Bill No.: HB-7273
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF INTERNSHIPS AND STUDENT TEACHING IN COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTS.
Vote Date: 3/14/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/7/2019

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Labor and Public Employees Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:
Student teachers and interns receive no compensation for their work causing many of them to accrue large student loans. This study would examine the programs.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None submitted.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Michelle Cardono, Vice-President, C.H.A.N.G.E. CT (Carrying Humanity as New Generations Emerge): This bill expands the pool of eligible interns and student teacher by providing them monetary compensation. Michelle gave a scenario where she had to pay $1,500 out of pocket to take the supplemental internship class which met only four times but was not covered by her scholarship even though she was doing the same tasks as the victim advocate. Doing his work with no pay was exploitative. Why not give college students a helping hand by mandating there be more paid internship opportunities for “broke college kids”?

Victor Constanza, President, CHANGE CT: Unpaid internships don’t recognize the financial hardships placed on individuals already in debt while attending college. They create a barrier for young adults from marginalized/ lower socioeconomic backgrounds and prevent them from taking opportunities, particularly in the public sector. This unpaid experience is often required, but they are forced to undercut spending on living expenses. People should
not be suffering when chasing their dreams. According to federal law, interns are not protected under the civil rights act of 1964 unless they receive ‘significant remuneration’. This bill is a step toward equity for all college students.

**Sidney Elkhay, UCONN College Democrats, Manchester Resident:** This expands the pool of eligible interns and student teachers by providing monetary compensation. He has volunteered and interned for different political and human rights oriented organizations but realizes he will graduate with significant student debt for just his undergraduate degree. Many talented people can’t afford to work in areas they are passionate about because they simply can’t afford to take on these unpaid internships. Organizations are limiting their applicant pools. Wealthy families continue to dominate academia and job markets while our entire society is disadvantaged as long as unpaid internships exist.

**Roshanay Tahar, Commuter Senator, Student Government Association and Chairwoman of External Affairs Committee, Central CT State University:** Those from a low-income household don’t have the financial support necessary to partake in unpaid internships. Many are forced to take outside jobs to support themselves. Already hurt from loan debt, they are expected to provide services without pay. This is very common within the Education Department for Student Teachers who are required to dedicate an entire semester student teaching. Not many students have a source of financial assistance. This is unfair, especially to students from low income communities. No student should suffer to reach their goals.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None submitted.

**Reported by:** Marie Knudsen  
**Date:** March 26, 2019