Bill No.: SB-1117  
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES FOR FRINGE BENEFITS.  
Vote Date: 5/2/2019  
Vote Action: Joint Favorable  
PH Date: 4/5/2019  
File No.:  

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SPONSORS OF BILL:  
Appropriations Committee  

REASONS FOR BILL:  
This bill calls for the Comptroller’s Office to complete reviews of the fringe benefit expenses for the Higher Education system, including UConn Health Center, the Department of Transportation, the Connecticut Airport Authority and resident state troopers with a goal of identifying areas for savings.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:  
Kevin A. Dillon, executive director of the Connecticut Airport Authority testified in favor of the bill. He briefly outlined the challenges the Authority faced in incorporating raising fringe benefit costs.  
Scott Jordan, Chief Financial Officer of the University of Connecticut, and Jeff Geoghegan, Chief Financial Officer of the University of Connecticut Health Center, stated that UConn and UConn Health were in strong support of the bill. They emphasized that ballooning fringe costs were eroding funds available to focus on their core educational mission. They stated that the current trajectory of anticipated expenses was not sustainable and that they welcomed the Comptroller’s review.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:  
Kevin Claffey, President of the UConn Health Faculty AAUP Chapter, supported the bill. He pointed out that UConn Health pays their costs of fringe benefits out of revenue from students, patients and research grants and when the costs rise this dramatically it is these
three areas that suffer. He included short testimonials from UCHC scientists and clinicians who could not be present.

Bruce J. Mayer, UConn Health professor and member of the Executive Council for UCHC-AAUP, supports the bill and outlined how the fringe benefit costs go in large part to pay for unfunded pension liability. He stressed that this growing expense puts the Health Center at a competitive disadvantage to similar institutions nationally for research dollars. Included in his testimony were petition signatures from faculty who were unable to attend the public hearing.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Elizabeth Gillette Date: May 8, 2019