



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 5046

February Session, 2026



AN ACT SUPPORTING FIRST RESPONDER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (d) of section 10a-77 of the 2026 supplement to
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

4 (d) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall waive the
5 payment of tuition at the Connecticut State Community College (1) for
6 any dependent child of a person whom the armed forces of the United
7 States has declared to be missing in action or to have been a prisoner of
8 war while serving in such armed forces after January 1, 1960, which
9 child has been accepted for admission to said college and is a resident
10 of the state at the time such child is accepted for admission to said
11 college, (2) subject to the provisions of subsection (e) of this section, for
12 any veteran, as defined in section 27-103, who performed service in time
13 of war, as defined in section 27-103, except that for purposes of this
14 subsection, "service in time of war" shall not include time spent in
15 attendance at a military service academy, which veteran has been
16 accepted for admission to said college and is domiciled in this state at
17 the time such veteran is accepted for admission to said college. Said
18 board shall also waive for any such veteran the payment of any
19 extension fees under section 10a-26 for educational extension programs,

20 (3) for any resident of the state (A) sixty-two years of age or older, or (B)
21 who is a resident of a nursing home, as defined in section 19a-490, and
22 has maintained residency at such nursing home for not less than thirty
23 days, provided, at the end of the regular registration period, there are
24 enrolled in the course a sufficient number of students other than those
25 residents eligible for waivers pursuant to this subdivision to offer the
26 course in which such resident intends to enroll and there is space
27 available in such course after accommodating all such students, (4) for
28 any student attending the Connecticut State Police Academy who is
29 enrolled in a law enforcement program at said academy offered in
30 coordination with the Connecticut State Community College which
31 accredits courses taken in such program, (5) for any active member of
32 the Connecticut Army or Air National Guard who (A) has been certified
33 by the Adjutant General or such Adjutant General's designee as a
34 member in good standing of the guard, and (B) is enrolled or accepted
35 for admission to said college on a full-time or part-time basis in an
36 undergraduate degree-granting program. Said board shall also waive
37 for any such member the payment of any mandatory fees relating to
38 such member's enrollment in said institution, including, but not limited
39 to, any extension fees under section 10a-26 for educational extension
40 programs, (6) for any dependent child of a (A) police officer, as defined
41 in section 7-294a, or supernumerary or auxiliary police officer, (B)
42 firefighter, as defined in section 7-323j, or member of a volunteer fire
43 company, (C) municipal employee, or (D) state employee, as defined in
44 section 5-154, killed in the line of duty, (7) for any resident of the state
45 who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a specified terrorist
46 victim who was a resident of this state, (8) for any dependent child of a
47 resident of the state who was killed in a multivehicle crash at or near the
48 intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005,
49 [and] (9) for any resident of the state who is a dependent child or
50 surviving spouse of a person who was killed in action while performing
51 active military duty with the armed forces of the United States on or
52 after September 11, 2001, and who was a resident of this state, (10) for
53 any police officer, as defined in section 7-294a, who has been employed
54 as such an officer in the state for not less than five years, (11) for any

55 uniformed member of a paid or volunteer fire department, including,
56 but not limited to, a fire department operated by a federally recognized
57 Indian tribe in the state, who, as documented by the chief of the
58 department, has served as such a member in the state for not less than
59 five years, (12) for any emergency medical responder, emergency
60 medical technician, advanced emergency medical technician,
61 emergency medical services instructor or paramedic, as such terms are
62 defined in section 20-206jj, who has been employed in the capacity of
63 such responder, technician, instructor or paramedic in the state for not
64 less than five years by a municipality or nonprofit organization, as
65 documented by the chief administrator of such municipality or
66 organization, and (13) for any student attending the state fire school
67 who is enrolled in a program at said school offered in coordination with
68 a regional community-technical college that accredits courses taken in
69 such program. If any person who receives a tuition waiver in accordance
70 with the provisions of this subsection also receives educational
71 reimbursement from an employer, such waiver shall be reduced by the
72 amount of such educational reimbursement. Veterans and members of
73 the National Guard described in subdivision (5) of this subsection shall
74 be given the same status as students not receiving tuition waivers in
75 registering for courses at the Connecticut State Community College.
76 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10a-30, as used in this
77 subsection, "domiciled in this state" includes domicile for less than one
78 year.

79 Sec. 2. Subsection (d) of section 10a-99 of the 2026 supplement to the
80 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
81 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

82 (d) The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall waive the
83 payment of tuition fees for undergraduate and graduate degree
84 programs at the Connecticut State University System (1) for any
85 dependent child of a person whom the armed forces of the United States
86 has declared to be missing in action or to have been a prisoner of war
87 while serving in such armed forces after January 1, 1960, which child
88 has been accepted for admission to such institution and is a resident of

89 the state at the time such child is accepted for admission to such
90 institution, (2) subject to the provisions of subsection (e) of this section,
91 for any veteran, as defined in section 27-103, who performed service in
92 time of war, as defined in section 27-103, except that for purposes of this
93 subsection, "service in time of war" shall not include time spent in
94 attendance at a military service academy, which veteran has been
95 accepted for admission to such institution and is domiciled in this state
96 at the time such veteran is accepted for admission to such institution.
97 Said board shall also waive for any such veteran the payment of any
98 extension fees under section 10a-26 for educational extension programs,
99 (3) for any resident of the state sixty-two years of age or older who has
100 been accepted for admission to such institution, provided (A) such
101 resident is enrolled in a degree-granting program, or (B) at the end of
102 the regular registration period, there are enrolled in the course a
103 sufficient number of students other than those residents eligible for
104 waivers pursuant to this subdivision to offer the course in which such
105 resident intends to enroll and there is space available in such course
106 after accommodating all such students, (4) for any student attending the
107 Connecticut Police Academy who is enrolled in a law enforcement
108 program at said academy offered in coordination with the university
109 which accredits courses taken in such program, (5) for any active
110 member of the Connecticut Army or Air National Guard who (A) has
111 been certified by the Adjutant General or such Adjutant General's
112 designee as a member in good standing of the guard, and (B) is enrolled
113 or accepted for admission to such institution on a full-time or part-time
114 basis in an undergraduate or graduate degree-granting program. Said
115 board shall also waive for any such member the payment of any
116 mandatory fees relating to such member's enrollment in said institution,
117 including, but not limited to, any extension fees under section 10a-26 for
118 educational extension programs, (6) for any dependent child of a (A)
119 police officer, as defined in section 7-294a, or supernumerary or
120 auxiliary police officer, (B) firefighter, as defined in section 7-323j, or
121 member of a volunteer fire company, (C) municipal employee, or (D)
122 state employee, as defined in section 5-154, killed in the line of duty, (7)
123 for any resident of this state who is a dependent child or surviving

124 spouse of a specified terrorist victim who was a resident of the state, (8)
125 for any dependent child of a resident of the state who was killed in a
126 multivehicle crash at or near the intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and
127 Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005, [and] (9) for any resident of the state
128 who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a person who was
129 killed in action while performing active military duty with the armed
130 forces of the United States on or after September 11, 2001, and who was
131 a resident of this state, (10) for any police officer, as defined in section 7-
132 294a, who has been employed as such an officer in the state for not less
133 than five years, (11) for any uniformed member of a paid or volunteer
134 fire department, including, but not limited to, a fire department
135 operated by a federally recognized Indian tribe in the state, who, as
136 documented by the chief of the department, has served as such a
137 member in the state for not less than five years, (12) for any emergency
138 medical responder, emergency medical technician, advanced
139 emergency medical technician, emergency medical services instructor
140 or paramedic, as such terms are defined in section 20-206jj, who has been
141 employed in the capacity of such responder, technician, instructor or
142 paramedic in the state for not less than five years by a municipality or
143 nonprofit organization, as documented by the chief administrator of
144 such municipality or organization, and (13) for any student attending
145 the state fire school who is enrolled in a program at said school offered
146 in coordination with a university that accredits courses taken in such
147 program. If any person who receives a tuition waiver in accordance with
148 the provisions of this subsection also receives educational
149 reimbursement from an employer, such waiver shall be reduced by the
150 amount of such educational reimbursement. Veterans and members of
151 the National Guard described in subdivision (5) of this subsection shall
152 be given the same status as students not receiving tuition waivers in
153 registering for courses at Connecticut state universities.
154 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10a-30, as used in this
155 subsection, "domiciled in this state" includes domicile for less than one
156 year.

157 Sec. 3. Subsection (e) of section 10a-105 of the 2026 supplement to the

158 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
159 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

160 (e) Said board of trustees shall waive the payment of tuition fees for
161 any undergraduate or graduate degree program at The University of
162 Connecticut (1) for any dependent child of a person whom the armed
163 forces of the United States has declared to be missing in action or to have
164 been a prisoner of war while serving in such armed forces after January
165 1, 1960, which child has been accepted for admission to The University
166 of Connecticut and is a resident of the state at the time such child is
167 accepted for admission to said institution, (2) subject to the provisions
168 of subsection (f) of this section, for any veteran, as defined in section 27-
169 103, who performed service in time of war, as defined in section 27-103,
170 except that for purposes of this subsection, "service in time of war" shall
171 not include time spent in attendance at a military service academy,
172 which veteran has been accepted for admission to said institution and is
173 domiciled in this state at the time such veteran is accepted for admission
174 to said institution. Said board shall also waive for any such veteran the
175 payment of any extension fees under section 10a-26 for educational
176 extension programs, (3) for any resident of the state sixty-two years of
177 age or older who has been accepted for admission to said institution,
178 provided (A) such resident is enrolled in a degree-granting program, or
179 (B) at the end of the regular registration period, there are enrolled in the
180 course a sufficient number of students other than those residents eligible
181 for waivers pursuant to this subdivision to offer the course in which
182 such resident intends to enroll and there is space available in such
183 course after accommodating all such students, (4) for any active member
184 of the Connecticut Army or Air National Guard who (A) has been
185 certified by the Adjutant General or such Adjutant General's designee
186 as a member in good standing of the guard, and (B) is enrolled or
187 accepted for admission to said institution on a full-time or part-time
188 basis in an undergraduate or graduate degree-granting program. Said
189 board shall also waive for any such member the payment of any
190 mandatory fees relating to such member's enrollment in said institution,
191 including, but not limited to, any extension fees under section 10a-26 for

192 educational extension programs, (5) for any dependent child of a (A)
193 police officer, as defined in section 7-294a, or supernumerary or
194 auxiliary police officer, (B) firefighter, as defined in section 7-323j, or
195 member of a volunteer fire company, (C) municipal employee, or (D)
196 state employee, as defined in section 5-154, killed in the line of duty, (6)
197 for any resident of the state who is the dependent child or surviving
198 spouse of a specified terrorist victim who was a resident of the state, (7)
199 for any dependent child of a resident of the state who was killed in a
200 multivehicle crash at or near the intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and
201 Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005, and (8) for any resident of the state
202 who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a person who was
203 killed in action while performing active military duty with the armed
204 forces of the United States on or after September 11, 2001, and who was
205 a resident of this state. If any person who receives a tuition waiver in
206 accordance with the provisions of this subsection also receives
207 educational reimbursement from an employer, such waiver shall be
208 reduced by the amount of such educational reimbursement. Veterans
209 and members of the National Guard described in subdivision (4) of this
210 subsection shall be given the same status as students not receiving
211 tuition waivers in registering for courses at The University of
212 Connecticut. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10a-30, as used
213 in this subsection, "domiciled in this state" includes domicile for less
214 than one year.

215 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,
216 "first responder" means any (1) police officer, as defined in section 7-
217 294a of the general statutes, (2) uniformed member of a paid or
218 volunteer fire department, or (3) emergency medical responder,
219 emergency medical technician, advanced emergency medical
220 technician, emergency medical services instructor or paramedic, as such
221 terms are defined in section 20-206jj of the general statutes.

222 (b) The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority shall develop and
223 administer a program of mortgage assistance to first responders in the
224 state. Such assistance shall be available to an eligible first responder
225 under guidelines adopted by the authority for the purchase of a home

226 used as such first responder's principal residence in the community
227 served by such first responder. In making mortgage assistance available
228 under the program, the authority may utilize down payment assistance
229 or any other appropriate housing subsidies. The terms of any mortgage
230 assistance may allow the mortgagee to realize a reasonable portion of
231 any equity gain upon sale of the mortgaged property.

232 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027, and applicable to taxable years*
233 *commencing on or after January 1, 2027*) (a) As used in this section, "eligible
234 volunteer firefighter" means an individual who is actively serving as a
235 volunteer firefighter for a fire department in the state and who has
236 served as a volunteer firefighter for a fire department in the state for not
237 less than fifteen consecutive years, as documented by the chief of the
238 department.

239 (b) For taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 2027, each
240 eligible volunteer firefighter shall be allowed a credit against the tax
241 imposed by chapter 229 of the general statutes, other than the liability
242 imposed by section 12-707 of the general statutes. The amount of the
243 credit shall be one thousand dollars. Any taxpayer claiming the credit
244 shall provide to the Department of Revenue Services documentation
245 supporting such claim in the form and manner prescribed by the
246 Commissioner of Revenue Services.

247 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to
248 study issues relating to the recruitment and retention of public safety
249 personnel. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to, an
250 examination of the feasibility and fiscal impact of the state providing (1)
251 tuition waivers, mortgage assistance and tax credits to correction
252 officers and judicial marshals, (2) tuition waivers to the dependent
253 children of police officers, uniformed members of paid or volunteer fire
254 departments, emergency medical responders, emergency medical
255 technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency
256 medical services instructors and paramedics, (3) tuition waivers for
257 undergraduate and graduate degree programs at The University of
258 Connecticut to police officers, uniformed members of paid or volunteer

259 fire departments, emergency medical responders, emergency medical
260 technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency
261 medical services instructors and paramedics, and (4) tuition vouchers to
262 public safety personnel that can be used at any accredited institution of
263 higher education in the state.

264 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

265 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
266 one of whom has expertise in public safety and one of whom has
267 expertise in higher education;

268 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

269 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
270 Representatives;

271 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

272 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
273 Representatives;

274 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

275 (7) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection,
276 or the commissioner's designee; and

277 (8) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee.

278 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),
279 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
280 of the General Assembly.

281 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
282 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall
283 be filled by the appointing authority.

284 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro
285 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from

286 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule
287 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty
288 days after the effective date of this section.

289 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
290 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public safety
291 and security shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

292 (g) Not later than January 1, 2027, the task force shall submit a report
293 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of
294 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public
295 safety and security, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
296 of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it
297 submits such report or January 1, 2027, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10a-77(d)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10a-99(d)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	10a-105(e)
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>January 1, 2027, and applicable to taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 2027</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 2(d)(13), "the university" was changed to "a university" for accuracy.

PS *Joint Favorable Subst.*