sHB-7306
AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON TOURISM.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Affected</th>
<th>Fund-Effect</th>
<th>FY 20 $</th>
<th>FY 21 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Economic &amp; Community Development</td>
<td>GF - See Below</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>See Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Transportation</td>
<td>TF - Potential Cost</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>See Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits1</td>
<td>TF - Potential Cost</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>See Below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: TF = Transportation Fund; GF = General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the restroom facilities at the states six visitor welcome centers to be open 24 hours per day. Of these six centers, three are open part time, 2 are open full time and one has been closed.

Currently, the visitor welcome centers in West Willington, Danbury and North Stonington are within the rest area facilities which are maintained by the Department of Transportation (DOT) during the hours of 8:30-3:30. There are 12 rest area attendants at a cost of approximately $500,000 annually. By keeping these three visitor welcome centers open an additional 16 hours, there would an

1The 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 41.19% of payroll in FY 20 and FY 21.

Primary Analyst: AB
Contributing Analyst(s): EW
Reviewer: MM
associated fiscal impact of up to $371,894 for six rest area attendant positions ($263,400 for salary and $108,494 for fringe benefit costs). This cost is dependent on having one rest area attendant stationed at each welcome center for each shift.

The visitor welcome centers of Greenwich and Darien are within the service plazas and are currently open 24 hours a day which will not result in a cost as they are already overseen by DOT’s Property and Facilities Division.

The Westbrook visitor welcome center has been closed since July 27, 2016. There would be an anticipated cost of up to $100,000 for the inspection, cleaning and other repairs needed to open the visitor welcome center. Also, an associated cost of $185,947 ($131,700 for salary and $54,247 for fringe benefit costs) would be needed for three rest area attendant positions. This cost is dependent on having one rest area attendant stationed for each shift.

The bill also eliminates the requirement in current law that the Department of Economic and Community Development maintain, operate, and manage the state's six visitor welcome centers, “within available appropriations.” These functions are estimated to cost up to $1.3 million annually including salaries, fringe benefits and expenses in addition to a one-time cost of $150,000 for physical improvements.

The bill also establishes a Connecticut Tourism Council to evaluate the Department of Economic and Community Development strategic marketing plan which is not anticipated to result in a cost to the state.

Lastly, the bill requires DOT to study wayfinding signage in the state which is not anticipated to result in a cost to the state.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above, absent the cost to open the Westbrook Center, would continue into the future subject to number of open visitor welcome centers.