
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5028 (as amended by House "A" and "B")*

AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES.

SUMMARY:

This bill amends sHB 5299, as amended by House Amendment "A" and passed by the House, which requires various governmental licensing authorities to certify, waive, grant, or award certain licenses, registrations, examinations, training, or credit to veterans or armed forces or National Guard members (i.e., service members) with military experience or qualifications similar to those otherwise required.

The bill alters when the licensing authorities must inquire about applicants' service member status and the information they must submit in annual reports to the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Veterans' Affairs Committee. The bill requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and the UConn Board of Trustees (BOT) to submit a separate report with different information than the other licensing authorities' and makes their first annual report due at a later date.

The bill also changes reporting requirements for the Planning Commission for Higher Education, which by law must develop and ensure the implementation of a strategic master plan for higher education in Connecticut (see BACKGROUND).

The bill makes changes to higher education statutes to conform with name and definition changes enacted in 2013 and several technical changes to other statutes relating to higher education and licensing of veterans and service members.

*House Amendment "A" changes the deadline for the Planning Commission's first annual report to the governor and removes BOR's

obligation to prepare the commission's annual report.

*House Amendment "B" adds provisions on governmental licensing entities and service providers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014, except the provisions on licensing entities are effective upon passage.

MILITARY WAIVERS FROM LICENSING ENTITIES

Licensing Entities' Requirements

sHB 5299 would require various licensing entities to ask each applicant for a license, certificate, registration, or an educational credit (if he or she is a veteran or a service member). This bill requires the licensing entity to ask only when evidence of military training or experience is relevant and could be applied to a credential or credit within the entity's authority.

The bill also makes changes to some of the required contents for the licensing entities' annual report to DOL and the Veterans' Affairs Committee, which is due by January 1, 2015 under sHB 5299. Under this bill, the report must now include the following information only if it falls within the licensing entity's authority and where military training or experience is relevant and could be applied:

1. the number of service members who applied for a military training evaluation, license, certificate, registration, or an educational credit;
2. the number of service members whose applications were (a) approved and (b) denied, along with the data on the reasons for the denials; and
3. the licensing entity's processing time for applications submitted by service members compared to the processing time for all applications.

Under sHB 5299, licensing entities that have the authority to certify, waive, grant, or award certain licenses, registrations, examinations,

training, or credit for veterans or service members with military experience include the (1) Department of Consumer Protection, (2) Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, (3) DOL, (4) Department of Motor Vehicles, (5) Department of Public Health, (6) BOR, (7) Office of Higher Education, (8) UConn BOT, and (9) Police Officer Standards and Training Council.

BOR and UConn BOT Reporting Requirements

The bill changes BOR and UConn’s reporting requirements to DOL and the Veterans’ Affairs Committee under sHB 5299. The bill changes the required report contents for BOR and UConn’s BOT. sHB 5299 requires these higher education entities to submit reports identical to the other licensing entities. The bill restores the requirements to report on:

1. information on (a) the number of service members who applied for a military training evaluation, license, certificate, registration, or an educational credit and (b) the number of service members whose applications were approved (the bill limits this to information about credentials that fall within the licensing entity’s authority and where military training or experience is relevant and could be applied);
2. information on their efforts to inform and assist service members in accessing programs that provide the education and training necessary for meeting the requirements for licensure, certification, registration, or educational credit;
3. information on whether existing law effectively addresses the challenges that service members face when applying for an occupational or professional license, certificate, registration, or an educational credit upon discharge from military service or relocating to the state; and
4. recommendations on improving their ability to meet the occupational needs of service members who were issued or denied a recommendation for review or a deduction from the

hours of apprenticeship training.

The bill eliminates the requirements to report on the:

1. number of service members whose application for a license, a certificate, a registration, or an educational credit was denied, and data on the reasons for the denials and
2. licensing entity's processing time for applications submitted by service members compared to the processing time for all applications.

Also, the bill extends BOR and UConn's BOT's first annual reporting deadline. Under sHB 52990, these entities must submit their first reports by January 1, 2015. The bill extends the deadline to July 1, 2016.

PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

The bill changes the deadline, from October 1, 2016 to January 1, 2016, by which the commission must submit its first annual report on implementation status and goal progress to the governor. The law already requires the commission to submit its first annual report by this date to the Higher Education, Education, Commerce, Labor, and Appropriations committees. It also removes the requirement that BOR prepare the annual report on behalf of the commission.

BACKGROUND

Planning Commission for Higher Education

The commission develops and ensures the implementation of a strategic master plan for higher education. The plan must address degree attainment, the number of people entering the workforce, and the achievement gap. It also must establish numerical goals for 2015 and 2020 that (1) eliminate the postsecondary achievement gap between minority students and the general student population and (2) increase the number of people (a) earning a bachelor degree, associate degree, or certificate; (b) completing coursework at community colleges; and (c) entering the state's workforce. The plan must provide specific strategies for meeting these goals and consider the impact of

education trends on higher education in Connecticut (CGS § 10a-11b).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18 Nay 2 (03/04/2014)