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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 6566**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING FOR THE DEBT-FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill delays, by one month, an annual deadline for reporting on the state's debt-free community college program (a.k.a., the Pledge to Advance Connecticut (PACT) program, see BACKGROUND). By law, the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) must report each fall and spring semester to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and Appropriations committees on the:

1. number of qualifying students (a) enrolled during each semester, (b) receiving minimum awards, and (c) receiving awards for the unpaid portion of eligible institutional costs;
2. average number of credit hours that qualifying students (a) enrolled in each semester and (b) completed in each semester;
3. average award amount to be made to qualifying students for the unpaid portion of eligible institutional costs; and
4. completion rates of qualifying students who receive awards by degree or certificate program.

Under current law, BOR must submit this report by October 1 for the fall semester and March 1 for the spring semester. The bill moves the fall semester reporting deadline out one month to November 1.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***PACT***

Generally, under PACT, Connecticut high school graduates who

enroll as first-time, full-time regional community-technical college students are eligible to receive awards that (1) cover the unpaid portion of the institutional costs (i.e., tuition and fees minus scholarships; grants; and federal, state, and institutional aid awarded to the student excluding loans) or (2) provide a minimum award of \$250, whichever is greater. Qualifying part-time students (i.e., students enrolled at a regional community-technical college carrying at least six but no more than 11 credit hours in a semester) can receive awards that (1) cover the unpaid portion of the institutional costs or (2) provide a minimum award of \$150, whichever is greater. Provided on a semester basis, the awards must apply to the first 72 credit hours earned by a student in the first 48 months of community college enrollment in a degree-granting or certificate program (CGS § 10a-174).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (02/28/2023)