Bill No.: HB-7355
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE EDUCATION COST SHARING FORMULA.
Vote Date: 3/25/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/18/2019

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
This bill would establish a task force to review the ECS formula and consider 1) the distribution of funds to different categories of towns and 2) The effect of the phase-in of funding levels on the predictability and sustainability of education funding for towns.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:
The substitute language in this bill is technical in nature.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.:
CABE supports this bill. Localities are those who are most affected by reforms like ECS changes but are essential actors in establishing a more equitable and stable school funding system.

Ruben Felipe, Northeast Charter Schools Network:
Ruben Felipe supports this bill with recommendations. Mr. Felipe states that the ECS funding is unfair to charter schools because it does not increase their funding with consideration to students with special needs and English learners. Public charter schools receive two hundred
seventy-five dollars less per pupil. The ECS formula needs to include weighted funding for economic and language learner status for charter schools.

Executive Director, Betsy Gara, Connecticut Council of Small Towns, COST:
Director Gara supports this bill. Seventy to eighty percent of a small town budgets come from the property taxes of their respective municipality. Director Gara states that fair share funding makes sure every community has a stake in Connecticut schools.

Director of Organizing, Ann Pratt, Connecticut Citizen Action Group, (CCAG), Pastor Rodney Wade:
CCAG supports this bill. Connecticut needs to take major steps to reform Connecticut education toward equality. Connecticut has the third highest income inequality and piecemeal solutions are not working. CCAG suggests that Connecticut can promote a more equitable system by recruiting minority teachers, funding early childhood education, incorporating restorative justice, requiring cultural competency training, and including African-American and Latino studies in the education curriculum.

Orlando Rodriguez, Connecticut Education Association (CEA):
CEA supports this bill. CEA has been selected to take part in this task force. CEA believes that the ECS formula does not need to be changed, but could be updated for true education costs and student needs. Section 17 of PA 17-2 JSS established the Connecticut Achievement and Resource Equity in Schools (CARES) which is a task force with similar goals and could be a sufficient alternative to this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:
None.

Reported by: Colin Carroll                      Date: 3/26/19