

# Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5737

AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE FOR RETIRED PART-TIME

**Title:** FACULTY OF THE STATE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION.

**Vote Date:** 3/14/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Change of Reference to Appropriations

**PH Date:** 2/16/2023

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,  
Rep. Mike Demicco, 21<sup>st</sup> District,  
Rep. Gary Turco, 27<sup>th</sup> District.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

Part-time faculty in Connecticut's higher education institutions don't get health insurance benefits, except for those actively teaching nine credit hours or more per semester. This bill aims to change that by requiring the Comptroller to enroll any part-time professional employed by the Connecticut State University System (CSUS) in the state's group health insurance plan, provided they've taught a minimum of 220 credit hours across any public institution of higher education in the state's system and choose to participate. The bill mandates the Comptroller and the Board of Regents for Higher Education to create a funding formula for retirement contributions. The need for adjunct professors to receive health insurance is clear from similar legislation that passed out of Committee in 2021 and public testimony heard this year. The bill would allow adjunct professors who have taught the equivalent of 12 semesters worth (220/18 credit hours) of full-time courses to receive benefits, regardless of their adjunct status. It would also address the issue of providing coverage to adjunct professors who have taught 220 credit hours throughout their career but don't meet the 9 credits per semester threshold.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Adjunct Professor, Anonymous:](#) Supports this bill as they have worked for the state's colleges and universities for decades since 1995 and believes that they are entitled to health insurance benefits when they retire.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Adjunct Professor, Christopher Montes, MA, FDC:](#) supports this bill as he has been teaching at Central Connecticut State University since 1995 and has taught over 225 credit hours. It was stated that the author typically teaches one or two courses per semester and cannot teach three courses at the same university due to the threshold for full-time benefits. It was also stated that they have brought in approximately \$54,260,375 to the state of Connecticut through an average of \$5541 per credit hour since 1995, with each course averaging 35 students, of which he has earned approximately \$526,250, or 6% of the gross revenue. It was also stated that part-time faculty in the Connecticut State University System do not receive health insurance, retirement benefits, paid time off, paid holidays, or sick days as such it is only fair for part-time faculty who teach 180 credit hours to have the same state-sponsored health insurance at retirement as full-time faculty.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Adjunct Professor, Santo A. Pirruccio:](#) supports this bill because as a long-term, part-time faculty member at CCSU, the injustice in pay and benefits is significant despite years of dedication. It is stated that part-time faculty members who have dedicated decades of service deserve access to healthcare in their retirement. It was also stated that from a profit and loss perspective, part-time faculty members generate enough gross profit that should substantially cover any costs in providing retiree healthcare coverage. It was further stated that providing retiree healthcare benefits has a positive effect on adjunct faculty quality, attraction, and retention.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Part-Time Professor, Anonymous:](#) Supports this bill because despite doing what full-time professors do, they have experienced wage theft, unfair working conditions, and disrespect from tenured professors, without health benefits. It is stated that these factors affect their students indirectly and affects the quality of work they can give. It is further stated that adjunct professors deserve retirement health benefits, and it is a travesty that part-time professors are denied healthcare.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Professor & Chair of Sociology, CSU-AAUP, Member, A. Fiona Pearson:](#) supports this bill as she began her teaching career in Connecticut as a part-time professor at Southern Connecticut State University and Naugatuck Valley Community College and recalled the instability of those early years and the challenges they faced with income and healthcare costs. It was stated that their department has worked with several part-time faculty who have become integral members of their university community and have taught for over 15 years, with some teaching for more than 25 years. It was also stated that their dedication and service, part-time faculty currently receive no retirement health insurance upon leaving state service, unlike their full-time counterparts. It is further stated that the Committee should pass this legislation calling it, the least that should be provided for faculty who have demonstrated their commitment to the CSCU system and the students of Connecticut.

[Central Connecticut State University \(CCSU\), Professor, CSU-AAUP, Acting Vice President, John O'Connor:](#) supports this bill because he was once an adjunct professor himself, and

notes that many professors work as part-time instructors at some point in their career, but this is often a precarious position with low pay and no benefits. It is stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the issue of healthcare disparities for part-time faculty, who only receive benefits when teaching nine or more credits per semester. It is also stated that this bill would provide greater equity by expanding healthcare benefits to all part-time professors, especially those in the Connecticut State University System.

[Southern Connecticut State University \(SCSU\), Adjunct Professor, Biology Department,](#)

[Carolyn Alling:](#) supports this bill as she has been teaching Biology at Southern Connecticut State University for over 30 years, often teaching 6.5 to 8 credit hours per semester, and 3 semesters full time as a special appointment, and has amassed well over the credit hours suggested for full-time faculty to retire with full healthcare. It was stated that despite years of dedicated service, Ms. Alling will have no health benefits when retiring, and she asks for equity by being given access to full healthcare at retirement based on the 180 or more credit hours that the rest of the faculty receive. It was also stated that the Connecticut State Legislature is eligible for state-sponsored health insurance upon leaving state service after ten years of service, for the rest of their lives.

[Southern Connecticut State University \(SCSU\), Assistant Professor of English, Dr. Andrew](#)

[M. Richmond:](#) supports this bill because adjunct members deserve access to health care in retirement, and passing this bill is an opportunity to provide support and equity for these dedicated educators. It is stated that adjunct faculty cover a diverse array of classes and have a significant impact on the success of students, especially those in their first two years of college. Furthermore, many part-time colleagues devote time beyond normal work hours to prepare classes and teaching is often their only form of employment, as it often leaves no time for other jobs, and no pay between semesters. It is also stated that adjunct professors are frequently left without health care due to cost-saving measures and variable enrollment which negatively impacts their welfare and affects the success of middle- and working-class students.

[Southern Connecticut State University \(SCSU\), Professor of Social Welfare Policy & Community Organization, SCSU-AAUP, Treasurer, CSU-AAUP, Member, Dr. Stephen](#)

[Monroe Tomczak L.M.S.W.:](#) supports this bill because as a former part-time faculty member, he is concerned with the issues faced by part-time colleagues. It was stated that the lack of health insurance is a critical issue for retired contingent part-time faculty who may face age-related health problems. Furthermore, it was noted that currently, only employed faculty teaching nine or more credit hours per semester for 10 years or more are eligible for lifetime health insurance upon leaving state service, so part-time faculty teaching less than nine credit hours per semester receive no benefits, even if they have accumulated over 180 credit hours.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Lukas Houle**

**Date: 3/20/2023**