

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5111

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY WORK-BASED
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN INDUSTRIES WITH A HIRING NEED IN THE
Title: STATE.

Vote Date: 3/3/2020

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/20/2020

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to create a task force with the purpose of studying the development of a public-private partnership to provide work-based learning opportunities for high school and college students in industries with a hiring need.

Substitute language reduces, from two to one, the number of executive officers from the top ten largest employers in the state appointed to the task force, which the Senate president pro tempore must appoint and adds to the task force one owner of a small business (i.e. a business that employs 50 employees or fewer) to be appointed by the Senate minority leader (in lieu of appointing a second executive officer of a top-ten employer).

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Timothy Larson, Executive Director, Connecticut Office of Higher Education](#): While the Office of Higher Education supports increasing vocational learning opportunities in the state, they believe that this bill is unnecessary. Mr. Larson notes that the Governor's Workforce Council is already tasked with what this bill aims to accomplish.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[The Connecticut Business and Industry Association](#): The Connecticut Business and Industry Association is in support of this bill. The CBIA states that four of the five fastest growing occupations in the state are STEM-related, and that Connecticut small businesses have trouble with employee recruitment and training. They suggest the task force include representatives from these small businesses.

[Shannon Marimón, Executive Director, ReadyCT](#): ReadyCT submitted testimony in support of this bill, as they believe that this task force would be a great starting point as it would increase students' exposure and access to various careers. They believe that this task force would result in increased work-based learning experiences.

[Annie Scully, Campaign for a Working Connecticut](#): The Campaign for a Working Connecticut is in support of this bill because they believe it will expand learning options and access to employment, and help more workers build skills that are in demand by Connecticut employers.

[The Connecticut Construction Industries Association](#): The Connecticut Construction Industries Association is in support of this bill because work-based learning programs are an effective way to increase employment opportunities. The CCIA recommends that this task force work collaboratively with the Governor's Workforce Council, the state Workforce Development Boards, and the Board of Regents for Higher Education to avoid redundancy and conflicts. They also recommend adding a provision that requires the task force to examine a plan from January 2015 prepared by the CT Employment and Training Commission.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[The Foundation for Fair Contracting of Connecticut](#): The FFC submitted testimony in opposition to this bill because they believe that the bill would create a program that mirrors that of the Trump administration and would allow Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs to undercut quality apprenticeship programs already established in the state.

[Sal Luciano, President, Connecticut AFL-CIO](#): The Connecticut AFL-CIO is in opposition to this bill. Mr. Luciano notes that this task force would be a redundancy because much of the proposed task force's work is already done by the Connecticut Department of Education and the Department of Labor. In addition, the AFL-CIO has concerns about whether this will undermine current registered apprenticeship programs.

**Reported by: Assistant Clerk Krystin DeLucia
Jeanie Phillips, Clerk**

Date: March 4, 2020