



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 694

January Session, 2001

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1375

Senate, May 9, 2001

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. CRISCO of the 17th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

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

1 Section 1. Not later than January 1, 2002, the Connecticut
2 Employment and Training Commission, within the Office of
3 Workforce Competitiveness, shall submit a report to the select
4 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
5 relating to workforce development, in accordance with the provisions
6 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, making specific
7 recommendations for:

8 (1) Forming a state-wide digital compact encompassing industry,
9 education, labor and government to integrate industry-driven
10 information technology skills development in a practical manner
11 across the entire educational and workforce systems;

12 (2) Funding and operating a Digital Strategic Fund for the purpose
13 of providing discretionary funding to strengthen program efforts to
14 improve connections between industry groups and specific
15 educational and training institutions; and

16 (3) Addressing the digital divide in this state by directing moneys in
17 a Digital Strategic Fund to specific groups and communities that are
18 traditionally underrepresented in the information technology fueled
19 economy.

20 Sec. 2. (NEW) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Department of
21 Economic and Community Development, in consultation with the
22 Office of Workforce Competitiveness, shall, within available
23 appropriations, coordinate a state-wide campaign designed to increase
24 the visibility of Connecticut's leading electronic business strengths and
25 new or emerging information technology businesses.

26 Sec. 3. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year
27 ending June 30, 2002, and the next two successive fiscal years, the
28 Department of Education, in cooperation with the Office of Workforce
29 Competitiveness, shall establish a pilot program that is designed to
30 encourage students in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, to
31 pursue careers in information technology.

32 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,
33 the Commissioner of Education, in cooperation with the Office of
34 Workforce Competitiveness, shall establish written participation
35 guidelines for the pilot program authorized under this section, and
36 shall submit such guidelines to the Connecticut Employment and
37 Training Commission.

38 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education
39 shall submit a status report in accordance with the provisions of
40 section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment and on any
41 operation of the pilot program authorized under this section to the

42 Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing
43 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
44 relating to appropriations and education and to the select committee of
45 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
46 workforce development.

47 Sec. 4. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal years
48 ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the Department of Higher
49 Education shall establish a two-year pilot program that is designed to
50 encourage public and private institutions of higher education in this
51 state to provide matriculating college students of any discipline with
52 the opportunity to demonstrate to prospective employers their
53 technology proficiency and problem-solving skills within the
54 technology environment by allowing such students to prepare for and
55 take an assessment examination, such as the Tek.Xam, at such
56 institutions.

57 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,
58 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in consultation with the Board
59 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-
60 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System and at
61 least three independent institutions of higher education in this state,
62 shall establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program
63 authorized under this section.

64 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher
65 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
66 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment
67 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this
68 section to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
69 having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and education
70 and to the select committee of the General Assembly having
71 cognizance of matters relating to workforce development.

72 Sec. 5. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year

73 ending June 30, 2002, the Department of Higher Education, in
74 cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The University of
75 Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the Connecticut
76 State University System, shall establish a pilot program that is
77 designed to assist noninformation technology workers who
78 demonstrate an aptitude in information technology to earn an
79 information technology credential or degree at one of the constituent
80 units of the state system of higher education.

81 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,
82 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board
83 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-
84 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System, shall
85 establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program
86 authorized under this section, and shall submit such guidelines to the
87 Office of Workforce Competitiveness.

88 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher
89 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
90 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment
91 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this
92 section to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the
93 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
94 of matters relating to appropriations and education and to the select
95 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
96 relating to workforce development.

97 Sec. 6. (NEW) (a) The Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the
98 Labor Commissioner, the Commissioners of Economic and
99 Community Development, Education and Social Services, the
100 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Chancellor
101 of the regional community-technical colleges, in consultation with the
102 superintendent of the vocational-technical school system and one
103 member of industry representing each of the economic clusters

104 identified by the Commissioner of Economic and Community
105 Development pursuant to section 32-4g of the general statutes shall (1)
106 review, evaluate and, as necessary, recommend improvements for
107 certification and degree programs offered by the vocational-technical
108 school system and the community-technical college system to ensure
109 that such programs meet the employment needs of business and
110 industry, and (2) develop strategies to strengthen the linkage between
111 skill standards for education and training and the employment needs
112 of business and industry.

113 (b) Not later than January 1, 2002, and annually thereafter, the
114 Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with section 11-
115 4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the
116 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,
117 commerce and labor and to the select committee of the General
118 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce
119 development on (1) the implementation of any recommended
120 programs or strategies within the vocational-technical school system or
121 the community-technical college system to strengthen the linkage
122 between vocational-technical and community-technical college
123 certification and degree programs and the employment needs of
124 business and industry, and (2) any certification or degree programs
125 offered by vocational-technical colleges or community-technical
126 colleges that do not meet current industry standards.

127 Sec. 7. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations, the Department
128 of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The
129 University of Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the
130 Connecticut State University System, shall establish a pilot program
131 that is designed to provide information technology related internship
132 and cooperative work-study programs at the constituent units of the
133 state system of higher education.

134 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,

135 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board
 136 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-
 137 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System, shall
 138 establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program
 139 authorized under this section, and shall submit such guidelines to the
 140 Office of Workforce Competitiveness.

141 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher
 142 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the
 143 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment
 144 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this
 145 section to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the
 146 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
 147 of matters relating to appropriations and education and to the select
 148 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
 149 relating to workforce development.

150 Sec. 8. The Department of Education shall encourage the creation of
 151 additional interdistrict magnet school programs with special emphasis
 152 on information technology curriculum.

153 Sec. 9. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In sections 1 and 7, references to the creation of a Digital Strategic Fund were deleted for accuracy; and throughout the bill, reporting requirements were revised to include statutory references to section 11-4a.

WFD	<i>Joint Favorable Subst. C/R</i>	ED
ED	<i>Joint Favorable Subst. C/R</i>	APP
APP	<i>Joint Favorable Subst.</i>	

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: See Explanation Below

Affected Agencies: Office of Workforce Competitiveness, Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, Department of Economic And Community Development, Department of Education, Department of Higher Education, Community Technical Colleges

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

State Impact:

The bill requires the Connecticut Employment and Training commission (CETC) to submit a report to the workforce Development committee of the General Assembly making specific recommendations for:

Forming a statewide digital compact to integrate information technology skills across the educational and workforce systems of the state.

Funding and operating the Digital Strategic Fund.

Addressing the digital divide by directing monies from the Digital Strategic Fund to groups and communities that are underrepresented

in the information

Technology economy.

This report can be completed within the budgetary resources of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness that staffs the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission.

The bill requires the Department of Economic Development, in consultation with the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), within available appropriations to coordinate a statewide campaign designed to increase the visibility of Connecticut's leading electronic business strengths and emerging information technology businesses.

To the extent that the Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) funding (part of the \$5,000,000 in surplus to be used over the biennium for cluster initiatives) for a marketing campaign to improve the perception of Connecticut for technology driven companies incorporates the statewide campaign in the bill, there could be funds available for this purpose within sHB 6668, the state budget as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee.

The bill requires the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Office of Workforce Competitiveness to establish a pilot program that is designed to encourage students in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, to pursue careers in information technology. There is \$5.0 million in FY01 surplus funds, \$2.5 million for FY02 and \$2.5 million for FY03 in the Appropriations committee budget for the School to Career program in the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. A portion of these funds can be used for this pilot program.

The bill also requires the Department of Education (DOE) and the OWC to develop written guidelines for the pilot program. The DOE is required to submit a status on the pilot program by January 1, 2002. This can be completed within the anticipated budgetary resources of

the DOE.

The bill requires the Department of Higher Education to establish a two-year Pilot program for FY02 and FY03 that is designed to encourage public and private institutions of higher education to provide matriculating students an opportunity to demonstrate their technology proficiency by taking an assessment examination. The Commissioner of Higher Education in consultation with the University of Connecticut, the Community Technical colleges and the Connecticut State University System shall establish written guidelines for the pilot program and by January 1, 2002 complete a status report on this pilot program.

This would result in an increased workload for the Department of Higher education particularly with the regard to the development of guidelines and the preparation of status reports for the program. In addition, there will be various indeterminate costs associated with the actual offering of such examinations by the institutions.

The bill requires the Department of Higher Education to establish a pilot program designed to assist noninformation technology workers to earn an information technology credential or degree at one of the constituent units of higher education. The Department of Higher Education will establish participation guidelines and produce a status report not later than January 1,2002.

This would result in an uncertain fiscal impact to the constituent units since the language of the bill is unclear as to what is meant by "assist workers". In addition, passage of the bill will result in increased workload for DHE particularly with regard to the development of guidelines and the preparation of status reports for the program.

The OWC, the Labor Commissioner, the Commissioners of DECD and Social Services, the Secretary of Policy and Management, and the

Chancellor of the regional community-technical colleges, in consultation with the superintendent of the vocational-technical school system and one member of each of industry clusters shall review and as necessary recommend improvements for certification and degree programs offered by the vocational-technical system, the community-technical college system (CTC) to ensure that such programs meet the needs of business and industry. They shall also develop strategies to strengthen the linkage between skill standards and the employment needs of business and industry.

There is no fiscal impact for this requirement. The workload increase can be handled within the resources of the state Jobs Cabinet. The implementation of any recommendations that may be produced by the group would result in potential indeterminate costs to the community-technical colleges.

The Commissioner of Education is also required to report by January 1, 2002 on the implementation of any programs that will strengthen the linkage between industry and CTC and vocational - technical schools and on any programs that do not meet business and industry needs. This can be completed within the anticipated budgetary resources of the Department of Education.

The bill requires the Department of Higher Education to establish a pilot program that is designed to provide information technology related internships and cooperative work-study programs at the constituent units of the state system of higher education. The bill allows the department to establish this program with appropriations from the Digital Strategic Fund. The department shall develop participation guidelines for the program and submit the guidelines to the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. Not later than January 1, 2002 the department shall submit a status report to the CETC and the Appropriations, Education, and Workforce Development committees of the General Assembly.

The language of the bill proposes that these internships be funded through the Digital Strategic Fund, thus passage of the bill would result in indeterminate costs to this fund that will be dependent upon the number of internships established.

The bill also requires the Department of Higher Education to encourage the creation of additional interdistrict magnet school programs with special emphasis on an informational technology curriculum.

OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1375

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.**SUMMARY:**

This bill creates programs and strategies to address Connecticut's information technology and workforce needs. It requires the Office of Workforce Competitiveness's (OWC) Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) to suggest to the Workforce Development Committee ways to (1) form a digital compact to identify areas of information technology skills development, (2) fund and operate a Digital Strategic Fund (DSF), and (3) use DSF money to address the digital divide. It also (1) requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to create a campaign to make electronic and information technology businesses more visible, (2) requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to establish an information technology pilot program, and (3) directs SDE to encourage the establishment of a new interdistrict magnet school with a curriculum emphasizing information technology.

The bill requires the Department of Higher Education (DHE) to create information technology proficiency and credential pilot programs. It also requires DHE to create an information technology internship and work-study pilot program. Finally, OWC, certain agency commissioners and education leaders, the secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), and members of the economic clusters must evaluate programs at the community-technical colleges (CTCs) and the vocational-technical (V-T) schools and recommend ways to improve them to meet the needs of business and industry.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001

DIGITAL AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES

CETC must submit a report to the Workforce Development Committee, by January 1, 2002, that makes specific recommendations for:

1. forming a statewide digital compact for industry, education, labor, and government to integrate into the educational and workforce systems areas of information technology skills development that industry identifies;
2. funding and operating DSF to give discretionary funding to improve connections between industries and specific educational and training institutions; and
3. addressing the "digital divide" (the disparity between those with access to technology and those without) by directing part of DSF's money to specific groups and communities that are traditionally underrepresented in the field of information technology.

ELECTRONIC BUSINESS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAMPAIGN

The bill requires DECD, in consultation with OWC, to coordinate a statewide campaign to increase the visibility of Connecticut's leading business strengths and new or emerging information technology businesses by January 1, 2002. It must do so within available appropriations.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAREER PILOT PROGRAM

The bill requires SDE to establish, within available appropriations for FYs 2002 through 2004 and in cooperation with OWC, a pilot program that encourages K-12 students to pursue careers in information technology. By September 28, 2001, the education commissioner, in cooperation with OWC, must establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program and submit them to CETC. He must also submit a status report on the program to CETC and the Education, Appropriations, and Workforce Development committees by January 1, 2002.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY PILOT PROGRAM

The bill requires DHE to establish, within available appropriations for FYs 2002 and 2003, a two-year pilot program to encourage public and private colleges and universities to provide enrolled students the opportunity to show prospective employers their technology and problem-solving skills by allowing students to prepare for and take assessment exams, such as the Tek.Xam, at the institutions. By September 28, 2001, DHE's commissioner must establish, in consultation with UConn's board of trustees, the CTCs, the Connecticut State University (CSU) system, and at least three private colleges or universities, written participation guidelines for the program. DHE's commissioner must also submit a status report on the program to the Education, Appropriations, and Workforce Development committees by January 1, 2002.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CREDENTIAL PILOT PROGRAM

The bill requires DHE to establish, within available appropriations for FY 2002 and in consultation with UConn's board of trustees, the CTCs, and CSU, a pilot program to help non-information technology workers who show ability in information technology to earn an information technology credential or degree at one of Connecticut's public colleges or universities. By September 28, 2001, DHE's commissioner must establish, in cooperation with the same entities, written guidelines for the program and submit them to OWC. DHE's commissioner must also submit a status report on the program to the Education, Appropriations, and Workforce Development committees by January 1, 2002.

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAMS

The bill requires OWC, the commissioners of Labor, Economic and Community Development, Education, and Social Services, the secretary of OPM, and the CTCs' chancellor, in consultation with the superintendent of the V-T schools and one member of industry from each "economic cluster" (group of industries the DECD links together because of customer, supplier, or other relationships) to:

1. review, evaluate, and recommend improvements for certificate and

degree programs at the V-T schools and CTCs to make sure they meet business and industry's employment needs and

2. develop ways to strengthen ties between skill standards for education and training and business and industry's employment needs.

The bill requires the education commissioner to report annually, beginning January 1, 2002, to the Education, Commerce, Labor, and Workforce Development committees on (1) the CTCs and V-T schools' implementation of any recommended programs or strategies to strengthen the linkage between their certificate and degree programs and business and industry's employment needs and (2) any V-T school or CTC certificate or degree program that does not meet current industry standards.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INTERNSHIP AND WORK-STUDY PILOT PROGRAM

The bill requires DHE to establish, within available appropriations and in cooperation with UConn's board of trustees, the CTCs, and CSU, a pilot program to provide information technology internships and cooperative work-study programs at the public colleges and universities. By September 28, 2001, DHE's commissioner must establish, in cooperation with the same entities, written participation guidelines for the program, and submit them to OWC. DHE's commissioner must submit a status report on the program to the CETC and the Education, Appropriations, and Workforce Development committees by January 1, 2002.

BACKGROUND

Office of Workforce Competitiveness

OWC is within the Office of Policy and Management for administrative purposes. It is the governor's principal workforce development policy advisor, and it acts as a liaison between the governor and other government entities for workforce development matters. OWC coordinates the state's implementation of the 1998 federal Workforce Investment Act and establishes related methods and

procedures. It also coordinates state agencies' workforce development activities.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Select Committee on Workforce Development

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 12 Nay 0

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 31 Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 51 Nay 0