OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 7216

AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

SUMMARY

This bill increases the age of eligibility for the Department of Children and Families’ (DCF) post-secondary education funding program, which provides funding to youth committed to the department by age 18 who meet certain requirements. Under the bill, DCF must amend its policies and regulations regarding this program to increase:

1. from 21 to 24, the age until which a youth can voluntarily agree to receive and qualify for post-secondary education funding and services and
2. from 23 to 26, the age until which a youth enrolled in a post-secondary education program, who continues to meet DCF-established requirements, is eligible for such funding to complete his or her education program.

For these purposes, a “post-secondary education program” is any program that leads to an academic degree or certification in a vocation or employment training.

The bill makes corresponding changes by extending the age of DCF guardianship, from 21 to 24, for:

1. a child or youth committed to DCF care prior to age 18 who receives services and funding from the post-secondary education funding program (unless or until another guardian is
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appointed); and
2. a youth committed to DCF care prior to age 18 who (a) remains voluntarily in DCF care once he or she reaches age 18 and (b) receives services and funding through the post-secondary education funding program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Post-Secondary Education Funding Program

Under this program, DCF provides post-secondary education funding to certain young adults who, before their 18th birthday, were adjudicated as abused, neglected, or uncared for children and committed by the Superior Court to DCF.

Related Bill

sHB 5682, reported favorably by the Children’s Committee, requires DCF to amend a similar policy concerning financial assistance for post-secondary education expenses for certain adopted youth. It expands eligibility criteria to include otherwise eligible individuals adopted through the DCF foster care program on or after January 1, 2001, four years earlier than current DCF policy.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19  Nay 3  (03/14/2019)