



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 594**

February Session, 2008

Substitute Senate Bill No. 344

*Senate, April 14, 2008*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. HARP of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY PROSPERITY AND THE  
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CHILD POVERTY AND PREVENTION  
COUNCIL.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2008*) (a) The Department of Social  
2 Services, in conjunction with the Child Poverty and Prevention  
3 Council, shall establish and administer, within available  
4 appropriations, a competitive grant program for municipalities whose  
5 school districts are priority school districts pursuant to section 10-266p  
6 of the 2008 supplement to the general statutes. The grants shall be used  
7 to establish local pilot programs to implement proven research-based  
8 strategies to reverse child poverty and to help reach the state goal of  
9 reducing child poverty by fifty per cent by the year 2014. Eligible  
10 recipients may apply for grants at such time and in such manner as the  
11 commissioner prescribes.

12 (b) The Department of Social Services shall seek to maximize state  
13 participation in the federal Food Stamp Employment and Training

14 Program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture  
15 for the purposes of the competitive grant program.

16 (c) The recipients of grants under the program shall work with  
17 community representatives and regional partners, including, but not  
18 limited to, regional community-technical colleges, nonprofit social  
19 service agencies, and regional workforce development boards, to  
20 develop and implement a comprehensive plan to reduce child poverty  
21 by identifying the target population of the local pilot program  
22 pursuant to this section and developing research-based and  
23 intergenerational strategies that assist children and parents. The plan  
24 shall: (1) Focus on research-based strategies that include (A) homeless  
25 diversion programs, (B) quality child care, and (C) workforce  
26 development including literacy, adult education, postsecondary  
27 education and vocational training and job placement; (2) focus on one  
28 or more of the following populations: (A) Adolescent parents, (B) older  
29 adolescents and young adults, (C) poor working families, and (D) early  
30 childhood; (3) identify existing programs and resources that serve the  
31 target population; (4) identify state, federal and local resources and  
32 benefits available to such population, including, but not limited to, the  
33 federal earned income tax credit and federal social service programs;  
34 (5) identify areas where resources can be aligned; (6) identify strategies  
35 to better coordinate and leverage resources; (7) include interventions  
36 that focus on (A) family income and earning potential, (B) literacy,  
37 education and vocational training, (C) income safety net services, and  
38 (D) family structure and support, including programs to reduce  
39 adolescent pregnancy and improve the income earning potential of  
40 fathers; (8) identify community partners; (9) identify methods of  
41 tracking progress on the number of families who have reached  
42 economic self sufficiency; (10) include a budget for implementation;  
43 and (11) include an evaluation process using results-based  
44 accountability.

45 (d) The plan developed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section  
46 shall be submitted to the Department of Social Services, in  
47 collaboration with the members of the Child Poverty and Prevention



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 09 \$	FY 10 \$
Department of Social Services	GF - Cost	Potential	Potential

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 09 \$	FY 10 \$
Various	Revenue Gain	Potential	Potential

**Explanation**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to administer a grant program for municipalities. These grants are to establish pilot programs to implement strategies to reduce child poverty. This program is to be implemented within available appropriations. sHB 5021 (the budget bill, as reported by the Appropriations Committee) contains no funding for this grant program. The bill further requires DSS to annually report to the General Assembly on the success of the grant program. Should the grant program be funded and DSS be required to report, the department would incur a minimal administrative cost.

**The Out Years**

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

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 344****AN ACT CONCERNING FAMILY PROSPERITY AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CHILD POVERTY AND PREVENTION COUNCIL.****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS), in conjunction with the Child Poverty and Prevention Council and within appropriations, to establish and administer a competitive grant program for municipalities with priority school districts. (For 2007-08, these are: Ansonia, Bloomfield, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Norwalk, Stamford, Waterbury, and Windham.) The grants are for establishing local pilot programs to implement research-based strategies to reverse child poverty. The state has a statutory goal of reducing child poverty by 50% by 2014.

The bill directs DSS to seek to maximize state participation in the federal Food Stamp Employment and Training Program for the purposes of the grant program the bill creates. It also requires the department to file annual reports from January 1, 2009 through January 1, 2014 with the Appropriations, Education, and Human Services committees. These reports must include the pilot programs' progress in reducing poverty among their target populations by 50%.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2008

**GRANT RECIPIENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Once they receive a grant, recipients must work with community representatives and regional partners, including regional community-technical colleges, nonprofit social services agencies, and regional workforce development boards, to (1) develop and implement a

comprehensive child poverty reduction plan and (2) develop research-based and intergenerational strategies that assist children and parents.

***Plan Contents***

Plans must:

1. focus on research-based strategies that include homeless diversion programs; quality child care; and workforce development, including literacy, adult education, postsecondary education, vocational training, and job placement;
2. target one or more of the following: (a) adolescent parents, (b) older adolescents and young adults, (c) poor working families, and (d) early childhood;
3. identify existing programs and resources that serve their target populations;
4. identify state, federal, and local resources and benefits for their populations, including federal earned income tax credits and federal social service programs;
5. identify (a) areas where resources can be aligned and (b) strategies to better coordinate and leverage resources;
6. include interventions that focus on (a) family income and earning potential; (b) literacy, education, and vocational training; (c) income safety net services; and (d) family structure and support, including programs to reduce adolescent pregnancy and improve fathers' earning potentials;
7. identify community partners;
8. identify methods of tracking progress on the number of families who have reached economic self sufficiency; and
9. include an implementation budget and evaluation process that uses results-based accountability.

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***Plan Approval***

The bill requires grant recipients to submit their plans to DSS, in collaboration with the members of the Child Poverty and Prevention Council, for approval and implementation. The council must convene an interagency committee to work with the local pilot programs and deploy resources through results-based accountability. DSS and the Commission on Children council members serve as co-chairpersons of the committee.

**BACKGROUND*****Priority School Districts***

State law designates the following towns as priority school districts:

1. the eight towns with the largest populations, based on the last census;
2. in the first year of each biennium, the 11 towns with the most children on welfare plus the most children scoring below the remedial level on the state mastery tests; and
3. in the first year of each biennium, the 11 towns that rank highest in number of children on welfare divided by grant mastery percentage; and

The grant mastery percentage is the number of mastery tests on which students in the district score below the remedial level divided by the total number of tests taken in the district (CGS § 10-266p (a)).

***Food Stamp Employment and Training Program***

The Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSE&T), created by the 1985 federal Food Security Act requires each state to implement an FSE&T program to help food stamp recipients gain skills, training, or experience to increase their ability to obtain regular employment. Funding for the program traditionally focused on able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), whose food stamp benefits became subject to time limits under the 1996 federal welfare reform legislation. These adults, with some exceptions, can receive food stamps only three

months out of each three-year period except in months when they work at least 80 hours or participate in an FSE&T activity. A 2002 change in the food stamp law eliminated the requirement that states spend 80% of the FSE&T funds on ABAWDs, giving states greater flexibility in how they use the funds.

**Related Bill**

sSB 660, reported favorably by the Human Services Committee, requires DSS to maximize its use of the FSE&T program’s 100% federal administrative grants and optional 50% federal matching funds components for employment and training activities, support services, and other programs and services for food stamp recipients.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Select Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 10 Nay 0 (03/06/2008)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute  
Yea 54 Nay 0 (03/28/2008)