



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 283

January Session, 2007

House Bill No. 5656

House of Representatives, April 3, 2007

The Committee on Human Services reported through REP. VILLANO of the 91st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO INDIVIDUALS TO PURSUE POST SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) The Department of Children
2 and Families may provide financial assistance for post secondary
3 school educational or vocational opportunities to any individual who
4 is committed to the department or was committed to the department at
5 the time of such individual's eighteenth birthday. The department
6 shall prescribe conditions of eligibility for the receipt of such financial
7 assistance and other program requirements deemed necessary in the
8 department's policy manual. For any new application for financial
9 assistance received by the department on or after July 1, 2007, financial
10 assistance provided to an individual by the department may not
11 exceed, on an annual basis, the total cost of in-state tuition, room,
12 board and matriculation fees associated with attending The University
13 of Connecticut at Storrs on September first of the calendar year in

14 which the request for financial assistance is made. Notwithstanding
15 the provisions of this section, if an individual has been determined
16 eligible for post secondary school financial assistance by the
17 department prior to the effective date of this section, and the amount
18 of financial assistance being provided by the department on behalf of
19 such individual exceeds or will exceed the limit prescribed by this
20 section, such individual may continue to receive the higher amount of
21 financial assistance provided the individual is in full compliance with
22 the department's program requirements.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2007	New section

HS *Joint Favorable*

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 chamber thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 08 \$	FY 09 \$
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Savings	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The Department of Children and Families will experience savings to the extent that it will no longer reimburse post secondary educational expenses in excess of the value of in-state tuition, room, board and matriculation fees at the University of Connecticut (UConn).¹ This restriction would apply to new applicants seeking financial assistance on or after 7/1/07.

In any year, actual savings will depend upon the number of young adults seeking financial assistance whose educational costs would otherwise have exceeded the cost of attending UConn. For comparison purposes, expenditures of \$261,289 would have been averted in FY 06 had DCF limited its payments for 47 students whose expenses exceeded UConn's to \$16,485 (UConn's 2005-2006 in-state tuition, room, board and matriculation fees).

Savings would accrue incrementally over the first four years of implementation, as it is assumed that the bill would initially apply to only freshmen (for example, increments of \$65,322, using FY 06 experience).

¹ \$17,692 for the 2007-2008 academic year.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 5656*****AN ACT CONCERNING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO INDIVIDUALS TO PURSUE POST SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.*****SUMMARY:**

In practice, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides financial assistance for post-secondary school educational and vocational opportunities to youths committed to DCF on their 18th birthday who meet certain requirements set in DCF policy. This bill authorizes DCF to provide this assistance to those who are committed to DCF or were committed to it on their 18th birthday. It requires DCF to prescribe in its policy manual eligibility conditions for receiving assistance and other program requirements DCF considers necessary.

For new applicants after July 1, 2007, the bill limits the department's annual assistance to any individual to the total cost of in-state tuition, room, board, and matriculation fees associated with attending the University of Connecticut at Storrs on September 1 of the calendar year when the request is made. But it allows someone who was determined eligible for such assistance before July 1, 2007 to continue to receive the amount of assistance DCF is already providing even if it exceeds or will exceed the bill's limits, as long as the beneficiary remains in full compliance with program requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2007

BACKGROUND***Current DCF Policy***

The DCF policy manual currently requires it to provide financial assistance for youth committed to DCF on their 18th birthday and

allows such assistance to continue until the person's 23rd birthday under certain conditions. The policy manual does not limit the amount paid, but it sets other requirements. These include requirements for students to apply and compete for appropriate grants and scholarships to offset the cost and to contribute \$500 to their annual educational costs unless grants and scholarships obtained cover the full cost. The DCF regional administrator approves the costs, and social workers maintain contact with the students and review their academic performance. (DCF Policy Manual §§ 42-20-20 and 42-20-21)

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 17 Nay 0 (03/20/2007)