



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 149**

January Session, 2021

Substitute House Bill No. 5895

*House of Representatives, March 29, 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 substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON THE REDUCTION OF STUDENT LOAN DEBT.***

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force  
2 to study the amount of student loan debt incurred by students and  
3 graduates in the state and options available for reducing such debt. Such  
4 study shall include, but need not be limited to, an examination of (1) the  
5 average amount of student loan debt incurred by students and  
6 graduates in the state compared to the average amount incurred by  
7 students and graduates in other states in the region and nationally, (2)  
8 possible reasons for any differences between such average amounts of  
9 student loan debt, (3) options available to the state for reducing the  
10 amount of student loan debt incurred by students and graduates, (4)  
11 recommendations for programs to reduce the average amount of  
12 student loan debt in the state, and (5) the relationship between race,  
13 ethnicity, gender identity, sex or age and the average amount of debt  
14 incurred by students or graduates.

15 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

16 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
17 one of whom is a financial aid officer at a four-year public institution of  
18 higher education in the state and one of whom is a financial aid officer  
19 at an independent institution of higher education in the state;

20 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of  
21 whom is a financial aid officer at a regional community-technical college  
22 in the state and one of whom works in the banking industry and has  
23 expertise in managing student loans;

24 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
25 Representatives, who is a current student at an institution of higher  
26 education in the state;

27 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a  
28 parent of a current student at an institution of higher education in the  
29 state;

30 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
31 Representatives, who is a recent graduate of an institution of higher  
32 education in the state;

33 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a  
34 parent of a recent graduate of an institution of higher education in the  
35 state;

36 (7) The executive director of the Office of Higher Education, or the  
37 executive director's designee;

38 (8) The executive director of the Connecticut Higher Education  
39 Supplemental Loan Authority, or the executive director's designee; and

40 (9) The chairpersons, vice-chairpersons and ranking members of the  
41 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
42 matters relating to higher education and employment advancement, or  
43 their designees.

44 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
45 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
46 of the General Assembly.

47 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
48 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
49 be filled by the appointing authority.

50 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
51 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
52 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
53 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty  
54 days after the effective date of this section.

55 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
56 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher  
57 education shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

58 (g) Not later than January 1, 2022, the task force shall submit a report  
59 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
60 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher  
61 education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
62 general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it  
63 submits such report or January 1, 2022, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**HED**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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*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.*

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### **OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill establishes a sixteen-member task force to study the amount of student loan debt incurred by students and graduates in the state and options available for reducing such debt.

Not later than January 1, 2022, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2022, whichever is later.

This bill has no fiscal impact as PA 17-236 prohibits transportation allowances for task force members.

### **The Out Years**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

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**OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 5895**

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE ON THE REDUCTION OF STUDENT LOAN DEBT.***

**SUMMARY**

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22    Nay 0    (03/11/2021)