
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 1163

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVENTION OF URBAN YOUTH DELINQUENCY AND VIOLENCE.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch, within available resources, to collaborate with private community-based service providers in Hartford to (1) inventory programs designed to promote positive youth development and reduce youth contact with the juvenile justice system and (2) design a process to identify and refer at-risk youth to such programs. The chief court administrator must submit a report on this to the Judiciary Committee by February 1, 2014.

The bill authorizes up to \$1.5 million in general obligation bonds for the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to provide grants-in aid, of up to \$500,000 each, to:

1. the Metropolitan Economic Development Commission to create elderly housing,
2. the John E. Rogers African American Cultural Center to convert the former Northwest-Jones School to a cultural center, and
3. Catholic Charities of Hartford to create affordable housing with supportive services.

The grants can be used for construction, improvements, repairs, renovations, and, except for Catholic Charities of Hartford, land acquisition.

The bill also requires the DECD commissioner, within available appropriations, to establish a Connecticut Young Adult Conservation Corps program. The program generally requires recipients of the bond

proceeds described above to set aside at least 10% of all positions for employable youth and young adults at each facility for five years. The bill authorizes the commissioner to audit and investigate these organizations for compliance and bring action against those that fail to do so. The commissioner must annually report on the program to the legislature.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage for the youth program inventory, July 1, 2013 for the bond authorization, and January 1, 2014 for the Connecticut Young Adult Conservation Corps.

§ 1 — HARTFORD YOUTH PROGRAM

The bill specifies that the inventory of programs must indicate the types of services each program provides, including:

1. screening and assessment;
2. crisis intervention;
3. family mediation;
4. educational evaluations and advocacy;
5. mental health treatment and services, including gender specific trauma treatment and services;
6. resiliency skills building;
7. access to positive social activities;
8. short-term respite care; and
9. access to services for children in the juvenile justice system.

The providers that CSSD must collaborate with to inventory these programs may include family support centers. Family support centers are community-based service centers for children and families against whom a family with service needs complaint has been filed.

§ 3 — CONNECTICUT YOUNG ADULT CONSERVATION CORPS PROGRAM

Program

The bill requires the DECD commissioner, within available appropriations, to establish a Connecticut Young Adult Conservation Corps program, similar to the former federal Young Adult Conservation Corps program (see BACKGROUND). The program's purpose is to employ youth and young adults (i.e., 16- to 25- year olds, except for emancipated 16 and 17-year-olds) at organizations that receive bond proceeds under the bill.

Under the bill, the head of such organizations must set aside at least 10% of all their employment positions for employable youth and young adults. This must (1) begin in the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the organization first receives bond proceeds and (2) continue for five total fiscal years. The bill allows the commissioner to grant an extension to comply with these requirements to an organization that shows good cause.

Audits and Investigations

The bill allows the DECD commissioner to (1) audit the financial, corporate, and business records of such organizations and (2) investigate them to determine program compliance.

Action for Noncompliance

Under the bill, the commissioner, through the attorney general, may bring an action on behalf of the state against any organization that fails to set aside employment positions as required by the program. Such action may seek (1) compliance or (2) recovery of the reasonable amount of wages that would have been paid to employable youths and young adults had the organization complied.

Reporting Requirement

The bill requires the DECD commissioner to submit to the General Assembly an annual report that provides an assessment and evaluation of the program. The reporting requirement (1) begins by December 1 after the fiscal year in which the organizations first receive

bond proceeds and (2) continues for the next four years.

BACKGROUND

The Former Federal Young Adult Conservation Corps Program (YACC)

YACC was authorized by Title I of the 1977 Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (P.L. 95-93). The program was established to employ youths who would not otherwise be productively employed, on a year-round basis to perform resource management work on public lands. The Department of Labor administered the program. To be eligible for YACC, a person had to be:

1. unemployed,
2. between ages 16 through 23,
3. a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident, and
4. physically capable of carrying out the work to be accomplished.

The maximum enrollment period was 12 months which had to be served in no more than three periods. A person was prohibited from leaving school to enroll in the YACC and preference was given to youths residing in areas with substantial unemployment. The program continued through the early 1980s.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 32 Nay 5 (04/19/2013)