Bill No.: HB-7111
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND THE INCLUSION OF THE DANGERS OF VAPING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

Vote Date: 3/6/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/22/2019
File No.: 90

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
The education curriculum is outdated. The public health curriculum does not include the recent development of e-cigarette technology, its proliferation, and the health risks associated with vaping. The public curriculum does not include the role of consent and healthy sexual relationships. This bill would update the public curriculum to include these two issues.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:
This substitute language changes the bill from a mandate on the Department of Education to provide vaping health curriculum materials to a mandate on the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to develop a curriculum ‘relating to the dangers and health consequences of using electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products.’

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, State Department of Education:
Commissioner Wentzell opposes this bill. Although the Commissioner supports the concept of the bill, she does not support its implementation because it will require the Department of Education to have additional resources and staff which they do not have at this time. Should this proposed bill move forward, it would require additional staff at SDE to meet the deadlines set in this proposal.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Minority Leader, Representative Themis Klarides:  
Rep. Klarides supports this bill. Rep. Klarides claims that this bill would require that the Department of Education include the role of sexual consent in their “Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework”. Rep. Klarides believes it is imperative to educate students on the importance of the role of consent. Rep. Klarides clarifies that this bill is not mandating that this curriculum become required in sexual education, but that this bill would mandate that the Department of Education make this curriculum available to schools.

Connecticut Prevention Network (CPN):  
CPN supports this bill. CPN supports this bill because recently there has been a significant increase in teen usage of vaping and they believe this bill would reduce that phenomenon. CPN claims that vaping should be treated as synonymous with smoking. CPN claims that given the success tobacco smoking education curriculum has had in the past in reducing adolescent smoking, including curriculum on the dangers of vaping would have a similar positive outcome.

Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence:  
The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence supports this bill. The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence support this bill because they claim it would provide the structure for teaching children at a young age the concept of consent which they believe would be a good measure for preventing future sexual violence.

Susan Yolen, Vice President, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England:  
Vice President Yolen supports this bill. Vice President Yolen claims that the need for an education program addressing consent ‘has never been clearer than it is right now’. Vice President Yolen believes that formal teaching about sexual consent should begin earlier than college, which is when it occurs now.

Sarah Holmes:  
Sarah Holmes supports this bill. Ms. Holmes supports this bill because she claims that including the role of consent in sexual relationships in the education curriculum “is necessary to help prevent sexual violence and domestic violence from occurring in the first place”.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc. (CABE):  
CABE opposes this bill. CABE opposes this bill because they claim that enough resource materials from the Department of Education are already made available, a mandate would be unnecessary.

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM):  
CCM opposes this bill. CCM opposes this bill because they claim additional curriculum mandates would minimize instruction time and that this mandate may require additional resources which may not be available to municipalities.

Connecticut Republican Assembly (CTRA):
CTRA opposes this bill. CTRA opposes this bill because they are concerned that “It appears as though providing ‘Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework bypasses the CT General Statutes in regard to ‘Family Life’”. CTRA is concerned that this bill could be used to circumvent and ultimately violate the parental right of a parent from preventing their children from attending Family Life courses.

Jan Perruccio, Superintendent, Old Saybrook Public Schools:
Superintendent Perruccio opposes this bill. Superintendent Perruccio opposes this bill because Old Saybrook Public Schools have recently developed creative opportunities for graduation requirements and she is concerned that this bill would result in a mandate which could interfere with said specialized graduation requirements.

Reported by: Colin Carroll  Date: 3/12/19