



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 119

January Session, 2023

Substitute House Bill No. 6773

House of Representatives, March 20, 2023

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through REP. HADDAD of the 54th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE NEEDS OF HOUSING INSECURE STUDENTS AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) As used in this section, (1)
2 "housing insecurity" means the lack of security caused by high housing
3 costs relative to income, poor housing quality, unstable neighborhoods,
4 overcrowding or moving frequently, and (2) "public institution of
5 higher education" means the constituent units of the state system of
6 higher education identified in subdivisions (1) and (2) of section 10a-1
7 of the general statutes.

8 (b) On or before January 1, 2024, the Board of Trustees of The
9 University of Connecticut and the Board of Regents for Higher
10 Education shall each develop and adopt a policy on students at the
11 public institutions of higher education governed by said boards who are
12 homeless or experiencing housing insecurity. Said boards shall consult
13 with students, faculty and staff of such institutions and local and state

14 organizations with subject matter expertise in homelessness and
15 housing insecurity to develop such policy. Said boards shall review such
16 policy at least annually and update such policy as deemed necessary
17 and after considering the results of a survey administered pursuant to
18 subsection (c) of this section.

19 (c) Not later than the start of the fall semester of 2024, and annually
20 thereafter, each public institution of higher education shall administer a
21 survey to each student enrolled at such institution for the purpose of
22 collecting data on the number of students who are homeless or
23 experiencing housing insecurity and the causes of and reasons for such
24 homelessness or housing insecurity. Such survey shall include, but need
25 not be limited to, questions regarding a student's (1) demographic
26 background, including age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, marital
27 status, income, education and employment; (2) specific barriers to
28 accessing housing; and (3) awareness or use of community or
29 institutional resources to address homelessness and housing insecurity
30 and any barriers to accessing such resources. Based on the results of
31 such survey, each such institution shall amend any existing services or
32 programs or establish new services or programs to address the needs of
33 students who are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity.

34 (d) Each public institution of higher education in the state shall: (1)
35 Within available appropriations, make grants or provide other financial
36 assistance to students of the institution who are homeless or
37 experiencing housing insecurity to be used for housing costs at times
38 when classes are in session at the institution; (2) within available
39 appropriations, make grants or provide other financial assistance to
40 such students to be used for housing costs at times when the institution
41 is closed for a period of more than seven days; (3) establish a team
42 comprised of students, faculty and staff of the institution that is
43 responsible for working with and supporting students of the institution
44 who are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity and provide
45 information regarding appropriate housing and mental health resources
46 for such students upon graduation; (4) designate a staff member to serve
47 as a liaison for the institution and whose duties include identifying

48 appropriate housing and mental health resources available to such
 49 students and using trauma-informed practices to mentor such students;
 50 (5) designate a staff member, in addition to the staff member designated
 51 pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection, to serve as a liaison for
 52 the institution for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer students
 53 of the institution who are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity;
 54 (6) provide trainings on trauma-informed practices to enable faculty and
 55 staff of the institution to more adequately respond to students of the
 56 institution who are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity; and (7)
 57 provide or offer financial assistance for such students to receive medical
 58 care and mental health counseling to address issues surrounding
 59 homelessness or housing insecurity.

60 (e) Not later than February 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Board
 61 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut and the Board of Regents
 62 for Higher Education shall each submit, in accordance with the
 63 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, the policy adopted
 64 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section and a report
 65 on the status of the implementation of the provisions of subsection (d)
 66 of this section to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
 67 having cognizance of matters relating to higher education.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	New section

HED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
UConn	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Board of Regents for Higher Education	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which addresses various issues related to housing insecurity for the state's public college and university students, will result in a cost to UConn and the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR).

The bill requires public colleges and universities to provide grants or other financial assistance to students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity to use for housing costs. Additionally, the bill requires public colleges and universities to provide additional resources and support, including financial assistance for related medical care and mental health counseling. This will result in a cost to both UConn and BOR, as there are currently no appropriations available for these programs. The scope of the costs will vary based on the number of students identified, the housing costs that will be covered by the grant funds, and the other health and counselling services that are provided. The estimated housing cost at UConn for the nine-month academic year is \$8,408, and the corresponding housing cost at the Connecticut State Universities is \$14,076.

The bill also requires public colleges and universities to provide trainings on trauma-informed practices to enable the institution's staff

and faculty to respond to homelessness more adequately or housing insecure students. This will result in a cost, as the institutions currently do not have the expertise necessary to provide this training. The cost of the training is unknown but is anticipated to be less than \$10,000 based on similar trainings.

The bill also requires each public college and university to annually administer, starting by fall 2024, a survey to enrolled students to collect data on the number of homeless or housing insecure students. This is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as they have the expertise necessary to do so.

The Out Years

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

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6773*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE NEEDS OF HOUSING INSECURE STUDENTS AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill establishes various requirements to assess and address housing insecurity for the state's public college and university students. It defines "housing insecurity" as the lack of security caused by high housing costs relative to income, poor housing quality, unstable neighborhoods, overcrowding, or moving frequently.

Specifically, the bill requires public colleges and universities to do the following:

1. starting by the fall 2024 semester, annually administer a survey to enrolled students to collect data on the number of students who are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity;
2. based on the survey results, amend existing services or programs or establish new services or programs to address the needs of these students;
3. within available appropriations, provide grants or other financial assistance to these students to use for housing costs when (a) classes are in session and (b) the institution is closed for more than seven days; and
4. provide additional resources and supports to these students, including, among other things, financial assistance for related medical care and mental health counseling and a support team of students, faculty, and staff.

Additionally, the bill also requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) and the UConn Board of Trustees (BOT), by January 1, 2024, to develop and adopt a policy on homeless or housing insecure students. When doing so, the boards must consult with students, institutional staff and faculty, and local and state organizations with subject matter expertise in homelessness and housing insecurity. The boards must also annually review and update the policy as they deem necessary and after considering survey results.

Lastly, the bill requires BOR and BOT, starting by February 1, 2024, to annually report on the (1) adopted policy on student homelessness and housing insecurity and (2) status of implementing the services and resources required under the bill to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

HOUSING INSECURITY SURVEY

Under the bill, each public college and university must annually administer, starting by the fall 2024 semester, a survey to enrolled students to collect data on the number of homeless or housing insecure students and the causes and reasons.

Specifically, the survey must include questions about a student's (1) demographic background, including age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, marital status, income, education, and employment; (2) specific barriers to accessing housing; and (3) awareness or use of community or institutional resources to address homelessness and housing insecurity and barriers to accessing these resources.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

The bill requires each public college and university to:

1. establish a team of students and institutional staff and faculty that is responsible for working with and supporting homeless or housing insecure students, and provide them with information about appropriate housing and mental health resources upon graduation;

2. designate a staff member who serves as a liaison for the institution and whose duties include identifying appropriate housing and mental health resources available to these students and using trauma-informed practices to mentor them;
3. designate an additional staff member to serve as a liaison for the institution's homeless or housing insecure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students;
4. provide trainings on trauma-informed practices to enable the institution's staff and faculty to more adequately respond to homeless or housing insecure students; and
5. provide or offer financial assistance for students to receive medical care and mental health counseling to address issues surrounding their homelessness or housing insecurity.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 18 Nay 4 (03/07/2023)