursement rate increase for new or expansion elementary school construction projects that include space for an early childhood care and education program that provides space for children from birth to age five.

Currently, this increase applies only to the portion of the building used primarily for the program. The bill applies it to the entire project.

Special Education Program Space

The bill establishes a new 15 percentage-point reimbursement rate bonus for new buildings or renovation or expansion school construction projects that include plans for expanding or creating in-district special education programs and services. The rate increase applies to the portion of the project used primarily for this purpose. To be eligible, the portion must be part of a school building (1) used for general education programs to non-special education students and (2) that is being built, renovated, or expanded.

Additionally, under the bill, any additional funding a school board receives because of or related to, including the plans for expanding or creating in-district special education programs and services, must be spent for the construction, renovation, or expansion. The bill specifies that the bonus rate cannot cause the project's total reimbursement rate to exceed 100%.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 144 & 145 — REPEALED PROVISIONS

Repeals four provisions related to priority-list school construction grants

The bill repeals four provisions related to priority-list school construction grants.

Conditions School Districts Affirm in Their Applications (§ 144)

Current law requires superintendents to affirm as part of the grant application that the school district has considered: (1) maximizing natural light, (2) wireless connectivity technology use and feasibility, and (3) the school safety infrastructure criteria. The bill repeals these affirmations. By law, and unchanged by the bill, the commissioner must review each grant application for a school building project for compliance with the school safety infrastructure criteria.

Grant Refund Forgiveness (§ 144)

By law, any town or school district that abandons, sells, leases, demolishes, or otherwise redirects the use of a school building project for non-public uses during the amortization period must give the state a refund for the unamortized balance of the state grant remaining.

Under prior law, this repayment requirement applied if the school building was redirected for any non-public school use purposes. PA 24-151 broadened this provision to allow redirection for other public uses without requiring repayment of the grant.

The bill makes a conforming change by repealing a provision allowing a town or school district to seek repayment forgiveness if a school building is redirected for public use. A town or school district must still repay the remaining grant if the building is redirected for non-public uses.

The bill also eliminates the requirement that DAS must include any proposed forgiveness on the annual priority list. The forgiveness was deemed approved when the General Assembly approved the priority list.

Prior Approval for Consultant Contracts (§ 145)

The bill repeals the requirement that consultant services contracts must have prior approval from DAS to be eligible for state grant reimbursement. Under current practice, DAS already conducts compliance reviews through the grant process, which includes reviewing these contracts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 147 — CHARTER SCHOOL GRANTS PRIORITY

Requires the education commissioner to give preference to charter school capital improvements grant applications when the school's accountability index score meets or exceeds the state-wide average

The bill requires the education commissioner to give preference to charter school capital improvements grant applications that do not provide matching funds from nonstate sources as long as the school's accountability index (AI) score meets or exceeds the state-wide average AI score for at least two of the previous three school years. The AI ranks school performance based on a number of measures including student performance on standardized tests and graduation rates.

Unchanged under current law, the commissioner also gives

preferences to charter school applications that provide for matching funds from nonstate sources.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 148 — INDOOR AIR QUALITY INSPECTIONS

Broadens the window, to start July 1, 2022, rather than July 1, 2026, when a school board's school HVAC inspection can count as a state-required inspection

By law, school boards must conduct a uniform inspection and evaluation of their schools' HVAC system beginning July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2031. The bill retroactively expands this window to begin July 1, 2022, thus allowing inspections done between July 1, 2022, and July 1, 2026, to count for the requirement. By law, certain deadline waivers are allowed if conditions are met.

Failure to meet the requirement means a school board is prohibited from qualifying for additional grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 149-176 — SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT EXEMPTIONS, WAIVERS, AND MODIFICATIONS

Exempts school construction projects in 18 towns and one regional school district from statutory and regulatory requirements to allow these projects to, among other things, qualify for state reimbursement grants, receive higher grant reimbursement percentages, or have their projects reauthorized due to a change in scope or cost

The bill exempts school construction projects in 18 towns (including projects by the state or a different entity) and one regional school district from statutory and regulatory requirements to allow them to, among other things, (1) qualify for state reimbursement grants, (2) receive higher reimbursement percentages for the grants, or (3) have their project reauthorized due to a change in scope or cost. (These exemptions are commonly referred to as "notwithstandings.") Generally, other than the specific notwithstanding provisions mentioned below, the projects must meet all other eligibility requirements.

The table below describes the notwithstandings that the bill grants.

Table: Notwithstandings for School Construction Projects

Bill §	Town or District	School and Project	Exemption, Waiver or Other Change
149	Region 13 (i.e. Durham and Middlefield)	Middlefield Memorial School	<p>Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list (see above) for the project with a maximum cost of \$76.13 million if the district applies before October 1, 2025</p> <p>Allows the district to change the project's description to a renovation project and then qualify as a renovation</p>
150	Ansonia	New middle school construction	Amends a 2024 notwithstanding for the same project by extending the application deadline from October 1, 2024, to July 1, 2026
151	Glastonbury	Naubuc Elementary School, alterations and code violations	Requires reimbursement for the project regardless of the requirement that a construction bid not be let out without DAS plan and specifications approval
152	Ashford	Ashford School, school building project, code violation and oil tank replacement	Requires reimbursement for the project regardless of the requirement that a construction bid not be let out without DAS plan and specifications approval
153	Cheshire	North End Elementary School, new construction	<p>Waives the standard building space requirements</p> <p>Allows project to qualify as an early childhood care and education program and, thus, receive a 15 point reimbursement rate bonus</p>
154	Cheshire	Norton School, new construction	Waives the standard building space requirements
155	Stamford	Westhill High School, new construction	Reauthorizes the project with an allowable cost of up to \$446 million
156	Stamford	New Roxbury Elementary School, new construction	<p>Reauthorizes project and allows a change in scope if the cost does not exceed \$130 million</p> <p>Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2024 priority list</p>

Bill §	Town or District	School and Project	Exemption, Waiver or Other Change
157	North Haven	North Haven High School, new construction	Allows reimbursement of up to \$2.6 million for otherwise ineligible project costs
158	Danbury	King Street Primary School, project unspecified	<p>Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list (see above) for the project with a maximum cost of \$7 million if the district applies before October 1, 2025</p> <p>Sets an 80% reimbursement rate instead of 63.93%*</p>
159	Middletown	Macdonough Elementary School, project unspecified	<p>Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list for the project with a maximum cost of \$48.9 million if the district applies before October 1, 2025</p> <p>Authorizes a 15 point reimbursement rate increase (current rate is 66.07%*)</p>
160	Middletown	Keigwin Elementary School, alteration	<p>Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list for the project with a maximum cost of \$2 million if the district applies before October 1, 2025</p> <p>Authorizes a 15 point reimbursement rate increase (current rate is 66.07%*)</p>
161	New Haven	<p>Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy for Global Awareness, new construction</p> <p>Hill Central School, new construction</p> <p>Bowen Field</p>	<p>Allows the municipality to receive up to \$17,824,348 in reimbursements for otherwise ineligible costs for the two schools and requires DAS to offset the remaining ineligible project costs against the amount due to the municipality for Bowen Field project</p> <p>Requires the municipality to spend this amount to cover the local share of the costs for any school building projects for which applications are filed and approved on or after July 1, 2025</p>
162	Farmington	Farmington High School, new	Waives the requirement that orders and contracts be

Bill §	Town or District	School and Project	Exemption, Waiver or Other Change
		construction and central administration facility	awarded after a publicly advertised invitation to bid, for architectural and other professional services related to these projects (Replaces provision from 2024 law that currently allows reimbursement of up to \$1.8 million for otherwise ineligible project costs for these projects)
163	Wethersfield	Highcrest Elementary School, new construction	Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list and grants the project a maximum cost of \$73,504,329 if the application is filed before October 1, 2025
164	Wethersfield	Samuel Webb Elementary School, project unspecified	Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list and grants the project a maximum cost of \$106 million if the application is filed before October 1, 2025
165	Wethersfield	Highcrest Elementary School Samuel Webb Elementary School Charles Wright Elementary School	Allows a 15 point reimbursement rate increase for projects at these schools if the application is filed on or before June 30, 2030 (Wethersfield's current rate is 56.79%*)
166	East Hartford (Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc.)	Connecticut River Academy, new magnet school	Allows the entity to receive up to \$2,764,493 in reimbursements for certain ineligible costs Allows the DAS commissioner to pay both the state and local share of eligible project costs if the (1) local share does not exceed \$2,732,664 and (2) project complies with the state school construction laws and SBE regulations
167	East Hartford (Goodwin	Early Childhood Magnet School, new	Allows the entity to receive up to \$369,813 in reimbursements for certain ineligible

Bill §	Town or District	School and Project	Exemption, Waiver or Other Change
	University Magnet Schools, Inc.)	magnet school and site acquisition	costs Allows the DAS commissioner to pay both the state and local share of eligible project costs if the (1) local share does not exceed \$811,348 and (2) project complies with the state school construction laws and SBE regulations
168	East Hartford (Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc.)	Pathways Academy of Design and Technology, new magnet school and site acquisition	Allows the entity to receive up to \$1,766,245 in reimbursements for certain ineligible costs
169	Fairfield	Mill Hill Elementary School, extension and alteration project	Allows the town to receive up to \$600,000 in reimbursements for certain ineligible costs and audit deficiencies
170	Waterbury (ACES)	ACES @ Chase, magnet school project	Reauthorizes the project and sets its total project cost at \$84,435,280
171	Norwich	Norwich Free Academy (NFA), alteration	Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list for the project with a maximum cost of \$5,610,000 if NFA files an application before October 1, 2025 Allows reimbursement for otherwise ineligible project costs Waives the standard building space requirements
172	Bridgeport	Special education program elementary school, new construction	Waives the filing deadline to be on the 2025 priority list for the project with a maximum cost of \$78,000,000 if the town of Bridgeport files an application before September 1, 2025 Sets a 95% project reimbursement rate instead of 68.57%*
173	Hartford	University High School of Science and Engineering, Capitol Preparatory Magnet School, R.J.	Amends a 2021 notwithstanding that required reimbursements of up to \$19,239,432 in ineligible costs for these projects to add as an eligible use of the reimbursement funds paying off deficits

Bill §	Town or District	School and Project	Exemption, Waiver or Other Change
		Kinsella Magnet School, Environmental Sciences Magnet School, Hartford Public High School, Fisher Magnet School, Webster School, Sport and Medical Sciences Academy	associated with the projects
174	New London	East End Elementary School, new construction	Sets a 95% project reimbursement rate instead of 68.21%, * for a cost increase not to exceed \$10 million approved by the administrative services commissioner by July 1, 2025
175	Greenwich	Central Middle School, new construction	Amends a 2024 notwithstanding for the project to change project type from renovation to new construction for a maximum cost of \$112,017,000 (project cost unchanged)
176	Willington	Any project the municipality applies for before June 30, 2027	Authorizes a 15 point reimbursement rate increase (currently, Willington's rate is 64.64%*)

*FY 25 reimbursement rates for general construction are shown for reference; actual rates depend upon the year the application is submitted and the final determination of the project type (new or renovation)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 177-180, 182 & 224 — BUDGET PROVISIONS

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of these sections

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of these sections.

§ 181 — PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATION FUND

Beginning FY 26, requires any probate fund balance on June 30 exceeding 20%, rather than 15%, of the authorized expenditures in the coming fiscal year to be transferred from the probate court Administration Fund to the General Fund

By law, the probate court Administration Fund is established for

authorized expenditures for the administration of each probate court. Under current law, each year any probate fund balance on June 30 exceeding 15% of the authorized expenditures in the coming fiscal year must be transferred from the probate court Administration Fund to the General Fund. Beginning FY 26, the bill increases this threshold to 20%.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 183-185 — CONNECTICUT MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Creates a new benefit tier in the CMERS named MERS 2.0 and sets its parameters; requires CMERC to create and administer a MERS defined contribution retirement plan by July 1, 2026; authorizes CMERC to set up and implement an annuity plan as an alternative to CMERS for nonparticipating municipalities, subject to certain requirements

The bill creates a new benefit tier in the Connecticut Municipal Employees Retirement System (CMERS; see *Background — CMERS*) named MERS 2.0 and sets its parameters. It generally requires CMERS-participating municipalities to enroll in MERS 2.0 anyone who first becomes eligible for CMERS membership on or after July 1, 2027. However, if the person's position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement that was in effect on July 1, 2027, the municipality must enroll the person when the agreement expires. It allows any nonparticipating municipality to enroll in MERS 2.0 on the later of July 1, 2026, or the expiration date of an applicable collective bargaining agreement that was in effect on July 1, 2026. After the municipality enrolls in MERS 2.0, anyone who first becomes eligible there must be enrolled in MERS 2.0.

The bill also requires the Connecticut Municipal Employees Retirement Commission (CMERC; see *Background — CMERC*), by July 1, 2026, to create and administer a MERS defined contribution retirement plan. It requires all CMERS members to contribute 0.25% of their pay to the plan and MERS 2.0 members to contribute an additional 5% of their "other pay" (for regular employers) or 8% of their "other pay" (for public safety employees). ("Other pay" includes overtime pay, bonuses, and any other employee compensation other than regular pay.) It also requires CMERS-participating municipalities to make matching contributions for their MERS 2.0 members.

Lastly, the bill authorizes CMERC to set up and implement an annuity plan as an alternative to CMERS for nonparticipating municipalities, subject to certain requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

MERS 2.0 (§ 183)

Employee Contributions. Under the bill, MERS 2.0 members must contribute (1) 5% of their regular pay (for regular employees) or (2) 8% of their regular pay (for public safety employees). An employee's "regular pay" is his or her "base pay" plus other predictable ongoing compensation (other than overtime pay), as determined under regulations adopted by CMERC. "Base pay" includes annual salary, wages, or earnings, but not (1) other pay; (2) any workers' compensation payments received; and (3) payouts for accrued vacation time, sick leave, or compensatory time. "Public safety employees" are uniformed members of a municipality's paid fire department or regular members of its paid police department.

Vesting Period and Normal Retirement. Under the bill, participating MERS 2.0 members are eligible for retirement benefits (i.e. are vested) if they complete five years of continuous service or 15 years of active aggregate service in a participating municipality. "Active service" is service with a participating municipality for which the member made the required contributions to MERS 2.0, as described below. As under existing law, "aggregate service" includes both (1) active service and (2) any other form of service for which the member has purchased credit as allowed under the law. "Continuous service" is generally active service as a member or, under certain conditions, before becoming a member.

Under the bill, regular vested members are generally eligible for full retirement benefits once they (1) have 30 years of aggregate service in a participating municipality or (2) are age 65 and have five years of continuous service. However, vested members who are public safety employees are eligible once they (1) have 25 years of aggregate service in a participating municipality or (2) are age 55 and have five years of

continuous service.

Early Retirement. The bill generally allows MERS 2.0 members, other than public safety employees, who are separated from their employment with the municipality to elect to receive early retirement benefits on or after reaching age 55 if they (1) have at least five years of continuous service but less than 30 years of aggregate service and (2) have not reached age 65. These employees are not eligible, however, if they were separated from their employment for cause. CMERC must determine the early retirement benefit amount as the actuarial equivalent of the member's full retirement allowance (presumably, reduced to reflect the member's age).

Retirement Benefit Calculation. Under the bill, a member's monthly retirement benefit is calculated as a percentage of his or her "average annual pay" (i.e. average regular pay during his or her five highest-paid years of active service). Specifically, it equals 12 monthly installments of (1) 1.8% of average annual pay for regular members or (2) 2.2% of average annual pay for public safety members, multiplied by the member's months of aggregate service.

The bill also specifies how to calculate a member's average annual pay for any year in which (1) he or she held more than one position or (2) the regular pay for his or her position changed. Specifically, the regular pay for each position the member held during the year must be multiplied by the fraction of the year for which he or she held the position and then added together.

Applicable CMERS Provisions. With certain exceptions, the bill subjects MERS 2.0 to existing CMERS requirements in the same way and with the same force and effect as if those requirements had been fully incorporated in the bill. If any provision conflicts, the bill's provisions supersede with respect to MERS 2.0.

Additionally, the bill explicitly applies the following existing CMERS provisions to also cover MERS 2.0 members:

1. eligibility for disability retirement and a disability retirement

- benefit for qualifying members with at least 10 years of continuous service;
2. survivors' benefits for firefighters and police killed in the line of duty;
 3. spousal benefits for employees who die during active employment; and
 4. annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for retirees, including those for retirements on or after July 1, 2029 (i.e. where the minimum COLA is tied to inflation in years where inflation increases by 2% or less).

Defined Contribution Plan (§ 184)

The bill requires CMERC to create a defined contribution retirement plan by July 1, 2026. CMERC must administer the plan and may (1) make deposits or payments to the plan, subject to its terms and (2) contract with a private entity for the plan's consolidated billing or other administrative services. Under the bill, municipalities must make payroll deductions for each member of the MERS defined contribution plan, as specified under the bill.

Annuity Plan (§ 185)

To establish the annuity plan, the bill requires CMERC's eight appointed trustees who represent either employee or employer interests to unanimously approve it. Once established, CMERC must set the process for nonparticipating municipalities to adopt the plan. Any municipality participating in CMERS on the date the annuity plan is implemented is ineligible to participate.

The plan must give municipalities the option of transferring to it any previously adopted defined contribution plan's accounts and assets. Municipalities that adopt the plan must make payroll deductions for each member.

The state comptroller must administer the plan and may:

1. enter into contracts on the state's behalf with plan members to defer any portion of the member's compensation from the municipality;
2. make deposits or payments to the plan, subject to its terms; and
3. contract with a private entity for the plan's consolidated billing or other administrative services.

Background — CMERC

Established in 2024, CMERC administers MERS and the Policemen and Firemen Survivors' Benefit Fund as the successor to the State Employees Retirement Commission for these purposes. It consists of 13 members: the state treasurer and comptroller, who serve as ex-officio, nonvoting members; eight members appointed by the governor (four who represent labor and four who represent government employers); two members appointed by the comptroller; and a neutral chairperson appointed by the governor.

Background — CMERS

Under existing law, CMERS does not make a distinction between public safety members and general members. All current CMERS members generally:

1. must contribute 5.25% of their total compensation (including overtime) subject to Social Security taxes and 8% of their total compensation not subject to Social Security taxes;
2. become vested after five years of continuous service or 15 years of aggregate service;
3. qualify for full retirement benefits after (a) reaching age 55 with either five years of continuous service or 15 years of aggregate service or (b) 25 years of aggregate service with no minimum age requirement; and
4. have their pension benefit calculated as their years of service, multiplied by their final average salary (the average salary,

including overtime, of their three highest-paid years), multiplied by a multiplier that depends on whether the member is covered by Social Security (for covered members the multiplier is 1.5% of salary up to the breakpoint + 2% of salary over the breakpoint; for members not covered by Social Security the multiplier is 2%).

§ 186 — STATE EMPLOYEE RETIREE LIFE INSURANCE

Changes the service criteria used to determine a retired state employee's eligibility for certain life insurance benefits

By law, state employees who participate in the state-sponsored group life insurance plan qualify for continued “paid-up” coverage under the policy when they retire from state service. Under current law, those employees receive coverage for 50% of the amount of life insurance they were insured for immediately before retiring, if they retire with at least 25 years of “state service,” which is occupying for pay any office or position or employment in the service of the state, but not its local governmental subdivisions.

For those employees who retire on or after July 1, 2025, the bill instead requires 25 years of “credited state service,” which is service for which the employee or other eligible person was eligible to participate in a state-sponsored retirement system other than the Teachers’ Retirement System or CMERS. As under current law, (1) those with enough credited state service receive coverage for 50% of the amount of life insurance they were insured for immediately before retiring; (2) those with less than 25 years of credited state service receive a proportionate amount of life insurance coverage, rounded to the nearest \$100; (3) the coverage must be for at least \$10,000; and (4) the retiree cannot be required to pay for the insurance.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 187 & 188 — PARAMEDIC LICENSE FEE

Eliminates the \$150 application fee for a paramedic license

The bill repeals a provision in the budget and implementer bill (HB 7287) that eliminated both the \$150 application fee and \$155 annual renewal fee for a paramedic license. Instead, the bill eliminates the \$150

application fee but retains the \$155 renewal fee for the license.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 189 & 190 — SUPPLEMENTAL GRANTS TO SPECIFIED TOWNS

Makes certain grant payments to specified towns (Branford, Bridgeport, New London, and Voluntown) from the MRSF payable as supplemental grants rather than PILOT payments

Under existing law, the Municipal Revenue Sharing Fund (MRSF) is used to fund certain municipal grants, including payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) grants for real property tax losses due to exemptions for state-owned property, private colleges, and certain hospitals. Current law specifies additional PILOT amounts for four municipalities annually:

6. \$100,000 for Branford;
7. \$5 million for Bridgeport;
8. \$1 million for New London; and
9. \$60,000 for Voluntown.

Beginning with FY 26, the bill instead makes these same amounts payable as supplemental revenue sharing grants to these four towns.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 191-194 — BOTTLE BILL REGISTRATION, REPORTING, AND CONTAINER ACCEPTANCE REQUIREMENTS

Requires redemption centers to be approved to operate by, and annually register with DEEP, rather than just register once; establishes reporting requirements for centers that accept more than 2,500 containers from a person in one day and generally prohibits anyone from redeeming more than 5,000 containers in any day; sets new reporting and record retention requirements; generally prohibits redemption centers from removing containers from their premises prior to distributors removing them; further limits the number of containers a person may redeem at reverse vending machines or dealers per day; prohibits dealers from collecting or charging a refund value for beverage containers that are not purchased in Connecticut; exempts THC-infused beverages and hard cider from the bottle bill's provisions

The bill makes a number of changes to the state's beverage container redemption law ("bottle bill") that expand the state's oversight and

enforcement of redemption centers. Principally, the bill:

1. requires redemption centers to be approved to operate by, and annually register with, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) in order to establish themselves or operate, rather than just register once with DEEP as current law requires;
2. requires redemption centers that accept more than 2,500 containers from any one person in one day to record certain identifying information about that person;
3. generally prohibits redemption centers from accepting more than 5,000 containers in a day at a redemption center, except for nonprofit organizations and verified fundraising activities;
4. requires redemption centers and reverse vending machine operators to retain certain records for at least two years and permits the DEEP commissioner to examine certain accounts and records of redemption centers and reverse vending machine operators;
5. adds a new quarterly reporting requirement for redemption centers (redemption centers that fail to submit these reports may be denied their annual registration);
6. prohibits redemption centers from removing beverage containers from their premises or transferring them between premises that they control before having them removed by a distributor, unless the distributor authorizes the removal in writing;
7. caps at 240 the number of beverage containers a person may redeem in any one day at a dealer or a dealer's reverse vending machine, rather than the current cap of 240 containers at any one time at a dealer's reverse vending machine;
8. exempts THC-infused beverages and hard cider from being subject to the bottle bill's provisions;

9. specifies that redemption centers are not considered dealers under the bottle bill;
10. limits the facilities that qualify as redemption centers under the bottle bill to those whose primary business is redeeming and sorting empty beverage containers and preparing them for redemption, rather than any facility for these purposes;
11. prohibits dealers from collecting or charging a refund value for beverage containers that are not purchased in Connecticut; and
12. makes various technical and minor changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Redemption Center Approval and Annual Registration

Current law requires prospective redemption center owners to register with the DEEP commissioner once and provide certain information, including the business's address and hours, principals, sponsors and dealers served, and beverage containers accepted. The bill instead requires these owners to be approved to operate by, and annually register with DEEP.

Records Required for People Redeeming More Than 2,500 Containers in One Day

The bill requires redemption centers that accept more than 2,500 containers from any one person in one day to get and record the following information for the person:

1. their name,
2. the license plate number of any vehicle used to transport the containers to the redemption center,
3. the person's driver's license,
4. the collection points of the empty containers, and
5. the number of containers brought to the redemption center.

The redemption center must have the person certify, to the best of their knowledge, that the containers brought to the redemption center were originally sold as filled beverages in Connecticut and were not previously redeemed.

Record Keeping Requirements

The bill requires redemption centers and reverse vending machine operators to maintain the records described above for at least two years. The DEEP commissioner may examine the accounts and records of redemption centers and reverse vending machine operators maintained in this way, or any accounts and records made under the solid waste management laws. This includes (1) receipts, (2) disbursements, and (3) any other item the commissioner deems appropriate.

Quarterly Reporting Requirement and Enforcement for Redemption Centers

The bill requires redemption center operators to submit monthly reports to the DEEP commissioner, on a DEEP-provided form, on the following:

1. the number and type of containers redeemed, aggregated by town for each town in which they operate;
2. each record created in relation to their registration and approval, changes in registration information, and redemptions of more than 2,500 containers and 5,000 in a day; and
3. any other redemption information the commissioner finds necessary.

Under the bill, redemption centers that fail to submit these quarterly reports may be denied an annual registration.

The bill prohibits dealers from collecting or charging a refund value for beverage containers that are not purchased in Connecticut. Under the bill, “dealers” are any person who engages in the sale of beverages in beverage containers to consumers but does not include redemption centers.

§ 195 — STUDY AND PILOT PROGRAM ON SUBSTITUTING COLLEGE COURSES FOR POLICE BASIC TRAINING

Requires POST to (1) study whether college-level criminal justice courses can be substituted for its police basic training courses and (2) create a related pilot program at the University of New Haven

The bill requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) to examine the criminal justice courses offered by colleges and universities in Connecticut and determine (1) if the courses equal those required as part of a police officer's minimum basic law enforcement training at the Connecticut Police Academy and (2) under what conditions a police trainee would not need to complete an academy course because he or she had already completed an equivalent college-level course. By January 1, 2026, POST must submit a report of its examination and determination to the Public Safety and Security Committee.

By that same date, the bill requires POST to establish a pilot program with the University of New Haven to allow someone who attends the police academy for basic training to complete it by taking (1) courses related to legal issues at the university and (2) the remaining courses at the academy.

By January 1, 2027, POST must submit a report to the Public Safety and Security Committee that:

1. describes the pilot program;
2. analyzes the program's impact on police recruitment and training procedures and resources; and
3. recommends whether to end, continue, revise, or expand the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 196 — RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLICE BONUSES

Requires DESPP and POST to create a report with recommendations on awarding bonuses to new and existing police officers

By January 1, 2026, the bill requires DESPP and POST to jointly

submit a report to the Public Safety and Security Committee with recommendations on awarding bonuses to encourage individuals to begin and continue careers as police officers. Specifically, the report must include recommendations for a schedule of bonuses to be awarded to (1) new officers when they begin service and (2) existing officers based on years of service.

Under the bill, DESPP and POST may consult with municipal police chiefs and anyone else in developing their recommendations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 197 — HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES PATHWAY

Requires the Board of Regents, UConn Board of Trustees, and POST to take specific actions towards helping police officers earn higher education degrees

By January 1, 2026, the bill requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education, UConn's Board of Trustees, and POST to jointly submit a report to the Public Safety and Security Committee that includes a career pathway and schedule that they must develop. The pathway must help police officers earn higher education degrees and include a schedule of credits that officers may receive at UConn (and all its campuses) and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities for the training they received in order to be certified, and maintain their certification, as police officers.

The boards and POST must promote this pathway to encourage police officers to earn higher education degrees, and their report must describe their plans for promoting it.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 198 — STATE POLICE OFFICER RETIREES RETURNING TO SERVICE STUDY

Requires DESPP, in conjunction with SBLR, to study the feasibility of the state entering into negotiations with the State Police officers union to set conditions for retired officers to return to service

The bill requires DESPP, in conjunction with the State Board of Labor Relations (SBLR), to study the feasibility of the state entering into negotiations with the State Police officers union to seek amendments to

their collective bargaining agreement that would set conditions under which a retired officer may return to service and (1) resume earning credit toward retirement benefits, in the same way as the retired officer did before retirement, and (2) be eligible for earning his or her pre-retirement benefits. DESPP and SBLR must jointly submit a report with the results of the study by January 1, 2026, to the Public Safety and Security Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 199 — POLICE MENTAL HEALTH

Requires DESPP to investigate ways to develop and enhance programs addressing police officer mental health

The bill requires the DESPP commissioner to investigate ways to develop and enhance programs and initiatives addressing the mental health needs of police officers.

The investigation must examine peer-to-peer support programs, programs that train officers to help themselves and fellow officers deal with work-related mental health issues, programs that employ a psychologist or other mental health professionals within a law enforcement unit to help officers with their mental health needs, employee assistance programs, and any other programs and resources that may address officers' mental health needs.

In its investigation, DESPP must consult with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, POST, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, law enforcement units throughout the state, employee organizations that represent police officers, and any other entities the commissioner deems appropriate.

By January 1, 2026, the DESPP commissioner must submit a report to the Public Safety and Security Committee with the investigation results; a list of programs, services, and resources identified as best practices that could be implemented by units across the state to address officers' mental health needs; and any legislative recommendations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 200 — TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS DURING CODIFICATION

Requires the Legislative Commissioners' Office to make necessary technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes when codifying the bill

The bill requires the Legislative Commissioners' Office to make technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes as necessary to codify the bill, including internal reference corrections.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 201 — LIMITED PURPOSE TRUST COMPANIES STUDY

Requires DOB to study and report to the Banking Committee on the establishment of limited purpose trust companies in the state

The bill requires the Department of Banking (DOB) to (1) study the establishment of limited purpose trust companies in Connecticut and (2) by December 1, 2025, submit a report on the study's results to the Banking Committee. The study must include recommendations for legislation necessary to authorize the companies' establishment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 202 — BUDGET PROVISION

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 203 — MUNICIPAL GRANTS

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section

Please refer to the Fiscal Note for a summary of this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 204 — TAX EXEMPTION FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ON CERTAIN RESERVATION LANDS

Delays the effective date of a property tax exemption that HB 7287, as amended by House Amendment "A," establishes for property located on reservation land that is held in trust for a federally recognized Indian tribe

HB 7287, as amended by House Amendment "A," establishes a property tax exemption for real and tangible personal property located

on reservation land that is held in trust for a federally recognized Indian tribe. Under this bill, the exemption is applicable to assessment years starting on or after October 1, 2026, rather than those starting on or after October 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 205 — INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PARTNERS

Allows, rather than requires as under SB 1, school boards to hire or designate a current employee to be an instructional support partner

The bill amends Section 28 of SB 1, as amended by Senate “A” and passed by both chambers, to allow, rather than require, school boards to hire or designate a current employee to serve as an instructional support partner in each school or school building under the school board’s jurisdiction beginning with the 2026-27 school year.

Under SB 1 and this bill, an instructional support partner’s responsibilities include:

1. reducing teachers’ administrative burden, including related to the IEP process, scheduling and taking minutes during planning and placement team meetings, being a designated staff member for specialized responsibilities, and attending (a) professional development trainings, (b) trainings for students’ individualized interventions, and (c) testing;
2. helping school-based personnel improve the delivery and administration of the IEP process;
3. collaborating with parents and school-based personnel on instructional decision-making for students with disabilities;
4. finding and attending, as a representative of the school or school building, trainings and professional development on student interventions and planning and delivering professional learning activities to increase students with disabilities’ achievement based on these trainings to staff, parents, and others; and
5. consulting with school-based instructional staff on IEP

development and writing, extended school year, behavioral interventions, and transition plans for students with disabilities.

The bill requires anyone hired or designated as a school or school building's instructional support partner to spend at least 50% of their time performing the position's duties.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 206-208 — STATE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Creates a 12-member State Historical Commission to examine and make recommendations on questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history; requires the commission to develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol's exterior; requires installation of historical placards around the exterior

The bill creates a 12-member State Historical Commission to examine and make recommendations to the legislative, executive, and judicial branches on questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history. It also requires the commission to develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol building's exterior.

Correspondingly, the bill requires the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission to implement the State Historical Commission's process. It also allows the Legislative Management Committee to commission additional statues through this process, using capital funds and following state bidding laws.

The bill also requires the State Historical Commission, by February 1, 2026, to (1) develop a plan to install placards or other signs around the State Capitol building's exterior to give the public a written historical explanation of the various statues and other markers on the building exterior and (2) submit the plan to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission and Legislative Management Committee. The Preservation and Restoration Commission must make recommendations to the committee on implementing the plan.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

State Historical Commission Membership

The bill creates the commission as an independent body within the legislative branch for administrative purposes only. Its membership consists of the following state officials: the chief court administrator or her designee, state historian, state librarian, and state preservation officer. It also includes eight appointed members, one each representing the organizations listed in the table below.

Table: State Historical Commission Appointed Members

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Organization Appointee Must Represent</i>
House speaker	CT Humanities
House majority leader	CT Library Association
Senate president pro tempore	CT Democracy Center
Senate majority leader	Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
House minority leader	CT Museum of Culture and History
Senate minority leader	Mohegan Tribe of Indians of CT
Governor (two appointments)	(1) Freeman Center for History and Community, Inc. and (2) undesignated

Appointing authorities must make their initial appointments by September 1, 2025, and fill any vacancy. Vacancies occurring during a term must be filled for the rest of the unexpired term. Appointed members (excluding gubernatorial appointees) may be legislators.

Members serve three-year terms starting on their appointment date and continue to serve until their successors are appointed. They serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses, within available funds.

Leadership and Meetings

Under the bill, the House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must select the chairperson from among the commission members. The chairperson must schedule and hold the first meeting by September 15, 2025. A majority of commission members constitutes a quorum to conduct business.

The Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee's administrative staff serve in this capacity for the commission.

Powers and Duties

The bill authorizes the commission to:

1. issue reports and recommendations to all three branches of government on historical questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history, on its own initiative or upon request of any state agency, department, board, or commission;
2. develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol building's exterior;
3. obtain available assistance and data from these government entities needed to carry out the commission's purposes;
4. accept gifts, donations, or bequests to perform its duties; and
5. perform other appropriate and necessary acts to carry out its duties.

Reports

By January 1, 2026, the commission must develop the process for identifying and commissioning additional statues and submit a report detailing the process to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission. The State Historical Commission must update the process when necessary and submit these revisions to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission.

The bill also requires the State Historical Commission, starting by February 1, 2026, to report annually to the governor and the GAE Committee.

§§ 209 & 210 — TRIBE APPLICATIONS TO CONVERT LAND TO FEDERAL TRUST STATUS

Removes a requirement for the state to oppose Native American tribe applications to convert fee interest land to federal trust status

The bill removes a provision in current law that requires the state to oppose any application by a Native American tribe to convert any parcel of fee interest land (i.e. land owned with no restrictions) to federal trust

status under federal regulations on Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) land acquisitions. It also makes conforming changes.

Generally, land in trust status is held in trust by the United States on behalf of an individual Native American or tribe. Among other things, land held in federal trust status:

1. may qualify for certain BIA programs and services;
2. is not subject to state or local taxes; and
3. cannot be alienated or encumbered (e.g., sold, gifted, or leased) without the federal secretary of the interior's approval.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 211 & 212 — PREVAILING WAGE FOR OFFSITE CUSTOM FABRICATION

Extends the state's prevailing wage law to cover off-site custom fabrication for a public works project

The bill extends the state's prevailing wage law to cover off-site custom fabrication for a covered public works project. Under the bill, "off-site custom fabrication" is fabricating mechanical systems specifically for a public works project at a site other than the project's location, but still in Connecticut. It includes plumbing, heating, cooling, pipefitting, ventilation, and exhaust duct systems, but not components or materials that are stock shelf items or readily available.

Generally, the prevailing wage law requires each contract to build, renovate, or repair certain public works projects to have a provision that requires the project's contractors and subcontractors to pay their construction workers wages and benefits equal to those that are customary or prevailing for the same work, in the same occupation, in the same town. Starting July 1, 2025, the bill requires contracts for offsite custom fabrication on prevailing wage projects to include this provision. The prevailing wage law applies to new construction projects costing at least \$1 million and renovation projects costing at least \$100,000.

(The bill repeals a substantially similar provision in HB 7287, as

amended by House Amendment “A” (§ 162), and replaces it with this provision to specify that the covered systems being fabricated off-site are “mechanical” ones.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 213 — FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT WORKING GROUP

Establishes a family entertainment working group to study and make recommendations on family entertainment in the state

The bill requires the chairpersons and ranking members of the General Law Committee, or their designees, to convene a working group by August 1, 2025, to study and make recommendations on family entertainment in the state, including:

1. family entertainment options and venues in the state, including live venues (theaters, concert halls, and movie theaters);
2. ways to increase these options, support these venues, and make sure they are economically viable, including by (a) ensuring families and patrons, including those with disabilities, have access to them and (b) providing financial and other incentives to ensure venues’ economic viability, such as tax credits for capital improvements, swipe fee reform, and entertainment districts;
3. the benefits and ramifications of disclosing the actual start time of movies before viewers enter the room where the movie will be shown, and practical and technological ways to make that disclosure;
4. other ways to provide transparency to consumers to enhance their experience and promote economic growth; and
5. other matters deemed relevant by the group.

The General Law chairpersons, or their designees, serve as the working group’ chairpersons. The working group must report on its studies and recommendations to the General Law Committee by January 1, 2026. The working group terminates on that date or when it submits its report, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 214 & 215 — OHE STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Makes various changes to the OHE student loan reimbursement program, including expanding eligibility and revising certain qualification criteria related to the volunteer hour requirement

The bill makes various changes to the Office of Higher Education's (OHE) student loan reimbursement program, including:

1. expanding eligibility to individuals holding a degree from any level and to certain former Stone Academy students,
2. making various changes to the volunteer hour requirement,
3. changing the income criteria qualification to be based on federal adjusted gross income rather than Connecticut adjusted gross income,
4. specifying that OHE must reimburse each program participant who meets the program's requirements for student loan payments paid during the preceding calendar year, and
5. carrying over the program's funding to be made available in FY 26.

The student loan reimbursement program was created in 2023 and launched in January of 2025. Eligible participants are reimbursed for up to \$5,000 of their student loan payments per year (for up to four years)

Lastly, the bill makes technical and grammatical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the provision carrying over the program's funding is effective from passage.

Income Qualification

In current law, to qualify for student loan reimbursement under the program, participants are required to be below a set income threshold based on their Connecticut adjusted gross income. The bill changes the criteria to be based instead on the participant's federal adjusted gross

income.

Eligibility Expansion

In current law, there is a general requirement that to qualify for student loan reimbursement, participants must have earned an associate or bachelor's degree from a Connecticut higher education institution (or meet a licensure or hardship requirement).

The bill expands the education requirement by allowing participants to have earned a degree of any level from a Connecticut institution of higher education.

The bill also extends student loan reimbursement eligibility to include individuals who were enrolled in Stone Academy's practical nurse education program between November 1, 2021, and February 28, 2023, and meet the following additional criteria:

1. they did not complete the program;
2. they have not participated in a teach-out (a plan to let students finish their course or full program in the case it was closed) or proctored comprehensive predictor examination administered by a higher education institution identified by OHE; and
3. they submit evidence that they filed a closed school loan discharge application not later than six months before applying for the student loan reimbursement program, but their student loan was not discharged.

(Stone Academy closed suddenly in early 2023. At the time of the school's closure, there were students midway through their practical nurse education program.)

By law, all participants are additionally required to maintain a Connecticut residency for at least five years.

Eligible Volunteer Work

Under current law, participants in the student loan reimbursement program must have at least 50 volunteer hours (generally for a nonprofit

organization or municipal government) for each year they participate. The bill makes various changes to the scope of eligible volunteer work, including:

1. expanding the eligible nonprofit organizations the participants can volunteer for to all tax-exempt nonprofits and not just those registered with the Department of Consumer Protection;
2. specifically adding the U.S. armed forces as an eligible entity to volunteer for, and those who complete their volunteer work through the U.S. armed forces do not need to adhere to the requirement that the hours be unpaid (existing law already includes military service as an eligible type of volunteer work);
3. specifying that volunteering as a firefighter, emergency medical personnel, or for a religious organization, nonprofit organization, or municipal government are eligible ways to meet the service requirement;
4. adding unpaid work that was required to complete any certificate or degree program to count as eligible volunteer hours;
5. specifying that an individual can combine hours from more than one eligible organization to meet the volunteer service requirement; and
6. allowing volunteer hours to be applied for two years after completion.

Hardship Waiver. The bill requires OHE to grant a hardship waiver to participants who apply for the waiver and have a medical condition or disability that prevents them from completing volunteer work (as determined by their treating health care provider). Additionally, individuals who were enrolled in the practical nurse education program at Stone Academy between November 1, 2021, and February 28, 2023, automatically qualify for a waiver.

Service Documentation. By law, participants must annually submit a form to OHE with the number of volunteer hours completed. This

form must be signed by a supervisor or other employee of the eligible entity the participant volunteered for.

The bill specifies that for documenting military service or unpaid student work volunteer hours, OHE can accept other documentation outside what is required by existing law. The bill also removes the requirement that for military service, the form be signed by the participant's commanding officer.

Additionally, for documenting volunteer hours at nonprofit organizations, including religious organizations, the bill requires the participant to submit evidence of current nonprofit certification from the Internal Revenue Service.

Appropriated Funding to OHE

The bill carries forward the FY 25 funding appropriated to OHE for the student loan reimbursement program, making the funds available for the same purpose in FY 26.

§§ 216 & 217 — HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE AND REPEAL OF WORKING GROUP

Establishes a subcommittee of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board to monitor Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) expenditures and sustainability plans and requires the board to make recommendations to the General Assembly on these plans; repeals a budget bill provision creating a working group on CSCU reserve funds

The bill establishes a subcommittee of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board to monitor Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) expenditures and sustainability plans and requires the board to make recommendations to the General Assembly on these plans.

The bill also repeals a provision of HB 7287, as amended by House "A", creating a working group to oversee and monitor expenditures from each reserve fund of CSCU or the higher education institutions within CSCU.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Subcommittee on Educational Alignment and Need

The bill creates a Subcommittee on Educational Alignment and Need of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board. It consists of the:

1. Appropriations and Higher Education and Employment Advancement committee chairpersons and ranking members;
2. Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary, or his designee;
3. Board of Regents for Higher Education chairperson and vice-chairperson, or board members they designate; and
4. Board of Regents for Higher Education faculty advisory committee chairperson and vice-chairperson, or committee members they designate.

The bill requires the subcommittee to (1) monitor CSCU expenditures, (2) review each CSCU sustainability plan, and (3) make recommendations to the board on these plans and their funding.

The bill requires the board to review the subcommittee's recommendations and submit the board's recommendations for each sustainability plan and its funding to the General Assembly.

OPM Secretary Designee

The bill allows the OPM secretary to designate someone to serve in his place as a member and one of the three chairs of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board. By law, the other members of the board are the (1) chairs and ranking members of the Appropriations and Higher Education and Employment Advancement committees and (2) members of the Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee. The other board chairs are the Appropriations Committee chairs.

§ 218 — CHANGES TO ECS GRANT PHASE-IN SCHEDULE

Delays by two years the start of an ECS schedule to phase in grant reductions for overfunded towns; holds these towns harmless for FYs 26 and 27

By law, the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant has a multi-year phase-in schedule of (1) incremental increases for towns that are underfunded and (2) incremental decreases, or years with no change in funding, for overfunded towns. The ECS grant is the state's single largest grant for municipalities.

The bill delays by two years the start of an existing statutory ECS schedule to phase in grant funding reductions for overfunded towns. It holds these towns harmless (i.e. maintaining the same funding level) for FYs 26 and 27. The decreased funding for overfunded towns starts in FY 28, rather than FY 26 as under current law. It maintains the same schedule of decreases as under current law for each year once the decreases begin, with larger decreases in each following year until the overfunded towns are at their full-funded level.

The bill leaves unchanged the existing provision that begins to fully fund the underfunded towns in FY 26.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Determining Grant Increases and Decreases

When determining ECS grant increases or decreases, the formula uses a town's "grant adjustment," which is the absolute value of the difference between a town's ECS grant amount for the previous fiscal year and its fully funded grant amount. So, for underfunded towns, the grant adjustment is the amount needed to reach the fully funded level; for overfunded towns, it is the amount the town is funded in excess of its fully funded grant.

The grants are based on student enrollment, added student weight for characteristics such as the number of students eligible for free or reduced priced school meals, and town wealth. Towns may be overfunded from one year to the next because hold-harmless provisions were in effect in previous years when a town would otherwise see a decrease in funding due to lower school enrollment or an increase in its town wealth or due to other changes.

ECS Funding Changes for Overfunded Towns

The table below shows the bill's changes for FYs 26-34.

Table: ECS Funding Schedule Changes for Overfunded Towns, FYs 26-34

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Overfunded Towns</i>	
	Current Law	Bill
26	Previous FY amount minus 14.29% of its grant adjustment	Same amount as in FY 25
27	Previous FY amount minus 16.67% of its grant adjustment	Same amount as in FY 26
28	Previous FY amount minus 20% of its grant adjustment	Previous FY amount minus 14.29% of its grant adjustment
29	Previous FY amount minus 25% of its grant adjustment	Previous FY amount minus 16.67% of its grant adjustment
30	Previous FY amount minus 33.33% of its grant adjustment	Previous FY amount minus 20% of its grant adjustment
31	Previous FY amount minus 50% of its grant adjustment	Previous FY amount minus 25% of its grant adjustment
32	Fully funded	Previous FY amount minus 33.33% of its grant adjustment
33	Fully funded	Previous FY amount minus 50% of its grant adjustment
34 and all following years	Fully funded	Fully funded

§ 219 — POSTING CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

Requires each school board to post approved curriculum objectives and scope on the board's website

The bill requires each local and regional board of education to post objectives and scope and sequence of approved curriculum on the board's website. Current law requires boards to make the curriculum and all associated curriculum materials available in accordance with the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). PPRA, in part, gives parents and guardians the right to inspect instructional material used by the school district as part of their student's educational curriculum (excluding academic tests and assessments) (20 U.S.C. § 1232h).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 220 — SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR NURSING HOMES

Replaces HB 7287 (§ 358), as amended by House A, and requires DSS to distribute up to \$55 million in supplemental funding to nursing homes and proportionally distribute it to support wage increases for nursing home employees

HB 7287 (§ 358), as amended by House A, requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to distribute up to \$55 million to nursing homes in FY 28, and allows her to proportionally distribute the funds to support wage increases as follows:

1. a 2.5% increase on July 1, 2027, for nurses; nurse's aides; and dietary, housekeeping, laundry, maintenance, and plant operation personnel and
2. a \$26 hourly rate for registered nurse's aides by January 1, 2028.

This bill requires, rather than allows the commissioner to proportionally distribute the funds to stay within the allocated amount.

It also specifies that (1) the hourly rate for registered nurse's aides must be at least \$26 and (2) any remaining funds must be used for other wage increases and minimum increases for nurses; nurse's aides; and dietary, housekeeping, laundry, maintenance, and plant operation personnel.

Under the bill, the commissioner must determine which homes are eligible for this supplemental funding and may recoup any amount given to facilities to provide wage increases who do not do so.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 221 & 222 — DDS PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS

Requires DDS to (1) distribute up to \$5 million in supplement funding to residential services providers in FY 27 and (2) from an available \$105 million pool, increase provider rates in FY 28 to support wage increases

The bill requires the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) commissioner, in FY 27, to distribute up to \$5 million (in total) in supplemental funding to DDS-contracted residential services providers.

It also requires the commissioner, in FY 28, to increase rates for DDS-contracted providers to support wage increases. He must do so from an

available \$105 million pool.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 223 — REPEAL OF ASSIGNED MUNICIPAL LIEN INTEREST RATE AND FEE PROVISIONS

Repeals §§ 245 & 246 of the 2025 budget implementer, which generally (1) reduces the annual interest rate on assigned municipal property tax liens; (2) for these and municipal sewer assessment liens, requires a written contract for the assignment to be valid; and (3) caps attorney's fees for the disposition of these assigned liens at 15% of the judgment involved

The bill repeals §§ 245 and 246 of HB 7287, as amended by House “A,” which generally (1) reduces, from 18% to 12%, the annual interest rate on assigned municipal property tax liens; (2) for these liens and those for delinquent municipal sewer assessments, requires a written contract between the municipality and the assignee for the assignments to be valid and enforceable; and (3) caps attorney’s fees related to a foreclosure, sale, or other disposition of these assigned liens at 15% of the judgment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 225 — BRIDGEPORT ELECTION MONITOR

Requires SOTS to hire and install an election monitor for Bridgeport and conduct a town-wide bilingual public awareness campaign to educate the public on their rights under the state’s election laws

The bill requires SOTS to hire and install an election monitor in Bridgeport as well as develop and conduct a town-wide bilingual public awareness campaign to educate the public on their rights under state election law. (The bill requires the secretary to use funds appropriated under the bill to conduct the campaign, but it does not appropriate any funds.)

Specifically, the secretary must contract with at least one individual to serve as an election monitor in any municipality with a population of at least 140,000, according to the most recent State Register and Manual (i.e. Bridgeport). The election monitor’s purpose is to detect and prevent irregularity and impropriety in how the municipality manages the election administration procedures and conducts the elections. The

elections covered under the bill include the 2025 municipal primary and election, the 2026 state primary and general election, and any special election in 2025 and 2026.

The monitor must (1) oversee the covered elections, including absentee ballots, early voting, election day registration, and election and primary day polling place voting; (2) conduct inspections, inquiries, and investigations of any duty or responsibility required by state election law and carried out by a municipal official or his or her appointee; (3) issue periodic reports to SOTS; and (4) immediately report any irregularity or impropriety discovered to the secretary. Toward that end, the bill also requires that the monitor have access to all records, data, and material maintained by or available to the municipal officials or appointees.

The bill requires the secretary to contract with the election monitor until December 31, 2026, unless SOTS terminates the contract for any reason before then. Under the bill, the election monitor must not be considered a state employee, but must be compensated as required by the contract and reimbursed for necessary expenses.

The municipality must provide the election monitor with office space, supplies, equipment, and services necessary to properly carry out his or her duties. Costs related to the monitor's service must be paid from the funds appropriated to the secretary for the position. (The bill does not appropriate funds for this purpose.)

The bill specifies that these provisions do not prohibit the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) from exercising its authority. By law, SEEC, among other things, investigates alleged election law violations, inspects campaign finance records and reports, refers evidence of violations to the chief state's attorney or the attorney general, and levies civil penalties for election violations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 226 & 227 — SEEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

Repeals provisions passed during the 2025 legislative session regarding SEEC Executive Director appointments, including that they receive legislative approval, and instead requires that (1) any reappointment be limited to a single term of up to four years and (2) before any reappointment, the executive director must appear at a joint legislative public hearing to discuss SEEC's efforts and the CEP program

Under current law, as amended by PA 25-26, by March 1, 2027, and every four years after that, the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) must generally appoint a person to serve as its executive director at its pleasure for up to a four-year term. The Senate and the House of Representatives must approve the appointment.

Under HB 7287, § 262, as amended by House Amendment “A” and passed by the House and the Senate, the executive director may be reappointed for one additional term of up to four years at the conclusion of his or her first term. However, under HB 7287, SEEC does not have to submit the reappointment to the legislature for approval.

This bill repeals the provision from HB 7287 and amends current law, as amended by PA 25-26, by eliminating the requirement that the executive director's nomination receive legislative approval.

Instead, the bill requires, by March 1, 2027, and every four years after, the commission to appoint a person to serve at its pleasure for a four-year term starting March 1 of the nominating year. If a vacancy occurs, the commission must appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

Under the bill, before SEEC reappoints its executive director for an additional four year term at the end of his or her first term, the Government Oversight and Government Administration and Elections committees must hold a joint public hearing for the executive director to appear and discuss SEEC's operations, achievements, and future initiatives, as well as the health of the Citizens' Elections Program (CEP).

The bill specifies that an executive director may only be reappointed once.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the repeal of Section 262 of HB 7287, as amended, is effective June 30, 2025.

§§ 228-232 — SOUTH MEADOWS SITE REVISIONS

Modifies provisions in the budget and implementer bill (HB 7287) related to the South Meadows site by, among other things, (1) requiring the state to include the site in the basis for state PILOT payments to Hartford until the site is redeveloped and (2) removing the Brainard Airport exclusion; specifies that no power or action of the South Meadows Development District established under the budget and implementer bill supersedes or authorizes conflicts with federal law or aviation regulations concerning Brainard

The bill makes a number of changes to provisions in the budget and implementer bill (HB 7287) related to the “South Meadows site,” which encompasses two Hartford properties located at 300 Maxim Road and 100 Reserve Road and contains closed resource recovery and jet turbine facilities. Specifically, it:

1. requires the state to include the site as a basis for any state payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) grant to Hartford for PILOTs made on or after June 30, 2025, until the site is redeveloped;
2. removes a provision specifying that none of the provisions apply to the Hartford Brainard Airport;
3. limits the balance of the MIRA Dissolution Authority’s (MDA) resources that transfer to the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) to the resources relating to the South Meadows site;
4. specifically authorizes CRDA to hire former MDA managers with specified expertise, rather than just any former MDA employees;
5. requires the transferred property be included in MDA’s FY 25 financial reports, and not CRDA’s, and be treated as having been transferred to CRDA on July 1, 2025, with current carrying values; and
6. makes other minor and clarifying changes.

The budget and implementer bill also created a South Meadows development district and delineated the district’s geographic boundaries. (The budget and implementer bill did not provide a purpose for or authority over this district.) The bill specifies that the

district's powers or actions do not supersede, or authorize any conflict with, federal law or any federal aviation regulation concerning control of Hartford Brainard Airport.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 30, 2025, except the repealer related to Hartford Brainard Airport is effective upon passage.

§ 233 — PAID SICK LEAVE INCREMENTS

Allows boards of education and municipal employers to require that certain employees use their accrued paid sick leave in the increments set in their applicable collective bargaining agreements, rather than in one-hour increments, as long as they meet certain conditions

The state's paid sick leave law generally requires employers to give their employees up to 40 hours of paid sick leave per year, and employees must accrue one hour of leave for every 30 hours worked. Under the Department of Labor's current implementation of the law, employers must allow eligible employees to use the leave in one-hour increments.

The bill instead allows certain public-sector employers to require that certain employees use their accrued paid sick leave at the increments set in their applicable collective bargaining agreement, as long as they:

1. give their employees paid sick leave, or any other paid leave or combination of other paid leave, that accrues at a rate greater than one hour of leave for every 30 hours worked and
2. do not prohibit the employees from using up to 40 hours of accrued leave per year.

More specifically, the bill allows local or regional boards of education to do this for their school employees, and municipal employers to do this for their police officers, firefighters, and public works department employees.

Generally, under these paid sick leave provisions:

1. "school employees" are (a) teachers, substitute teachers, school administrators, school superintendents, guidance counselors, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses,

physicians, paraeducators, and coaches and (b) anyone else who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of enrolled students under a contract with the local or regional board of education;

2. a “municipal employer” is any (a) political subdivision of the state, including any town, city, borough, district, district department of health, school board, housing authority, or other authority established by law, or (b) private nonprofit corporation with a valid contract with any town, city, borough, or district to extinguish fires and provide fire protection; and
3. a “public works department” is a municipal department responsible for the construction, regulation, or maintenance of all things in the nature of public works and improvements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 234-237 — PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE FOR CERTAIN SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Extends the state’s Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program to cover school employees whose position does not require a professional certification; correspondingly extends the state’s FMLA to cover these employees

This bill extends the state’s Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program to cover school employees whose position does not require a professional certification under the law for teachers and superintendents (referred to below as “non-certified school employees”). More specifically, it applies to those employees employed by local or regional boards of education, nonpublic elementary or secondary schools, or certain magnet schools, charter schools, academies, or cooperative arrangements.

The bill correspondingly extends the state’s Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to cover these employees, which allows them to take job-protected unpaid leave for certain reasons and receive a partial wage replacement benefit from the program while on leave.

The bill also makes various changes to accommodate the non-

certified school employees' particular employment conditions (e.g., summer breaks), such as (1) allowing the Paid Family and Medical Leave Authority to establish an alternative method to calculate their base period and base weekly earnings (to calculate their benefits) and (2) allowing them to qualify for FMLA job-protected leave if they were employed for three months during the previous 12-month period (rather than for the three months preceding a leave for other covered employees).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

Paid Family and Medical Leave

Covered School Employees. Under current law, nonpublic school employees are not covered by the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program and municipal and school board employees are only covered if it is negotiated through collective bargaining. The bill extends the program to cover non-certified employees of nonpublic schools and public school operators. Under the bill, "public school operators" include local or regional boards of education, and also explicitly include:

1. interdistrict magnet school operators, including those that are (a) the board of governors for an independent institution of higher education or (b) a third-party nonprofit corporation approved by the education commissioner;
2. state or local charter schools;
3. an endowed or incorporated academy approved by the State Board of Education; or
4. a cooperative arrangement between multiple boards of education, as allowed under state law.

In extending the program to non-certified school employees, the bill generally (1) requires them to contribute to the program through a payroll deduction administered by their employers and (2) allows them to receive partial wage replacement benefits when they take unpaid leave from employment under the FMLA.

Alternate Base Period and Base Weekly Earnings. To qualify for benefits under current law, covered employees must also have (1) earned at least \$2,325 during their highest earning quarter within their base period (i.e. the first four of the five most recently completed quarters) and (2) been employed by an employer in the previous twelve weeks. A covered employee's weekly benefit from the program is based on his or her "base weekly earnings," which are 1/26 of his or her total wages earned during the two highest-paid quarters in the employee's base period.

The bill authorizes the Connecticut Paid Leave Authority, which administers the program, to establish an alternative method of calculating the base period and base weekly earnings for the non-certified employees covered by the bill.

Non-Bargaining Unit Employees. Under current law, if a local or regional board of education's employees collectively bargain to join the program, then all of the board's employees who are not in a bargaining unit also become covered by the program. The bill extends this provision to also apply to the broader range of schools considered "public school operators" under the bill (e.g., charter and magnet schools).

FMLA

The state's current FMLA excludes employees of local or regional boards of education or nonpublic elementary or secondary schools. The federal FMLA gives these employees substantially similar job-protected unpaid leave but uses different eligibility criteria from Connecticut's FMLA. For example, the federal law requires eligible employees to have been employed by their employer for at least 12 months and 1,250 workhours, but the state's FMLA requires them to have been employed for at least three months immediately preceding their leave. However, current state law also requires the state's political subdivisions to (1) give the same benefits as the federal FMLA to school paraeducators and other non-certified school employees who have worked for them for at least 12 months and 950 work-hours and (2) allow those employees to take leave to be an organ or bone marrow donor.

The bill extends the state's FMLA to cover non-certified employees of public school operators and nonpublic elementary or secondary schools. It also creates separate eligibility criteria for them, requiring them to have been employed by their school or school district for at least three months during the previous 12-month period. It makes conforming changes to, among other things, remove the current requirement for paraeducators and other non-certified school employees to get the same benefits as the federal FMLA allows with a lower work-requirement threshold.

§ 238 — BRIDGEPORT SOCCER STADIUM STUDY

Requires the DECD commissioner to assess the proposed Connecticut United Football club stadium's anticipated economic impact on Connecticut and the city of Bridgeport

The bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioner, in consultation with the Department of Revenue Services commissioner, to assess the proposed Connecticut United Football club stadium's anticipated economic impact on Connecticut and the city of Bridgeport. The assessment must also evaluate when the state could expect to receive a return, through revenue generated from the proposed stadium's added payroll taxes, sales and use taxes, and other sources, on a \$127 million state bonding investment. The DECD commissioner must report on the assessment to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee by October 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage