

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6685

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONVEYANCE OF A PARCEL OF STATE LAND

Title: IN THE TOWN OF NORTH HAVEN.

Vote Date: 5/19/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 5/14/2021

File No.: 766

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Sponsors of the Bill:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

Reasons for Bill:

To convey a parcel of state land in the town of North Haven to Area Cooperative Educational Services for the purposes of a magnet school or other educational purposes.

Response from Administration/Agency:

Melissa McCaw, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management:

OPM is opposed to this bill as written. The language states that the executive director of the Office of Higher Education shall convey, however, said office does not have custody and control of this property; rather it is controlled by the Board of Regents. Additionally, the language needs to include a provision that the existing Board of Regents (Gateway Community College) automotive operation can continue at this site, at no cost, until a new location for the operation can be found. The conveyance language should provide that an agreement for conveyance be drafted and agreed upon before any conveyance can occur.

Senator Paul Cicarella, Connecticut General Assembly:

Sen. Cicarella states ACES has been an asset to the North Haven community for decades with the goal of providing our children with opportunities for learning beyond the traditional classroom experience. ACES programs put a premium on innovation, education and leadership for students. These programs develop the next generation of our workforce, which is critical to the economic prosperity of our state. This conveyance is also beneficial because the surrounding athletic fields and grounds will be utilized for North Haven youth sports and activities, in addition to being utilized by all North Haven residents.

Nature and Sources of Support:

Sean Bradbury, Senior Director of Government Relations and External Affairs, CSCU:

The property subject to this conveyance bill is home to the North Haven Campus of Gateway Community College. Of the overall 170,000 square foot North Haven facility, the Automotive Technology program continues to utilize approximately 65,000 square feet. The unused building area is currently leased to Area Cooperative Educational Services. This conveyance presents a mutually beneficial arrangement for both ACES and Gateway Community College which will save money for both organizations. They also suggested several language changes regarding issues like jurisdiction.

Thomas Danehy, Executive Director, Area Cooperative Educational Services:

This transfer of property will allow ACES to continue to support parent choice and make for non-zip code dependent addresses as parents select where to send their children to school. While the school provides a state of art curriculum, the aesthetics and design of the school needs reinventing and redesigning for an elementary and middle school setting. While Gateway Community College still uses the automotive mechanics center on the premises, we intend to keep them there should the bill pass. This agreement will allow Gateway to continue its program until it finds other appropriate space for the program.

Dawn Zimmer: The strong foundation that her two daughters gained by being Wintergreen students is irreplaceable and has paved the road for their very successful academic accomplishments. As a family, they often look back on the fond experiences and memories of the time that we spent as part of the Wintergreen community. The school is intertwined into who we are as a family and the impact on our daughters will be lifelong.

Isabelle Zimmer: The education received at Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School, which was technology-based, are things she still uses today. She was taught presentation skills, a language, as well as how to think critically and independently, things that most districts don't teach until middle school or maybe even high school. The staff at WIMS is also what made her education there so worthwhile. She hopes that other students can enjoy their time there as much as she did because it was truly exceptional.

Nature and Sources of Opposition:

None expressed.

Reported by: Dallas Emerle

Date: 5-19-21