

Appropriations Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-885

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Title: FOR GENERAL GOVERNMENT.

Vote Date: 4/21/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/26/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Governor Lamont

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill implements Governor Lamont's budget recommendations for various general government operations.

Substitute language:

The bill was amended to delete several sections (Secs. 1,3,4,7,10 and 11-54) in order to comply with the Appropriations Committee budget and committee leadership policy concerns.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Melissa McCaw, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management – Secretary McCaw submitted detailed testimony in support of the bill.

Kurt Westby, Commissioner, Department of Labor – Commissioner Westby testified in support of Sections 11 through 54, which create the Office of Workforce Strategy, to be located in the Department of Economic and Community Development for administrative purposed only. He applauded Governor Lamont's efforts to create a statewide workforce system that will be responsive to the demands of the state's economy and that will maximize the potential of the state's workforce.

David Lehman, Commissioner, Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) – Commissioner Lehman spoke in favor of the creation of the Office of Workforce

Strategy. He stated that the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) will coordinate the implementation of the Governor's Workforce Council's strategic plan while building on the state's efforts to support workers impacted by COVID-19 through the development of short-term training programs for in-demand jobs. He added that DECD will partner with OWS to help attract and grow companies that have workforce needs in the state.

Scott Gaul, Chief Data Officer, Office of Policy and Management – Mr. Gaul spoke in favor of the creation of the Office of Workforce Strategy (Sections 11 and 50). He stated that those provisions were needed to improve the quality of workforce data and to provide measurement and evaluation of program outcomes in education and workforce development, as well as improvements in interagency data sharing.

Eulalia Garcia, District Administrator, Department of Correction (DOC) – Ms. Garcia spoke in favor of the establishment of a Chief Workforce Officer and an Office of Workforce Strategy. She testified that DOC believes a Chief Workforce Officer will assist the agency in working with state and federal governmental entities, private sector employers and non-profit agencies in providing employment & workforce training services to Returning Citizens. Ms. Garcia added that the OWS could assist DOC in selecting vocational education programming in the Unified School District #1, which would assist in providing the work skills necessary for incarcerated persons to be successfully employed upon their release.

Mark Argosh, Chair, Governor's Workforce Council – Mr. Argosh spoke in favor of statutorily establishing the Office of Workforce Strategy and creating the position of Chief Workforce Officer. Mr. Argosh testified that the primary goal of the Governor's Workforce Council and the Office of Workforce Strategy is to ensure that Connecticut develops "the most accessible, equitable, and high quality workforce in the country". He explained that nearly all states have the equivalent to an Office of Workforce Strategy. He commended the staff of OWS for its leadership in coordinating the CARES funded job training programs with the state's workforce development boards and remarked that is of great importance that OWS has the organizational flexibility it needs to take on a coordination role.

Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Executive Director, Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) – Ms. Vallieres spoke in support of statutorily establishing the Office of Workforce Strategy and creating the position of Chief Workforce Officer. Ms. Vallieres testified that since the inception of the Governor's Workforce Council, the Office of Workforce Strategy has taken the lead on coordinating different stakeholders across the state and organizing them into groups and committees to execute on the goals and objectives of the initiatives in the Council's strategic plan. She spoke of how strong alignment between business partners and workforce training providers is critical to the success of a workforce development system. Ms. Vallieres explained that one of the key components missing in previous workforce development programs in the state was a coordinated effort to engage businesses directly on how training and certification programs were configured so that the programs were aligned with the actual needs of businesses that have open jobs to fill.

Sibongile Magubane, Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles – Commissioner Magubane spoke in support of Section 2, which makes changes to CGS Section 22a-201c) that governs the collection of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fee (GGRF) on new vehicles, first-time vehicle registrations and vehicle registration renewals. She stated that the change in section 2 is necessary to remedy an inconsistency that occurred during the 2019 legislative

session. During that session, the legislature passed Public Act 19-117, which raised the amount of the GGRF for new and first-time registrations, as well as for registration renewals. Those fees were to be imposed for two-year registrations. However, following the passage of PA 19-117, the legislature also passed PA 19-165, which increased the duration of registration periods to three years. Section 2 of SB 885 seeks to make the imposition of the GGRF consistent with the registration provisions in Title 14.

[Major General Francis J. Evon, Jr.](#), Adjutant General, Military Department – Major General Evon provided testimony in support of Section 4 of the bill. The language reflects the Military Department's longstanding efforts to clarify the Governor's authority with respect to the Connecticut State Guard, its organization and use. He cited the State Auditors' 2012-2013 and subsequent AG's opinion, which indicated that the current statute needed to be revised in order to best serve the interests of the state.

[Department of Social Services](#) – DSS submitted testimony in support of Section 1 of the bill, which would allow for state agencies to contract directly with other states. According to DSS, the Office of the Attorney General has advised the department that all state agencies require explicit legislative authority to contract with other states. Currently, DSS lacks this legislative authority, which has impaired the department's ability to pursue opportunities with other states that would provide valuable services to DSS and its clients.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

The following people/organizations expressed support for the creation of the Office of Workforce Strategy and the Chief Workforce Officer. They spoke of the critical role of the OWS in coordinating the efforts to bring together all of the state's workforce development stakeholders and in developing pathways to meet the talent needs of employers:

[Susan Adamson](#), Partner in Social Venture Partners-CT

[David Allon](#), Partner in Social Venture Partners-CT; Member, Governor's Workforce Council

[Ronald F. Angelo](#), President and CEO, CT Center for Advanced Technology

[Cindi Bigelow](#), President and CEO, Bigelow Tea

[Andrew Bond](#), General Dynamics Electric Boat

[Marna P. Borgstrom](#), CEO, Yale New Haven Health

[Peter L. Denious](#), President and CEO, AdvanceCT

[Jeffrey Flaks](#), CEO and President, Hartford Healthcare

[Jennifer Gerber](#), Member, Equity and Access Committee, Governor's Workforce Council

[Maggie Hulce](#), Senior VP & GM of Enterprise, Indeed

[Margaret Keane](#), CEO, Synchrony Financial

[Jim Loree](#), CEO, Stanley Black & Decker

[Shannon Marimon](#), Executive Director, ReadyCT

[Marcia Proto](#), Executive Director, CT League for Nursing

[Peter Salovey](#), President, Yale University

[Sylvia Shepard](#), Partner, Social Venture Partners-CT

[Robert Trefry](#), Chair, Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS)

[Bill Villano](#), et.al, CT Workforce Development Council

[Jennifer Widness](#), President Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
[Dr. Karen Wosczyzna-Birch](#), Executive Director of both the Connecticut College of
Technology (COT) and the Center for Next Generation Manufacturing
[Ashley Zane](#), Government Affairs Associate, CBIA
[Hartford Foundation for Public Giving](#)

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Sal Luciano](#), **President CT AFL-CIO** – Mr. Luciano submitted testimony expressing his concerns regarding moving the development of workforce strategies from the Department of Labor (DOL) to the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). He offered that DOL has provided "one stop shopping" for people seeking employment opportunities and education and training options. As such, he believes that DECD should collaborate with DOL, as he stated that DOL has "significant expertise and experience" with workforce matters.

Reported by: Susan Keane

Date: May 10, 2021