



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 98

January Session, 2023

Substitute Senate Bill No. 922

Senate, March 16, 2023

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through SEN. SLAP of the 5th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT PROHIBITING AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM WITHHOLDING TRANSCRIPTS.

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,
2 "debt" means an obligation, claim or sum that is due or alleged to be due
3 to an institution of higher education from a student. "Debt" does not
4 include a fee, if any, charged for the actual cost of providing a transcript
5 to a student.

6 (b) No institution of higher education in the state shall (1) upon
7 receiving a request or permission to provide a transcript from a student
8 who is currently or was formerly enrolled at such institution, refuse to
9 provide a transcript to an employer or prospective employer of such
10 student or to any branch of the military service of the United States
11 because such student owes a debt, (2) condition the provision of a
12 transcript to an employer, prospective employer or any branch of the
13 military service of the United States on the payment of a debt, (3) charge

14 a fee for the provision of a transcript to an employer, prospective
 15 employer or any branch of the military service of the United States that
 16 is higher than the actual cost of providing the transcript because such
 17 student owes a debt, or (4) use the provision of a transcript to an
 18 employer, prospective employer or any branch of the military service of
 19 the United States as a method to collect a debt.

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

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Subsec. (b)(1), "to provide a transcript" was added after "permission" for clarity, and in Subsec. (b)(4), "issuance" was changed to "provision" for internal consistency.

HED *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

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 \$
Board of Regents for Higher Education	Other - Revenue Loss	Minimal	Minimal
Uconn	Other - Revenue Loss	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which establishes requirements regarding postsecondary transcripts sought by employers or potential employers, is anticipated to result in an annual revenue loss to the University of Connecticut and the Board of Regents beginning in FY 24.

The bill is likely to reduce the amount of debt from current and past students that institutions collect. The University of Connecticut currently requires students to pay off institutional debts, or in some cases to make progress payments, before a transcript is issued for any reason, while the Board of Regents institutions may release transcripts directly to employers when a student has debt. The bill requires all institutions of higher education to provide a transcript to an employer or prospective employer: (1) regardless of any student debt to the institution, and (2) on the same terms as other transcript requests related to students who do not owe the institution.

The extent of the constituent units' revenue loss associated with the bill depends on to what extent employer-driven transcript needs currently result in students paying off institutional debt, which is

unknown. The impact to the Board of Regents institutions is likely to be minimal, given current practices, while the impact to the University of Connecticut may be higher but cannot be determined.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation in transcript fees, changes in the number of transcript requests for employment reasons, and the level of institutional debt held by students.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 922*****AN ACT PROHIBITING AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM WITHHOLDING TRANSCRIPTS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill generally prohibits Connecticut higher education institutions from withholding a student's transcript from a student's employer, prospective employer, or a branch of the U.S. military because the student owes the institution a debt.

Specifically, under the bill, Connecticut higher education institutions cannot:

1. refuse to give a current or former student's transcript to one of these entities because he or she owes the institution a debt,
2. condition a transcript's release to one of these entities upon debt payment,
3. charge a higher fee for providing the transcript to one of these entities because the student owes a debt, or
4. use transcript release as a debt collection method.

Under the bill, "debt" is an obligation, claim, or sum that the student owes or allegedly owes to a higher education institution, but excludes any fee related to the actual cost of releasing a transcript.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18 Nay 4 (02/28/2023)