



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 6841

LCO No. 5170



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Introduced by:
(PS)

AN ACT CONCERNING FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

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

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) There is established a Fire
2 Service Youth Program Advisory Board. The board shall be within the
3 Office of State Fire Administrator for administrative purposes only. The
4 board shall consist of the following members:
- 5 (1) The director of fire training in the Office of State Fire
6 Administrator, who shall serve as chairperson of the board;
- 7 (2) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;
- 8 (3) The Labor Commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;
- 9 (4) The Chief Workforce Officer of the Office of Workforce Strategy,
10 or such officer's designee;
- 11 (5) The director of the Office of Emergency Medical Services within
12 the Department of Public Health, or the director's designee;

13 (6) The executive director of the Technical Education and Career
14 System, or such executive director's designee;

15 (7) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
16 one of whom has expertise in fire services;

17 (8) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
18 whom has expertise in occupational safety;

19 (9) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
20 Representatives, who has expertise in legal issues relating to firefighters
21 or emergency medical services;

22 (10) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who has
23 expertise in public health in matters relating to firefighters or emergency
24 medical services;

25 (11) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
26 Representatives;

27 (12) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; and

28 (13) One appointed by the Governor.

29 (b) The board shall:

30 (1) Advise the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control;

31 (2) Develop a standard curriculum for grades nine through twelve,
32 inclusive, emphasizing the importance of public safety and community
33 service, and a plan for public safety tracks for technical high schools to
34 offer to students, including specific tracks and certifications for
35 firefighting and emergency medical services;

36 (3) Introduce the curriculum and implement the public safety tracks
37 developed pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection as a pilot
38 program in one technical high school not later than July 1, 2025, and
39 make such curriculum and tracks available to other technical high
40 schools and other high schools;

41 (4) Coordinate state funding to technical high schools and other high
42 schools to provide such curriculum and tracks;

43 (5) Establish a training program for fire service instructors in
44 technical high schools and other high schools;

45 (6) Support fire departments that provide or seek to provide cadet or
46 explorer programs; and

47 (7) Expand and implement components of the United States Fire
48 Administration fire service apprenticeship program.

49 (c) The board shall employ a full-time youth program coordinator,
50 who shall coordinate and oversee technical high school and other high
51 school curriculum and public safety track programs, implement state
52 standards and a best practices guide for such programs, ensure the
53 consistency and continuity of such programs and oversee the hiring and
54 training of program instructors.

55 (d) The board shall employ a full-time cadet or explorer program
56 coordinator, who shall coordinate and oversee cadet or explorer
57 programs, implement state standards and a best practices guide for such
58 programs, encourage establishment and expansion of such programs
59 throughout the state and encourage the expanded use of regional fire
60 schools for such programs.

61 (e) In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and each fiscal year
62 thereafter, the board shall pay five thousand dollars to (1) each technical
63 high school or other high school that operates, or plans to operate in the
64 following fiscal year, a program with public safety tracks pursuant to
65 the curriculum developed under subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this
66 section, and (2) each fire department that operates, or plans to operate
67 in the following fiscal year, a cadet or explorer program.

68 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The Commissioner of Emergency
69 Services and Public Protection shall appoint a firefighter recruitment
70 and training coordinator in each emergency preparedness region

71 designated by the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland
72 Security within the Department of Emergency Services and Public
73 Protection. Each such coordinator shall (1) recruit individuals for careers
74 in firefighting or manage such recruitment programs, and (2) provide
75 training assistance to fire departments and, upon request of a fire
76 department, coordinate or conduct training programs.

77 Sec. 3. Section 7-323o of the general statutes is repealed and the
78 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

79 (a) There is established the position of State Fire Administrator who
80 shall be recommended by the Commission on Fire Prevention and
81 Control and appointed by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and
82 Public Protection and who shall: (1) Carry out the requirements of
83 section 7-323n; (2) administer federal funds and grants allocated to the
84 fire services of the state; (3) provide technical assistance and guidance
85 to fire fighting forces of any state or municipal agency; (4) develop a
86 centralized information and audiovisual library regarding fire
87 prevention and control; (5) accumulate, disseminate and analyze fire
88 prevention data; (6) recommend specifications of fire service materials
89 and equipment and assist in the purchasing thereof; (7) assist in mutual
90 aid coordination; (8) coordinate fire programs with those of the other
91 states; (9) assist in communications coordination; (10) establish and
92 maintain a fire service information program; and (11) review the
93 purchase of fire apparatus or equipment at state institutions, facilities
94 and properties and, on and after July 1, 1985, coordinate the training and
95 education of fire service personnel at such institutions, facilities and
96 properties. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to apply
97 to forest fire prevention and control programs administered by the
98 Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection pursuant to
99 sections 23-33 to 23-57, inclusive.

100 (b) (1) The State Fire Administrator shall develop, or enter into an
101 agreement with a vendor to develop, facilities across the state that
102 provide opportunities to train for and take the candidate physical ability
103 test for firefighters throughout the year. The administrator shall seek to

104 develop such facilities at multiple locations that are designed to improve
105 opportunities for, and access to, training and test taking, and shall give
106 a preference to locations at regional fire school sites. The administrator
107 shall provide equipment for such training and test taking at any regional
108 fire school or state facility that offers such training and test taking.

109 (2) The director of fire training within the Office of the State Fire
110 Administrator shall act as coordinator of such training and oversee such
111 training and testing facilities.

112 Sec. 4. Section 7-323p of the general statutes is repealed and the
113 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

114 (a) The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
115 shall (1) maintain and operate a state fire school that shall serve as the
116 training and education facility for the Commission on Fire Prevention
117 and Control, [and] (2) provide training and educational services in
118 accordance with the standards established pursuant to section 7-323l₂
119 and (3) provide instructors and facilities sufficient to conduct training
120 for at least three classes of recruits at the state fire school each year. The
121 use of any hazardous material, as defined in section 29-307a, except a
122 virgin fuel, is prohibited in the simulation of any fire. The Department
123 of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall, in consultation with
124 the commission, fix fees for training and education programs and
125 sessions and for such other purposes deemed necessary for the
126 operation and support of the school. Such fees shall be used solely for
127 training and education purposes.

128 (b) The department may establish and maintain a state fire school
129 training and education extension account, which shall be a separate
130 account within the General Fund. The account shall contain any moneys
131 required by law to be deposited in the account. The account shall be
132 used for the operation of such training and education programs and
133 sessions as said department may establish, for the purchase of such
134 equipment as is required for use in the operation of such programs and
135 sessions, and, within available funding, for (1) reimbursement to

136 municipalities and municipal fire departments for one-half of the costs
137 of Firefighter I certification and recruit training of municipal volunteer
138 and paid fire service personnel, and (2) reimbursement to state agencies
139 for one-half of the costs of Firefighter I certification and recruit training
140 of state agency fire service personnel. All proceeds derived from the
141 operation of the training and education programs and sessions shall be
142 deposited in the General Fund and shall be credited to and become a
143 part of the resources of the account. All direct expenses incurred in the
144 conduct of the training, certification and education programs and
145 sessions shall be charged, and any payments of interest and principal of
146 bonds or any sums transferable to any fund for the payment of interest
147 and principal of bonds and any cost of equipment for such operations
148 may be charged, against the account on order of the State Comptroller.
149 Any balance of receipts above expenditures shall remain in the account
150 to be used by the department for training and education programs and
151 sessions, and for the acquisition, as provided by section 4b-21, alteration
152 and repairs of real property for educational facilities, except such sums
153 as may be required to be transferred from time to time to any fund for
154 the redemption of bonds and payment of interest on bonds, provided
155 repairs, alterations or additions to educational facilities costing fifty
156 thousand dollars or less shall require the approval of the Commissioner
157 of Administrative Services, and capital projects costing over fifty
158 thousand dollars shall require the approval of the General Assembly or,
159 when the General Assembly is not in session, of the Finance Advisory
160 Committee.

161 (c) The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection may
162 establish and maintain a state fire school auxiliary services account,
163 which shall be a separate account within the General Fund. The account
164 shall be used for the operation, maintenance and repair of auxiliary
165 service facilities and for such other auxiliary activities of the state fire
166 school as said department determines. The proceeds of such activities
167 shall be deposited in the General Fund and shall be credited to and
168 become a part of the resources of the account. All direct expenses of
169 operation, maintenance and repair of facilities, food services and other

170 auxiliary activities shall be charged, and any payments of interest and
171 principal of bonds or any sums transferable to any fund for the payment
172 of interest and principal of bonds and any cost of equipment for such
173 operations may be charged, against the account on order of the State
174 Comptroller. Any balance of receipts above expenditures shall remain
175 in the account to be used for the improvement and extension of such
176 activities, except such sums as may be required to be transferred from
177 time to time to any fund for the redemption of bonds and payment of
178 interest on bonds, provided repairs, alterations or additions to auxiliary
179 service facilities costing fifty thousand dollars or less shall require the
180 approval of the Commissioner of Administrative Services, and capital
181 projects costing over fifty thousand dollars shall require the approval of
182 the General Assembly or, when the General Assembly is not in session,
183 of the Finance Advisory Committee. The department, with the approval
184 of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Finance
185 Advisory Committee, may borrow from the resources of the General
186 Fund at any time such sum or sums as it deems advisable, to establish
187 or continue auxiliary services activities, such sums to be repaid in
188 accordance with such schedule as the Secretary of the Office of Policy
189 and Management shall establish.

190 (d) The compensation provided by the department to a fire service
191 instructor to provide fire service training shall be comparable to pay
192 provided by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council to a law
193 enforcement instructor for police officer training.

194 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) There is established a
195 paramedic candidate scholarship program administered by the
196 Department of Public Health. The program shall provide scholarships
197 to individuals receiving training to become licensed as a paramedic
198 pursuant to section 20-206ll of the general statutes.

199 (b) Not later than January 1, 2024, the department shall develop a
200 policy concerning the administration of the scholarship program. Such
201 policy shall include, but need not be limited to, provisions regarding (1)
202 eligibility criteria, and (2) the payment and distribution of the

203 scholarships.

204 (c) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year
205 thereafter, the department shall award scholarships in accordance with
206 the provisions of this section and the policy developed pursuant to
207 subsection (b) of this section.

208 (d) The department may accept gifts, grants and donations from any
209 source, public or private, for the paramedic candidate scholarship
210 program.

211 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) No fire department shall deny
212 employment as a firefighter to a prospective employee solely on the
213 basis of the prospective employee's status as a noncitizen of the United
214 States, provided such prospective employee is lawfully admitted for
215 permanent residence of the United States under federal law and
216 regulations.

217 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The Connecticut Housing Finance
218 Authority shall develop and administer a program of mortgage
219 assistance to uniformed members of paid or volunteer fire departments
220 in the state. Such assistance shall be available to an eligible firefighter
221 for the purchase of a house as such firefighter's principal residence in
222 the community served by such firefighter. In making mortgage
223 assistance available under the program, the authority shall utilize down
224 payment assistance or any other appropriate housing subsidies. The
225 terms of any mortgage assistance shall allow the mortgagee to realize a
226 reasonable portion of the equity gain upon sale of the mortgaged
227 property.

228 Sec. 8. Subsection (d) of section 10a-77 of the general statutes is
229 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
230 *2023*):

231 (d) Said board of trustees shall waive the payment of tuition at any of
232 the regional community-technical colleges (1) for any dependent child
233 of a person whom the armed forces of the United States has declared to

234 be missing in action or to have been a prisoner of war while serving in
235 such armed forces after January 1, 1960, which child has been accepted
236 for admission to such institution and is a resident of the state at the time
237 such child is accepted for admission to such institution, (2) subject to the
238 provisions of subsection (e) of this section, for any veteran, as defined in
239 section 27-103, who performed service in time of war, as defined in
240 section 27-103, except that for purposes of this subsection, "service in
241 time of war" shall not include time spent in attendance at a military
242 service academy, which veteran has been accepted for admission to such
243 institution and is domiciled in this state at the time such veteran is
244 accepted for admission to such institution, (3) for any resident of the
245 state sixty-two years of age or older, provided, at the end of the regular
246 registration period, there are enrolled in the course a sufficient number
247 of students other than those residents eligible for waivers pursuant to
248 this subdivision to offer the course in which such resident intends to
249 enroll and there is space available in such course after accommodating
250 all such students, (4) for any student attending the Connecticut State
251 Police Academy who is enrolled in a law enforcement program at said
252 academy offered in coordination with a regional community-technical
253 college which accredits courses taken in such program, (5) for any active
254 member of the Connecticut Army or Air National Guard who (A) has
255 been certified by the Adjutant General or such Adjutant General's
256 designee as a member in good standing of the guard, and (B) is enrolled
257 or accepted for admission to such institution on a full-time or part-time
258 basis in an undergraduate degree-granting program, (6) for any
259 dependent child of a (A) police officer, as defined in section 7-294a, or
260 supernumerary or auxiliary police officer, (B) firefighter, as defined in
261 section 7-323j, or member of a volunteer fire company, (C) municipal
262 employee, or (D) state employee, as defined in section 5-154, killed in
263 the line of duty, (7) for any resident of the state who is a dependent child
264 or surviving spouse of a specified terrorist victim who was a resident of
265 this state, (8) for any dependent child of a resident of the state who was
266 killed in a multivehicle crash at or near the intersection of Routes 44 and
267 10 and Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005, [and] (9) for any resident of
268 the state who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a person who

269 was killed in action while performing active military duty with the
270 armed forces of the United States on or after September 11, 2001, and
271 who was a resident of this state, (10) for a uniformed member of a paid
272 or volunteer fire department, who has served as such a member in the
273 state for not less than two years, (11) for any dependent child of a
274 uniformed member of a paid or volunteer fire department, who, as
275 documented by the chief of such department, has served as such a
276 member in the state for not less than five years, and (12) for any student
277 attending the state fire school, who is enrolled in a program at said
278 school offered in coordination with a regional community-technical
279 college that accredits courses taken in such program. If any person who
280 receives a tuition waiver in accordance with the provisions of this
281 subsection also receives educational reimbursement from an employer,
282 such waiver shall be reduced by the amount of such educational
283 reimbursement. Veterans and members of the National Guard
284 described in subdivision (5) of this subsection shall be given the same
285 status as students not receiving tuition waivers in registering for courses
286 at regional community-technical colleges. Notwithstanding the
287 provisions of section 10a-30, as used in this subsection, "domiciled in
288 this state" includes domicile for less than one year.

289 Sec. 9. Subsection (d) of section 10a-99 of the general statutes is
290 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
291 *2023*):

292 (d) Said board shall waive the payment of tuition fees at the
293 Connecticut State University System (1) for any dependent child of a
294 person whom the armed forces of the United States has declared to be
295 missing in action or to have been a prisoner of war while serving in such
296 armed forces after January 1, 1960, which child has been accepted for
297 admission to such institution and is a resident of the state at the time
298 such child is accepted for admission to such institution, (2) subject to the
299 provisions of subsection (e) of this section, for any veteran, as defined in
300 section 27-103, who performed service in time of war, as defined in
301 section 27-103, except that for purposes of this subsection, "service in
302 time of war" shall not include time spent in attendance at a military

303 service academy, which veteran has been accepted for admission to such
304 institution and is domiciled in this state at the time such veteran is
305 accepted for admission to such institution, (3) for any resident of the
306 state sixty-two years of age or older who has been accepted for
307 admission to such institution, provided (A) such resident is enrolled in
308 a degree-granting program, or (B) at the end of the regular registration
309 period, there are enrolled in the course a sufficient number of students
310 other than those residents eligible for waivers pursuant to this
311 subdivision to offer the course in which such resident intends to enroll
312 and there is space available in such course after accommodating all such
313 students, (4) for any student attending the Connecticut Police Academy
314 who is enrolled in a law enforcement program at said academy offered
315 in coordination with the university which accredits courses taken in
316 such program, (5) for any active member of the Connecticut Army or
317 Air National Guard who (A) has been certified by the Adjutant General
318 or such Adjutant General's designee as a member in good standing of
319 the guard, and (B) is enrolled or accepted for admission to such
320 institution on a full-time or part-time basis in an undergraduate or
321 graduate degree-granting program, (6) for any dependent child of a (A)
322 police officer, as defined in section 7-294a, or supernumerary or
323 auxiliary police officer, (B) firefighter, as defined in section 7-323j, or
324 member of a volunteer fire company, (C) municipal employee, or (D)
325 state employee, as defined in section 5-154, killed in the line of duty, (7)
326 for any resident of this state who is a dependent child or surviving
327 spouse of a specified terrorist victim who was a resident of the state, (8)
328 for any dependent child of a resident of the state who was killed in a
329 multivehicle crash at or near the intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and
330 Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005, [and] (9) for any resident of the state
331 who is a dependent child or surviving spouse of a person who was
332 killed in action while performing active military duty with the armed
333 forces of the United States on or after September 11, 2001, and who was
334 a resident of this state, (10) for a uniformed member of a paid or
335 volunteer fire department, who has served as such a member in the state
336 for not less than two years, (11) for any dependent child of a uniformed
337 member of a paid or volunteer fire department, who, as documented by

338 the chief of such department, has served as such a member in the state
339 for not less than five years, and (12) for any student attending the state
340 fire school, who is enrolled in a program at said school offered in
341 coordination with the university that accredits courses taken in such
342 program. If any person who receives a tuition waiver in accordance with
343 the provisions of this subsection also receives educational
344 reimbursement from an employer, such waiver shall be reduced by the
345 amount of such educational reimbursement. Veterans and members of
346 the National Guard described in subdivision (5) of this subsection shall
347 be given the same status as students not receiving tuition waivers in
348 registering for courses at Connecticut state universities.
349 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10a-30, as used in this
350 subsection, "domiciled in this state" includes domicile for less than one
351 year.

352 Sec. 10. Subsection (e) of section 10a-105 of the general statutes is
353 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
354 *2023*):

355 (e) Said board of trustees shall waive the payment of tuition fees at
356 The University of Connecticut (1) for any dependent child of a person
357 whom the armed forces of the United States has declared to be missing
358 in action or to have been a prisoner of war while serving in such armed
359 forces after January 1, 1960, which child has been accepted for admission
360 to The University of Connecticut and is a resident of the state at the time
361 such child is accepted for admission to said institution, (2) subject to the
362 provisions of subsection (f) of this section, for any veteran, as defined in
363 section 27-103, who performed service in time of war, as defined in
364 section 27-103, except that for purposes of this subsection, "service in
365 time of war" shall not include time spent in attendance at a military
366 service academy, which veteran has been accepted for admission to said
367 institution and is domiciled in this state at the time such veteran is
368 accepted for admission to said institution, (3) for any resident of the state
369 sixty-two years of age or older who has been accepted for admission to
370 said institution, provided (A) such resident is enrolled in a degree-
371 granting program, or (B) at the end of the regular registration period,

372 there are enrolled in the course a sufficient number of students other
373 than those residents eligible for waivers pursuant to this subdivision to
374 offer the course in which such resident intends to enroll and there is
375 space available in such course after accommodating all such students,
376 (4) for any active member of the Connecticut Army or Air National
377 Guard who (A) has been certified by the Adjutant General or such
378 Adjutant General's designee as a member in good standing of the guard,
379 and (B) is enrolled or accepted for admission to said institution on a full-
380 time or part-time basis in an undergraduate or graduate degree-
381 granting program, (5) for any dependent child of a (A) police officer, as
382 defined in section 7-294a, or supernumerary or auxiliary police officer,
383 (B) firefighter, as defined in section 7-323j, or member of a volunteer fire
384 company, (C) municipal employee, or (D) state employee, as defined in
385 section 5-154, killed in the line of duty, (6) for any resident of the state
386 who is the dependent child or surviving spouse of a specified terrorist
387 victim who was a resident of the state, (7) for any dependent child of a
388 resident of the state who was killed in a multivehicle crash at or near the
389 intersection of Routes 44 and 10 and Nod Road in Avon on July 29, 2005,
390 [and] (8) for any resident of the state who is a dependent child or
391 surviving spouse of a person who was killed in action while performing
392 active military duty with the armed forces of the United States on or
393 after September 11, 2001, and who was a resident of this state, (9) for a
394 uniformed member of a paid or volunteer fire department, who has
395 served as such a member in the state for not less than two years, and
396 (10) for any dependent child of a uniformed member of a paid or
397 volunteer fire department, who, as documented by the chief of such
398 department, has served as such a member in the state for not less than
399 five years. If any person who receives a tuition waiver in accordance
400 with the provisions of this subsection also receives educational
401 reimbursement from an employer, such waiver shall be reduced by the
402 amount of such educational reimbursement. Veterans and members of
403 the National Guard described in subdivision (4) of this subsection shall
404 be given the same status as students not receiving tuition waivers in
405 registering for courses at The University of Connecticut.
406 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 10a-30, as used in this

407 subsection, "domiciled in this state" includes domicile for less than one
408 year.

409 Sec. 11. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) As used in this section:

410 (1) "Accrued service award" means the total value, as of a given date,
411 of a participant's program account.

412 (2) "Bona fide volunteer" has the same meaning as in Section 457(e) of
413 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
414 internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to
415 time.

416 (3) "Commission" means the State Retirement Commission.

417 (4) "Eligible firefighter" means a firefighter who (A) is a bona fide
418 volunteer performing qualified services in a volunteer fire company or
419 department, and (B) is not otherwise earning credit for such qualified
420 service as a participant in any other length of service award program,
421 pension system operating pursuant to subparagraph (A) of subdivision
422 (5) of subsection (c) of section 7-148 of the general statutes or any other
423 comparable program.

424 (5) "Participant" means an eligible firefighter who participates in the
425 program.

426 (6) "Program account" means a separate account maintained for each
427 participant reflecting applicable contributions, applicable forfeitures,
428 investment income or loss and administrative and investment expenses
429 allocated to each participant and paid from the Volunteer Firefighter
430 Length of Service Award Program Trust Fund, established under
431 subsection (c) of this section.

432 (7) "Qualified service" has the same meaning as provided in Section
433 457(e)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent
434 corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended
435 from time to time.

436 (b) The State Retirement Commission, in consultation with the
437 Commission on Fire Prevention and Control and the State Fire
438 Administrator, shall establish a volunteer firefighter length of service
439 award program. The State Retirement Commission may contract with
440 third parties to provide services for such program.

441 (c) There is established a Volunteer Firefighter Length of Service
442 Award Program Trust Fund. The fund shall contain any moneys
443 required or permitted by law to be deposited in the fund and may apply
444 for and accept gifts, grants or donations from public or private sources
445 to enable the trust fund to carry out its objectives. Investment earnings
446 credited to the assets of the fund shall become part of the assets of the
447 fund. The fund shall be held in trust separate and apart from all other
448 moneys, funds and accounts. Any balance remaining in the fund at the
449 end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward in the fund for the fiscal
450 year next succeeding. The fund shall be used to make payments as
451 provided in this section and for administrative expenses related to the
452 provisions of this section.

453 (d) Not later than January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, each
454 volunteer fire company or department shall submit to the commission a
455 list of eligible firefighters and the amount of service credit each such
456 firefighter has earned with such department, on a form and in a manner
457 as determined by the commission.

458 (e) (1) Not later than April 1, 2024, the commission shall determine
459 which eligible firefighters satisfy the service credit requirements
460 established pursuant to regulations adopted in accordance with
461 subsection (k) of this section to be participants in the program, and the
462 amount of credits applicable to each such participant.

463 (2) An eligible firefighter may decline to become a participant in the
464 program if such firefighter files with the commission, prior to such
465 firefighter satisfying such service credit requirements to become a
466 participant in the program, an irrevocable waiver of participation that
467 is signed by the eligible firefighter and the chief of the volunteer fire

468 company or department of which such firefighter is a member.

469 (3) A participant shall receive service credit for service as an eligible
470 firefighter before, on and after the effective date of this section. Service
471 credit earned by a participant shall never be forfeited.

472 (f) Not later than July 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the
473 commission shall credit a length of service award, in an amount
474 determined by the regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (k) of this
475 section, to the program account of each participant who the commission
476 determines qualifies for a length of service award pursuant to the
477 service credit requirements established by such regulations. No such
478 award may exceed the limit provided in Section 457(e)(11) of the
479 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
480 internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to
481 time.

482 (g) (1) A participant's accrued service award becomes vested once
483 such participant has five years of service credit, as determined pursuant
484 to regulations adopted under subsection (k) of this section.

485 (2) If a participant has not been an eligible firefighter for thirty-six
486 consecutive months and such participant's accrued service award has
487 not become vested, such accrued service award shall be forfeited and
488 deposited in the Volunteer Firefighter Length of Service Award
489 Program Trust Fund.

490 (h) The commission shall pay each participant such participant's
491 accrued service award when the participant:

492 (1) Attains the age of sixty-five, if such participant is vested pursuant
493 to subsection (g) of this section;

494 (2) Becomes vested pursuant to subsection (g) of this section and such
495 participant's age is sixty-five years or over;

496 (3) Has twenty years of service credit, provided the participant may,
497 prior to attaining such twenty years of service credit, file a written

498 election with the commission to defer payment of the accrued service
499 award until the participant attains the age of sixty-five;

500 (4) Is vested and has not been an eligible firefighter for at least thirty-
501 six consecutive months; or

502 (5) Has been determined to be totally and permanently disabled by
503 the United States Social Security Administration, the Workers'
504 Compensation Commission or any other entity approved by the State
505 Retirement Commission.

506 (i) If a participant is paid such participant's accrued service award
507 pursuant to subsection (h) of this section and subsequently qualifies for
508 a service award at any other time, the commission shall pay such service
509 award directly to such participant.

510 (j) If a participant dies prior to receiving such participant's accrued
511 service award pursuant to subsection (h) of this section or a service
512 award pursuant to subsection (i) of this section, the commission shall
513 pay such award to any beneficiary the participant has designated on a
514 form and in a manner prescribed by the commission.

515 (k) Not later than January 1, 2024, the State Retirement Commission,
516 in consultation with the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control
517 and the State Fire Administrator, shall adopt regulations, in accordance
518 with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement
519 the volunteer firefighter length of service award program. Such
520 regulations shall include, but need not be limited to, provisions
521 regarding (1) earning service credits and determining the amount of
522 awards, which may include a point-based system that requires earning
523 points for responding to calls, attending meetings and trainings or other
524 factors, (2) documentation for earning such credits, including a system
525 to permit volunteer fire companies and departments to comply with the
526 requirements of subsection (d) of this section, and (3) contesting
527 determinations of service credits awarded to a participant.

528 Sec. 12. Section 3-13c of the general statutes is repealed and the

529 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

530 Trust funds as used in sections 3-13 to 3-13e, inclusive, and 3-31b shall
531 be construed to include Connecticut Municipal Employees' Retirement
532 Fund A, Connecticut Municipal Employees' Retirement Fund B,
533 Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund, Family and Medical Leave
534 Insurance Trust Fund, State's Attorneys' Retirement Fund, Teachers'
535 Annuity Fund, Teachers' Pension Fund, Teachers' Survivorship and
536 Dependency Fund, School Fund, State Employees Retirement Fund, the
537 Hospital Insurance Fund, Policemen and Firemen Survivor's Benefit
538 Fund, Volunteer Firefighter Length of Service Award Program Trust
539 Fund, any trust fund described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of
540 section 7-450 that is administered, held or invested by the State
541 Treasurer and all other trust funds administered, held or invested by the
542 State Treasurer.

543 Sec. 13. (*Effective from passage*) The State Retirement Commission shall
544 develop a new tier or classification within the municipal employees'
545 retirement system for public safety professionals. Such tier or
546 classification shall (1) take into consideration the tiered classifications of
547 firefighters developed pursuant to section 14 of this act, and (2) permit
548 an individual employed as a firefighter to retire from such position with
549 one participating municipality and accept employment as a firefighter
550 with another participating municipality and be eligible for retirement
551 benefits from such other municipality. The commission may consult
552 with the Commission on Fire Prevention Control, the State Fire
553 Administrator and any other entities deemed appropriate in developing
554 such new tier or classification. Not later than January 1, 2024, the
555 commission shall report to the joint standing committee of the General
556 Assembly having cognizance of matter relating to public safety and
557 security, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
558 general statutes, regarding the terms and benefits that will be applicable
559 to such tier or classification and legislation necessary to implement such
560 tier or classification.

561 Sec. 14. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commission on Fire Prevention

562 and Control shall conduct a study of the different levels of training and
563 certification of firefighters and the benefits available to firefighters and
564 make recommendations regarding benefits to provide incentives to
565 encourage individuals to begin a career in firefighting and encourage
566 firefighters to continue in their careers in firefighting. As part of such
567 study, the commission shall:

568 (1) Develop a tiered classification of firefighters based on various
569 factors the commission deems relevant, which may include, but need
570 not be limited to, a firefighter's certification and level of training, years
571 of experience, responsibilities, including any supervisory, executive,
572 support or administrative responsibilities and status as an employed or
573 volunteer firefighter, and the commission may include one of more
574 classifications for individuals training to become a firefighter;

575 (2) Identify existing benefits available to firefighters, including the
576 volunteer firefighter length of service award program established under
577 section 11 of this act and the retirement tier developed pursuant to
578 section 13 of this act, propose changes to any such benefits and identify
579 new benefits that could encourage recruitment and retention of
580 employed and volunteer firefighters;

581 (3) Consider as a factor for a firefighter's eligibility for any one or
582 more benefits identified under subdivision (2) of this subsection,
583 whether the firefighter (A) adheres to the National Fire Protection
584 Association standard 1582 on comprehensive occupational medical
585 program for fire departments, or any subsequent standard by such
586 association that is applicable to fire departments, and (B) does not use
587 any tobacco products; and

588 (4) Consider whether eligibility for any one or more benefits
589 identified under subdivision (2) of this subsection should be determined
590 based on a firefighter's inclusion in a specific classification tier, as
591 developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in order to
592 provide incentives that encourage individuals to begin a career in
593 firefighting and encourage firefighters to continue in their careers in

594 firefighting.

595 (b) Not later than January 1, 2024, the commission shall report the
596 results of the study, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a
597 of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General
598 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public safety and
599 security.

600 Sec. 15. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Commissioner of Public Health
601 shall establish a pilot program to provide emergency services
602 organizations, as defined in section 19a-904 of the general statutes, with
603 (1) equipment capable of identifying individuals at high risk of cardiac
604 arrest, (2) an early detection system capable of identifying individuals
605 who are at low risk of cardiac arrest before such individuals experience
606 critical cardiac issues, or (3) both such equipment and system. Not later
607 than October 1, 2023, the Department of Public Health shall (A) post in
608 a conspicuous place on the department's Internet web site a description
609 of the program, including, but not limited to, eligibility criteria and the
610 application process for such program, and (B) notify each emergency
611 services organization of the opportunity to apply for participation in
612 such program.

613 (b) Not later than January 1, 2025, the commissioner shall, in
614 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
615 report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
616 cognizance of matters relating to public safety and security on the result
617 of such pilot program and recommendations as to whether to continue
618 or expand such program.

619 Sec. 16. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of five hundred thousand
620 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Emergency Services and
621 Public Protection from the General Fund, for the fiscal years ending June
622 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025, for the purpose of providing funds, in
623 addition to any reimbursement provided pursuant to subsection (b) of
624 section 7-323p of the general statutes, as amended by this act, to reduce
625 the cost to trainees and fire departments of attendance at the state fire

626 school.

627 Sec. 17. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of five hundred thousand
 628 dollars is appropriated to the Department of Emergency Services and
 629 Public Protection from the General Fund, for the fiscal years ending June
 630 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025, for the purpose of providing funds to reduce
 631 the cost to trainees and fire departments of attendance at regional fire
 632 schools.

633 Sec. 18. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of seven hundred fifty
 634 thousand dollars is appropriated to the Department of Public Health
 635 from the General Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, for the
 636 purposes of providing scholarships pursuant to section 5 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	7-323o
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	7-323p
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10a-77(d)
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10a-99(d)
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	10a-105(e)
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	3-13c
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 14	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 15	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 17	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 18	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To enhance recruitment and retention of firefighters.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]