

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-568

AN ACT ELIMINATING THE NONMEDICAL EXEMPTION TO THE IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT.

## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Board of Regents for Higher Education	Various - Potential Revenue Loss	Less than 1.4 million	Less than 1.4 million
Public Health, Dept.	IF - Cost	Less than 479,000	Less than 107,000

Note: Various=Various; IF=Insurance Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

This bill eliminates the religious exemption from immunization requirements for individuals attending public and private schools, child care centers, and group and family day care homes. This is anticipated to result in a cost to the Department of Public Health (DPH) of less than \$479,000 in FY 22 and less than \$107,000 in FY 23 to purchase vaccines for privately insured children who would not have been vaccinated in the absence of the passage of the bill.<sup>1</sup>

The bill grandfathers in individuals enrolled in 7th grade or higher who submitted a religious exemption prior to the bill's passage. Under the bill, individuals with prior religious exemptions who are enrolled in 6th grade or below generally must comply with immunization

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<sup>1</sup> Funding to vaccinate children that are Medicaid-eligible, uninsured, underinsured, and/or American Indian or Alaska Native is provided by the Federal Vaccines for Children program.

requirements.

The maximum DPH cost projection assumes, based on national 2018 Census data, that 67% of school enterers with religious exemptions have private insurance. There were 8,328 religious exemptions in Connecticut for the 2019 - 2020 school year. Of those students with religious exemptions, 5,667 were enrolled in grades K - 6 (of which 3,797 are estimated to be privately insured and 1,870 estimated to be Medicaid enrolled). Currently, the cost to fully vaccinate an insured Connecticut child 0-18 years of age with all recommended vaccines is approximately \$2,400 per child (an average of \$126 annually). Therefore, the FY 22 cost to DPH is estimated to be less than \$479,000 ( $3,797 \times \$126 = \$478,422$ ). For FY 23 only two school cohorts would need to be vaccinated (those entering Kindergarten from Pre-K and those entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade from grade 6 as immunization requirements are for entry into kindergarten and 7<sup>th</sup> grade). There were 1,266 students with religious exemptions enrolled in Pre-K and grade 6 in the 2019-20 school year, of which 848 are estimated to be privately insured and 418 are estimated to be Medicaid enrolled. Thus, the FY 23 cost to DPH is estimated to be less than \$107,000 ( $848 \times \$126 = \$106,848$ ).

The cost to DPH will vary based on several factors, including: (1) the number of privately insured individuals that would have procured a religious exemption that chooses to receive DPH-recommended vaccinations, rather than leave the state or become homeschooled, (2) the number of these individuals that are already vaccinated to some extent and for which preventable childhood diseases, (3) the utilization rate of combination vaccines, (4) the types of combination vaccines used, (5) the timing of vaccine administration, and (6) the price of vaccines.<sup>2</sup>

The bill is also anticipated to result in a potential revenue loss to the

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<sup>2</sup> DPH purchases vaccines through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention contract that is negotiated between the vaccine manufacturers and the federal government each year.

Board of Regents due to possible reduced enrollment, should prospective students who previously would have utilized a religious exemption continue to choose not to vaccinate themselves and, therefore, are unable to enroll.

The revenue loss to the Board of Regents for Higher Education is potential because it is possible that most, or all, of such prospective new students, will choose to receive vaccinations to enroll. The potential revenue loss may reach \$1.4 million annually, beginning in FY 22, if few such prospective students choose to comply with the vaccination requirements. However, if many comply, the potential revenue loss will be minimal.

Of the potential Board of Regents revenue loss, up to \$900,000 is associated with the possible total impact to the 12 community colleges, while up to \$435,000 is associated with potential total impact to the four Connecticut State Universities. The Connecticut State Universities may experience reduced tuition and fees revenue (up to approximately \$260,000) as well as auxiliary revenue for room and board (up to an estimated \$175,000). These estimates are based on: (1) recent data on the number of new students enrolled who have a religious exemption from vaccination requirements, (2) FY 22 tuition and fees rates, and (3) the anticipated FY 22 percent of first-year Connecticut State Universities students who plan to live on-campus and therefore will pay the FY 22 average room and board rate of \$13,548.

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

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.