



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 214**

February Session, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill No. 261

*Senate, March 24, 2016*

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs reported through SEN. FLEXER of the 29th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS SERVICES AT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2016*) (a) The Board of Regents  
2 for Higher Education and the Board of Trustees for The University of  
3 Connecticut, as the case may be, shall establish at each constituent unit,  
4 as defined in section 10a-1 of the general statutes, an Operation  
5 Academic Support for Incoming Service Members (OASIS) center  
6 responsible for developing and offering programming and services  
7 focused on providing outreach and assistance to students who are  
8 veterans enrolled at such constituent unit.

9 (b) The Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of  
10 Trustees for The University of Connecticut, as the case may be, shall  
11 require that each constituent unit employ at least one dedicated full-  
12 time professional to staff the OASIS center at such constituent unit.  
13 Such professional shall have a demonstrated interest in the concerns of  
14 veterans and pursue opportunities for improving and increasing

15 programming and services offered by such OASIS center.

16 (c) The Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Board of  
 17 Trustees for The University of Connecticut shall adopt a plan for  
 18 collaborating with each other and any veterans' service organization,  
 19 which plan shall include, but not be limited to, holding an annual  
 20 conference for any staff of the OASIS center at each constituent unit to  
 21 (1) share best practices for and identify challenges in serving the  
 22 student population at each such constituent unit who are veterans, (2)  
 23 discuss efforts for improved communication and coordination of  
 24 efforts to so serve such population, and (3) develop and update, as the  
 25 case may be, enhanced behavioral intervention training for any staff  
 26 working directly with students who are veterans.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2016	New section

**VA**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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 \$	FY 18 \$
Board of Regents for Higher Education	GF/TF - Cost	112,500	150,000
Comptroller- Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF/TF - Cost	44,932	59,910

Note: GF=General Fund, TF = Tuition Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill results in a cost to the state of \$157,432 in FY 17 and \$209,910 in FY 18 by requiring each constituent unit of higher education as defined in section 10a-1 of the general statutes to establish an Operation Academic Support for Incoming Service Members (OASIS). The cost in FY 17 represents three-quarter year funding. The constituent units of higher education consist of the University of Connecticut, the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College.

The regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College do not currently have a dedicated OASIS staff member. The full-year cost of a staff member for each of these would require a salary of \$75,000 plus corresponding fringe benefits of \$29,955.

**The Out Years**

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

<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 39.94% of payroll in FY 17 and FY 18.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 261*****AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS SERVICES AT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education and UConn Board of Trustees to establish an Operation Academic Support for Incoming Service Members (OASIS) center at each of their constituent units to develop and offer programs and services focused on providing outreach and assistance to veterans enrolled at the constituent units. A “constituent unit” means UConn, the Connecticut State Universities, regional community-technical colleges, or Charter Oak State College.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2016

**OASIS CENTERS**

The Board of Regents and the UConn Board of Trustees must require each constituent unit to employ at least one dedicated full-time professional to staff its OASIS center. The individual must have a demonstrated interest in veterans’ concerns and pursue opportunities to improve and increase the center’s programs and services.

The boards must adopt a plan to collaborate with each other and veterans’ service organizations. The plan must include an annual conference for OASIS center staff to do the following:

1. share best practices for, and identify challenges in, serving the students who are veterans;
2. discuss efforts to improve communication and coordination of efforts to serve such students; and

3. develop and update, as necessary, enhanced behavioral intervention training for staff who work directly with such students.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 2 (03/08/2016)