



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 332**

January Session, 2021

House Bill No. 5467

*House of Representatives, April 8, 2021*

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through REP. ELLIOTT of the 88th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A "FEE-FREE DAY" AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2021*) The Board of Regents for  
2 Higher Education and the Board of Trustees of The University of  
3 Connecticut shall establish November first or another date jointly  
4 chosen by such boards to annually be known as a "Fee-Free Day". Such  
5 boards shall not charge an application fee to any high school student  
6 who has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and  
7 submits an application for admission on such day to any of the public  
8 institutions of higher education governed by such boards.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	New section
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**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In the second sentence, "on such day" was inserted for clarity.

**HED**      *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
UConn	Other - Revenue Loss	See Below	See Below
Board of Regents for Higher Education	Other - See Below	See Below	See Below

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill requires the University of Connecticut (UConn) and the Board of Regents to establish an annual "Fee-Free Day," on which an admissions application fee will not be charged to high school students who have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The bill results in a revenue loss to both UConn and the Board of Regents, but the Board of Regents may potentially experience a small tuition and fee revenue increase as described below.

As the bill requires the constituent units to waive admissions fees for only high school students who submit applications on a single day, and have already completed the FAFSA, the extent of any fiscal impacts is anticipated to be limited.

The amount of the revenue fee loss will depend on the number of students who submit applications on Fee-Free Day and would have applied absent the one-day fee waiver. The institutions have not previously held similar fee-waiving days, although admissions fee waivers are available at any time upon request, and consequently, no previous experiences are available to inform this estimate. At UConn,

the admissions application fee is \$80 per person, and total application fee revenue associated with first-time college applicants was approximately \$2.2 million in both FY 20 and FY 21. At the four Connecticut State Universities, the admissions application fee is \$50, and the total associated revenue for all undergraduate admissions was an estimated \$1.1 million in FY 20.

At the same time, the bill's mandated Fee-Free Day may encourage more applications. To the extent that any students apply who would not have otherwise done so, and any are admitted as well as enroll, then the bill may result in a tuition and fees revenue gain beginning in FY 23 to the Connecticut state universities. No comparable impact to UConn is anticipated because it is not expected to substantially grow its undergraduate student population in future years.

The bill will not impact the other institutions under the Board of Regents. The community colleges charge no application fees and very few Charter Oak State College students enroll immediately after high school graduation.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to changes in undergraduate college admission application fees.

**OLR Bill Analysis****HB 5467*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING A "FEE-FREE DAY" AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and the UConn Board of Trustees (BOT) to jointly establish on November 1, or another date the boards jointly choose, an annual "Fee-Free Day."

Under the bill, BOR and BOT cannot charge an application fee to any high school student who applies for admission to any public higher education institution governed by the boards on the established day. The student must have already completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2021

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/22/2021)