

# Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** HB-5163 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY METHODS AND PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES  
**Title:** AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS.

**Vote Date:** 2/24/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/17/2026

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

The Committee on Children

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill seeks to establish a task force to research poverty in Connecticut to better inform policy regarding methods that the legislature could use to adequately address it. In the task force, subject matter experts designated by the Commissioners of the Departments of Social Services, Children and Families, Developmental Services, Public Health, and Education along with a designee from the Office of Early Childhood would study how inflation and regional cost increases impact the cost of living. With this data, the task force would construct a tracking method to document improvements in economic signifiers such as income, job retention, and homeownership. The task force's preliminary report would serve the purpose of providing accuracy and efficiency to future anti-poverty measures by the legislature.

## **SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):**

There is no substitute language.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None expressed.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Connecticut Business & Industry Association, Policy Director Danielle Cloud](#): Ms. Cloud and the CBIA support this bill based on the benefits it brings to families' participation in the economy. She emphasizes the broad, positive impacts that financial stability has on

workforce strength and investment in local communities. CBIA requests membership in the task force since the work will include topics such as workforce development, employment programs, and economic mobility. Ms. Cloud states that Connecticut employers are deeply invested in the quality of life of their employees and would like to offer insight into how the business community can help to address the cost of living.

**Executive Director of the UConn Child Development Lab and member of the CT Early Childhood Alliance, Marianne Legassey:** Ms. Legassey expresses the urgency of the negative impacts that financial strain has on families and children. She testifies that she has met with families who are not able to afford childcare and do not have access to resources to support these costs. Funding for the Early Childhood Education Endowment will need to increase to meet families' needs.

**United Way Coastal and Western Connecticut (UWCWC), Senior Director of Advocacy and Partnerships Tida Infahsaeng:** UWCWC supports this bill and the emphasis on supports such as cash assistance and pathways to education and employment. Ms. Infahsaeng expresses gratitude for the work of the Early Childhood Endowment and the Office of Early Childhood. Moreover, she urges additional investment in the state's childcare infrastructure to prevent inequities in the distribution of care and the under-resourcing of communities with high-need families.

**CSEA SEIU Local 2001, Director of Organizing and Early Education Adrean Enrique Rodriguez:** Mr. Rodriguez testifies that working families face growing financial pressure due to the rising costs of housing, food, and utilities. For the task force, he emphasizes that Care4Kids is an essential part of maintaining Connecticut's workforce and supporting children's learning and development. Additionally, he stresses the need for a fully funded Early Childhood Education Endowment and a Child Tax Credit.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Sarah Dzialo:** Ms. Dzialo opposes HB 5163 and argues it goes against free market principles. She believes that task forces are precursors to regulatory expansion and the increased scope of government.

**Laura Reurink:** Ms. Reurink opposes the bill and disagrees that a task force is the best solution available. She suggests allowing towns to pilot their own programs, which enables them to learn the best practices for their municipalities.

**Reported by: Mia Giglietti and Zachary Robinson    Date: 3/9/2026**