



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 382**

*January Session, 2017*

Substitute House Bill No. 5584

*House of Representatives, April 4, 2017*

The Committee on Commerce reported through REP. SIMMONS of the 144th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A SMALL BUSINESS HOTLINE.***

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

1       Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2017*) The Commissioner of  
2       Economic and Community Development shall establish and operate a  
3       state-wide small business hotline to provide prospective and existing  
4       small business owners with individualized information and guidance  
5       regarding business formation and development, networking resources  
6       and technical and financial assistance from the state and quasi-public  
7       agencies. A natural person shall staff such hotline during normal  
8       business hours. The commissioner may partner with the Connecticut  
9       Economic Resource Center for the establishment and operation of such  
10      hotline.

11      Sec. 2. (*Effective October 1, 2017*) Not later than January 1, 2019, the  
12      Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall  
13      submit a report on the small business hotline established pursuant to  
14      section 1 of this act, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a

15 of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General  
16 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce. Such  
17 report shall include a description of the services offered through the  
18 hotline, how the hotline is advertised to businesses, a summary of the  
19 most common types of assistance requested through the hotline and  
20 statistics concerning hotline call volume.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2017</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2017</i>	New section

**CE**      *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.

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***OFA Fiscal Note******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

The bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to establish and operate a state-wide small business hotline to provide information and guidance to business owners. The bill allows DECD to create this hotline in collaboration with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC).

There is no fiscal impact as CERC currently runs a hotline with a dedicated staff person to provide information and guidance to small businesses.

***The Out Years******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

**OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 5584**

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A SMALL BUSINESS HOTLINE.***

**SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioner to establish and operate a hotline that provides individualized information and guidance to entrepreneurs and small business owners across the state on how to start and develop a business, identify resource networks, and access technical and financial assistance from state and quasi-public agencies.

The commissioner may collaborate with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) to establish and operate the hotline, which must be operated by a natural person (presumably, as opposed to a fully automated or pre-recorded system) during normal business hours. CERC is a nonprofit organization that provides economic development services to businesses, often in partnership with the state's utilities and state and local economic development agencies. Its services include providing technical assistance to businesses seeking to start, expand, or relocate to Connecticut.

The commissioner must submit a report on the hotline's operation to the Commerce Committee by January 1, 2019. The report must describe the hotline's services, summarize the most common types of assistance entrepreneurs and small businesses request, and provide statistics on the hotline's call volume.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2017

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 1 (03/21/2017)