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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 7242**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING POLICE OFFICERS AT INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill allows independent higher education institutions to apply to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) commissioner to employ police officers at their own expense. (Existing law permits private and public colleges to establish police forces to varying degrees, and certain private and public colleges have established them already (see BACKGROUND).)

Under the bill, the DESPP commissioner may commission, at his pleasure, individuals who are certified by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) and designated by the institutions. Those sworn may act as police officers within an institution's law enforcement unit on its premises. Under the bill, these officers may arrest and bring before the proper authority those who commit offenses on the institution's premises. They may also exercise authority on highways adjacent to an institution's premises, provided the institution's law enforcement unit enters into a memorandum of understanding with the municipality having authority or control over such highways. (Under existing law, those commissioned will also be designated as peace officers and therefore possess the powers and protections state law affords them (CGS § 53a-3(9)).)

The bill requires these institutions' officers and units to comply with POST's standards and practices for police officers and law enforcement units. Under the bill, the commissioner may supervise and direct these officers as he deems necessary, including revoking their commissions. He must notify each judicial district's Superior Court clerk when issuing or revoking any commission.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Independent Higher Education Institution***

By law, an independent higher education institution is an in-state, private nonprofit institution that (1) has degree-granting authority, (2) is not included in Connecticut's public higher education system, and (3) does not primarily prepare students for religious vocation (CGS § 10a-173(a)).

### ***Private College and University Police***

The city of West Haven has granted the University of New Haven authority to appoint police officers under a state statute that allows municipal chief executive officers to appoint special constables to requesting corporations (CGS § 7-92). The city of New Haven, acting through its board of police commissioners, has appointed POST-certified individuals to be Yale University police officers under a special act (PA 83-466 § 3).

### ***Public College and University Police***

By law, special police forces are established at the University of Connecticut, Central Connecticut State University, Southern Connecticut State University, Eastern Connecticut State University, and Western Connecticut State University. The law also establishes special police forces on all twelve of Connecticut's regional community technical college campuses, subject to the Board of Regents for Higher Education's approval (CGS § 10a-156b). Armed members of these special police forces must be certified by POST (CGS § 10a-156c).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 23 Nay 1 (03/19/2019)