



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 559

February Session, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill No. 426

Senate, April 7, 2016

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. COLEMAN of the 2nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO LEGAL COUNSEL IN CIVIL MATTERS.

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force
2 to study the nature, extent and consequences of unmet legal needs of
3 state residents in civil matters. The task force shall examine, on a state-
4 wide basis, the impact that the lack of access to legal counsel in civil
5 matters is having on the ability of state residents to secure essential
6 human needs.

7 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

8 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
9 one of whom shall be a director of a legal clinic program of a law
10 school located in the state, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city
11 with a population exceeding one hundred thousand;

12 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one

13 of whom shall be an attorney who either has a solo practice or is in a
14 law firm located in the state with twenty or fewer attorneys, and one of
15 whom shall be an attorney in a law firm located in the state with one
16 hundred or more attorneys;

17 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
18 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of the Open
19 Communities Alliance, and one of whom shall represent an
20 organization advocating on behalf of the disability community;

21 (4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of
22 whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Coalition Against
23 Domestic Violence, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city with a
24 population not exceeding one hundred thousand;

25 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of
26 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of a pro bono
27 program organized by a law firm located in the state, and one of
28 whom shall be a state resident who has been a pro se litigant in a civil
29 matter in a state court;

30 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of
31 whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Bar Association, and
32 one of whom shall be an in-house counsel attorney for a state business;

33 (7) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
34 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
35 relating to the judiciary;

36 (8) Three appointed by the Chief Court Administrator, one of whom
37 shall be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the Family
38 Division or has been assigned to the Family Division in the three-year
39 period prior to the effective date of this section, and one of whom shall
40 be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the housing
41 session or has been assigned to the housing session in the three-year
42 period prior to the effective date of this section;

43 (9) The Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court, or the Chief

- 44 Justice's designee;
- 45 (10) The Chief Public Defender, or the Chief Public Defender's
46 designee;
- 47 (11) The Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's
48 designee;
- 49 (12) The Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee;
- 50 (13) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
51 designee;
- 52 (14) The Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee;
- 53 (15) The president of the Connecticut Bar Association, or the
54 president's designee;
- 55 (16) The president of the Connecticut Bar Foundation, or the
56 president's designee;
- 57 (17) The dean of The University of Connecticut School of Law, or the
58 dean's designee;
- 59 (18) The dean of the Quinnipiac University School of Law, or the
60 dean's designee;
- 61 (19) The dean of the Yale University School of Law, or the dean's
62 designee;
- 63 (20) The executive director of Connecticut Legal Services, or the
64 executive director's designee;
- 65 (21) The executive director of Greater Hartford Legal Aid, or the
66 executive director's designee; and
- 67 (22) The executive director of the New Haven Legal Assistance
68 Association, or the executive director's designee.
- 69 (c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than

70 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be
71 filled by the appointing authority.

72 (d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
73 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force
74 from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall
75 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not
76 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

77 (e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
78 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
79 judiciary shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

80 (f) Not later than December 15, 2016, the task force shall submit a
81 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing
82 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
83 relating to the judiciary, in accordance with the provisions of section
84 11-4a of the general statutes. Such recommendations shall include
85 suggested mechanisms to: (1) Secure access to justice and legal
86 representation in civil matters by increasing the availability of legal
87 assistance with civil matters throughout the state; and (2) encourage
88 increased pro bono service by the state's legal community. The task
89 force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or
90 December 15, 2016, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(a), repetitive language was deleted and the last sentence relating to recommendations of the task force was moved to Section 1(f) for clarity and consistency. In Section 1(b)(8), "had been assigned" was changed to "has been assigned" for accuracy.

JUD Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 17 \$
Various State Agencies	GF - Potential Cost	Less than \$1,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

There may be a cost of less than \$1,000 in FY 17 to those agencies participating in the task force to reimburse legislators and agency staff for mileage expenses.

The Out Years

There is no ongoing fiscal impact because the task force terminates in FY 17.

OLR Bill Analysis

SB 426

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LEGAL COUNSEL IN CIVIL MATTERS.***

SUMMARY:

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 29 Nay 14 (03/21/2016)