

# Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-746

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP

**Title:** FOUNDATION AND CREATING A BUSINESS TAX CREDIT.

**Vote Date:** 3/14/2019

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 2/21/2019

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Senator James Maroney, 14<sup>th</sup> District

### REASONS FOR BILL:

According to the [Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education in Connecticut](#), "Projections indicate that by 2025 Connecticut's economy will require a workforce in which 70% will have some education beyond high school (Figures 4 and 5). Hitting that 70% target will require production of 300,000 *more* graduates than the current rates of production will yield (and that number accounts for in-migration of college-educated individuals ( see Appendix A, Figure 7). If nothing is done and current education patterns continue, Connecticut will produce 23,000 *fewer* graduates due to a projected decline in high school graduates over the next decade and beyond. Higher education is becoming very expensive in the state. Affordability of higher education is an issue, especially for low-income students, both youth and adults, who must have access to postsecondary education if workforce needs are to be met (Appendix A, Figures 14 and 15)." Due to recent fiscal constraints, this scholarship has not been fully funded. This bill would help resolve that issue and allow more students to receive financial help with their college tuition.

**SUSTITUTE LANGUAGE:** Lines 1-17: establishes a GF account, rather than a nonprofit foundation within OHE, to receive donations for the scholarship program

Lines 18-56: removes language describing the duties of the foundation's governing board

Lines 57-70: removes language allowing OHE to adopt regulations relating to the foundation and requiring the office to report annually to the committee about the foundation's progress

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Timothy D. Larson, Executive Director, Office of Higher Education](#): Mr. Larson testified in support of creating a corporate tax credit for making donations to this scholarship.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Senator James Maroney, 14<sup>th</sup> District](#): Senator Maroney supports this bill because “it is a creative way to increase the amount of scholarship funds offered without increasing the fiscal note for the state.”

Rosa Rada, The Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors and The Commission on Equity and Opportunity spoke in support of this legislation. Stating: “CWCS supports efforts to increase donations for such scholarships as well as expanding access for historical marginalized students. Adequately, preparing all students for success in growing fields of employment will break cycles of intergenerational poverty and advance the economic well-being of our entire state.”

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None provided.

**Reported by: Jeanie Phillips, Clerk**

**Date: March 20, 2019**