

Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-285

AN ACT CONCERNING TIME LIMITS IN THE TEMPORARY FAMILY

Title: ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DURING A STATE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.

Vote Date: 3/17/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/8/2022

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Section 347 of P.A. 21-2 of the June 2021 Special Session amended General Statutes § 17b112(c) to provide that months during which a household receives Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) shall not count towards the time limits for such program. This bill allows the Department of Social Services Commissioner to exempt from the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program's 21-month time limit, benefits received during a state public health emergency declared by the governor or the General Assembly, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford, MD, Department of Social Services urges the passage of this bill. The testimony provides background on the previous legislation. This bill clarifies that months during which a household receives TFA during a state public health emergency do not count towards such program's time limits, regardless of whether such emergency is declared by the Governor or through an act of the General Assembly. Overall, DSS is supportive and in favor of this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Alison Weir, Policy Advocate and Attorney Greater Hartford Legal Aid is in support of this bill but urges the legislature to go even farther in making the program more successful by extending the time limits to 60 months. Additionally stated, Greater Hartford Legal Aid advocate lawmakers to replace the present outdated eligibility standard with one based on

the federal poverty level and eliminate the program's asset constraints. Instead of a scooping back of funds that should be going to the most in need, the reduced caseloads should inspire further investment and inquiry into ways to make the programs more sensitive to poverty and useful for families and low-income disabled individuals in Connecticut.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Connecticut Resident, David Godbout, opposes this bill. As stated in the testimony, all proposed bills within the Connecticut General Assembly are in violation of citizens' 4th Amendment Rights, citing the fact that many spaces in the Capitol and Legislative Office Buildings are currently restricted.

Reported by: Taylor Williams

Date: 03/25/2022