



House of Representatives

File No. 749

General Assembly

January Session, 2021

(Reprint of File No. 120)

Substitute House Bill No. 6436
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 27, 2021

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OPEN CHOICE VOUCHERS PILOT PROGRAM.

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than June 15, 2022, the
2 Commissioner of Housing, in consultation with the Commissioner of
3 Education and housing, civil rights and education advocates, shall
4 establish the Open Choice Voucher pilot program. Such pilot program
5 shall designate twenty rental assistance program certificates under
6 section 8-345 of the general statutes over a period of two years for use
7 by families who (1) qualify as low income under the rental assistance
8 program, (2) have participated for at least one year in the interdistrict
9 public school attendance program, established under section 10-266aa
10 of the general statutes, in the Hartford region, and (3) would like to
11 move to the town where their child participating in the interdistrict
12 public school attendance program attends school.

13 (b) The Commissioner of Housing shall develop procedures for

14 landlord recruitment, family recruitment, housing search assistance and
 15 counseling for such pilot program. As existing rental assistance
 16 certificates become available, the commissioner shall make ten rental
 17 assistance certificates available during the school year commencing in
 18 2022 and ten additional rental assistance certificates during the school
 19 year commencing in 2023 for such pilot program. All participants in the
 20 pilot program shall have access to the residence mobility counseling
 21 program established under section 8-348 of the general statutes.

22 (c) The Commissioner of Housing shall submit an interim report and
 23 final report concerning such pilot program, in accordance with the
 24 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
 25 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
 26 relating to housing and education. The commissioner shall submit the
 27 interim report on or before August 31, 2022, and a final report on or
 28 before August 31, 2023. Each report shall include, but need not be
 29 limited to: (1) A summary of program implementation, including efforts
 30 to inform and educate families about the program, recruit landlords and
 31 provide search assistance and counseling, and (2) assessment of
 32 program utilization rates, waiting list numbers, and the racial, ethnic
 33 and household composition and income demographics of the program
 34 participants and those on the waiting list. The final report shall include
 35 an assessment of program performance during the pilot period based
 36 on available data, including, but not limited to, data concerning both the
 37 implementation of the program by the Department of Housing and the
 38 use of the program, and any recommendations the commissioner may
 39 have regarding future implementation or an extension of the pilot
 40 program.

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

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: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Housing (DOH) to establish the Open Choice Voucher Pilot Program and is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities. As the program is intended to utilize twenty existing vouchers under the state's rental assistance program (RAP) as they become available from regular turnover, there is no anticipated increase in the number of state-supported rental assistance certificates under the bill.

There is no anticipated cost to DOH to develop the program procedures or produce the reports required by the bill, as the agency has the necessary expertise.

House "A" specifies that the program use existing rental assistance certificates upon turnover rather than additional certificates, which eliminates the cost in the underlying bill.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6436 (as amended by House "A")

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OPEN CHOICE VOUCHERS PILOT PROGRAM.

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 15 Nay 0 (03/09/2021)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 33 Nay 16 (05/10/2021)