

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6576
AN ACT STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER
Title: NONPARENT RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN.
Vote Date: 02/28/2023
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 2/21/2023
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill would increase the Temporary Family Assistance payment for child-only cases headed by a nonparent caretaker who is the child's legal guardian.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Connecticut Dept. of Social Services, Ms. Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner: This bill is similar to one proposed in 2019 and the estimated cost at that time was \$17.6 million dollars. The Dept. would have to update this estimate to the current time. Given the significant and unbudgeted cost the Dept. must **oppose** this legislation.

Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity, Mr. Michael Werner, Lead Aging Policy Analyst: Their testimony was in **support** of this proposal. The bill expands eligibility in the existing temporary family assistance program under the DSS to include grandparents, legal guardians and other nonparent caretaker relatives. The bill provides monetary assistance equal to the monthly foster care rate per child and is crucial for families who are already engaged in multigenerational caregiving.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Voices for Children, Ms. Lauren Ruth, Research and Policy Fellow: They offered testimony in **support** of this legislation. In Connecticut approximately 17,667 grandparents are primary caregivers for their grandchildren. In communities with a large concentration of lower-income people— including Hartford and New Haven — the percent of

grandparents who live with their grandchildren and are responsible for the grandchildren approaches 50%. In an early survey conducted by Connecticut Voices for Children, three-quarter of relative guardians reported that their financial situation become worse after becoming a guardian, 38% reported that their work situation became worse, and a quarter reported that their health deteriorated. Recent national research shows that these same patterns still exist for nonparent guardians. When relative caregivers step up to care for children in their families the State saves money through fewer court fees and less need for case management and social worker involvement.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None

Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk

Date: 3/3/23