

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR GENERAL GOVERNMENT.**

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1,
2 2025, and quarterly thereafter, the Connecticut Port Authority shall
3 submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
4 general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General
5 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation and
6 appropriations that shall include the following: (1) A description of the
7 authority's work to support grants under the Small Harbor
8 Improvement Projects Program; (2) a description of the authority's
9 dredging activities and the needs concerning dredging in harbors in the
10 state; and (3) a description of the authority's marketing activities on
11 behalf of maritime communities in the state.

12 Sec. 2. Section 23 of public act 23-170 is repealed and the following is
13 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

14 Not later than July 1, [2024] 2025, the Secretary of the Office of Policy
15 and Management, in consultation with the Commissioner of Energy and
16 Environmental Protection, shall submit recommendations to the joint
17 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
18 matters relating to the environment and energy and technology, in
19 accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, regarding the
20 feasibility and advisability of creating a new quasi-public state agency,
21 state waste authority or other entity for purposes that include, but are

22 not limited to, the development of new solid waste infrastructure and
23 the operation and maintenance of new or existing solid waste
24 infrastructure. Such recommendations shall be made in consultation
25 with any municipalities, municipal authorities, regional waste
26 authorities or private sector operators of solid waste companies
27 participating in a request for proposals pursuant to section [2 of this act]
28 22a-268h of the general statutes.

29 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 4-66g of the 2024 supplement to the
30 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
31 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

32 (b) The proceeds of the sale of said bonds, to the extent of the amount
33 stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the Office of
34 Policy and Management for a small town economic assistance program
35 the purpose of which shall be to provide grants-in-aid to any
36 municipality or group of municipalities, provided the municipality and
37 each municipality that is part of a group of municipalities is not
38 economically distressed within the meaning of subsection (b) of section
39 32-9p, does not have an urban center in any plan adopted by the General
40 Assembly pursuant to section 16a-30 and is not a public investment
41 community within the meaning of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of
42 section 7-545. Such grants shall be used for purposes for which funds
43 would be available under section 4-66c. No group of municipalities may
44 receive an amount exceeding in the aggregate [five hundred thousand]
45 one million dollars per municipality in such group in any one fiscal year
46 under said program. No individual municipality may receive more than
47 [five hundred thousand] one million dollars in any one fiscal year under
48 said program, except that any municipality that receives a grant under
49 said program as a member of a group of municipalities shall continue to
50 be eligible to receive an amount equal to [five hundred thousand] one
51 million dollars less the amount of such municipality's proportionate
52 share of such grant. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection
53 and section 4-66c, a municipality that is (1) a distressed municipality
54 within the meaning of subsection (b) of section 32-9p or a public

55 investment community within the meaning of subdivision (9) of
56 subsection (a) of section 7-545, and (2) otherwise eligible under this
57 subsection for the small town economic assistance program may elect to
58 be eligible for said program individually or as part of a group of
59 municipalities in lieu of being eligible for financial assistance under
60 section 4-66c, by a vote of its legislative body or, in the case of a
61 municipality in which the legislative body is a town meeting, its board
62 of selectmen, and submitting a written notice of such vote to the
63 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management. Any such election
64 shall be for the four-year period following submission of such notice to
65 the secretary and may be extended for additional four-year periods in
66 accordance with the same procedure for the initial election.

67 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 4-9d of the general statutes is repealed
68 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

69 (a) [Unless otherwise provided by law, an] An elected or appointed
70 officer of the executive or judicial branch who, as such officer, is
71 required to serve on a board, commission, council, authority, task force
72 or other body, and is unable or chooses not to so serve, may designate
73 [a person] an employee of such officer's agency to serve on such body in
74 [his] such officer's place. [, provided (1) an officer may only designate
75 another officer of his agency and (2) an officer who is required by law to
76 serve as a chairperson or presiding officer of such body shall not
77 designate a person to serve on such body in his place.] The authority to
78 designate a replacement, as provided in this subsection, shall be in
79 addition to any other designation authority provided in the general
80 statutes.

81 Sec. 5. Section 5-250 of the general statutes is repealed and the
82 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2025*):

83 (a) Each appointing authority shall grant to (1) each full-time
84 employee in a permanent position in the state service, who has worked
85 at least one full calendar year, and (2) each full-time employee in a
86 permanent position in the state service during such employee's initial

87 working test period an annual vacation with pay of twenty-one
88 consecutive calendar days or its equivalent. Each such employee who
89 has completed twenty years of service shall be entitled to one day for
90 each additional year up to twenty-five years of service, and each such
91 employee with twenty-five or more years of service shall be entitled to
92 not more than twenty days' vacation, subject to regulations issued by
93 the Commissioner of Administrative Services. The Commissioner of
94 Administrative Services may adopt regulations, in accordance with the
95 provisions of chapter 54, concerning the accrual, prorating and granting
96 of vacation leave with pay as required. Computation of such vacation
97 leave may be made on an hourly basis. Hourly computation of vacation
98 leave shall not diminish benefit entitlement.

99 (b) An appointing authority may permit a full-time permanent
100 employee in the state service to accumulate vacation days with pay up
101 to a maximum of one hundred twenty vacation days, subject to
102 regulations issued by the Commissioner of Administrative Services.

103 (c) In addition to annual vacation, each appointing authority shall
104 grant to (1) each full-time permanent employee in the state service, and
105 (2) each full-time permanent employee in the state service during such
106 employee's initial working test period three days of personal leave of
107 absence with pay in each calendar year. Personal leave of absence shall
108 be for the purpose of conducting private affairs, including observance
109 of religious holidays, and shall not be deducted from vacation or sick
110 leave credits. Personal leave of absence days not taken in a calendar year
111 shall not be accumulated. For full-time permanent employees within
112 such employees' working test period that began employment on or after
113 July first of a calendar year, the number of personal leave of absence
114 days shall be prorated during such employee's first calendar year of
115 employment. Such proration shall be based on the number of full
116 calendar months remaining in the calendar year after such employee
117 began employment divided by six.

118 (d) Vacation accruals earned by employees in the unclassified service,

119 in accordance with administrative practice or internal departmental
120 policy, which accrual practice or policy was included, by the appointing
121 authority, in the terms of employment on the basis of which such
122 employees were employed prior to July 1, 1972, and which accruals have
123 not been used and which can be verified by written attendance records,
124 remain to the credit of such employees for use as vacation time or for
125 payment as provided in section 5-252, as the case may be.

126 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a general worker
127 employed in a position by the Department of Developmental Services
128 as a self-advocate, not to exceed eleven such general workers, shall be
129 eligible for prorated vacation and personal leave.

130 (f) Not later than June 30, 2025, the Commissioner of Administrative
131 Services shall adopt or amend regulations, as applicable, in accordance
132 with chapter 54, to implement the provisions of subsections (a) and (c)
133 of this section relating to the granting of vacation and personal leave to
134 full-time permanent employees during such employees' initial working
135 test periods. Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4-168 to 4-172,
136 inclusive, in order to effectuate the purposes of subsections (a) and (c)
137 of this section, prior to adopting or amending such regulations and not
138 later than January 1, 2025, the commissioner shall adopt policies and
139 procedures to implement the provisions of subsections (a) and (c) of this
140 section that shall have the force and effect of law. The commissioner
141 shall post all policies and procedures on the department's Internet web
142 site, and submit such policies and procedures to the Secretary of the
143 State for posting on the eRegulations System, at least fifteen days prior
144 to the effective date of any policy or procedure. Any such policy or
145 procedure shall no longer be effective upon the adoption of such policies
146 and procedures as a final regulation pursuant to section 4-172.

147 Sec. 6. Subsection (b) of section 10a-173 of the 2024 supplement to the
148 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
149 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

150 (b) The Office of Higher Education shall establish the Roberta B.

151 Willis Scholarship program to annually make need-based financial aid
152 available for eligible educational costs to eligible students enrolled at
153 Connecticut's public and independent institutions of higher education.
154 Within available funds, the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship program shall
155 include a need and merit-based grant, a need-based grant and a Charter
156 Oak grant. The need and merit-based grant shall be funded at not less
157 than twenty per cent but not more than thirty per cent of available funds
158 or ten million dollars, whichever is greater. The need-based grant shall
159 be funded at up to eighty per cent of available funds. The Charter Oak
160 grant shall be not less than one hundred thousand dollars of available
161 funds. There shall be an administrative allowance based on one-quarter
162 of one per cent of the available funds, but not less than one hundred
163 thousand dollars annually. The Office of Higher Education shall [use]
164 disburse the funds appropriated or allocated for the Roberta B. Willis
165 Scholarship program for the fiscal [year] years ending June 30, 2024, and
166 June 30, 2025, to make awards pursuant to subsection (c) of this section
167 and allocate funds pursuant to subsections (d) and (f) of this section [for
168 the academic years commencing July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024] in
169 accordance with a plan developed by the office, provided the office shall
170 [use] disburse all funds allocated for the Roberta B. Willis Scholarship
171 program from the federal funds designated for the state pursuant to the
172 provisions of Section 602 of Subtitle M of Title IX of the American Rescue
173 Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to time, on or before
174 December 31, 2024.

175 Sec. 7. Subsections (c) and (d) of section 51-49d of the general statutes
176 are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
177 *from passage*):

178 (c) The Retirement Commission shall determine on an actuarial basis
179 (1) a normal rate of contribution which the state shall be required to
180 make into the retirement fund in order to meet the actuarial cost of
181 current service, and (2) the unfunded past service liability. Effective July
182 1, 1991, the unfunded past service liability shall be funded as a level
183 percentage of payroll. [The] On and after July 1, 2024, the state

184 contribution shall be the sum of the normal cost and the amount
185 required for a [forty-year] fifteen-year layered amortization of
186 unfunded liabilities. The [forty-year] fifteen-year period for such
187 amortization shall commence [July 1, 1991] with the valuation for the
188 fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

189 (d) No act liberalizing the benefits of the retirement system shall be
190 enacted by the General Assembly until the assembly has requested and
191 received from the Retirement Commission a certification of the
192 unfunded liability created by such change and the cost of such change
193 under the actuarial funding basis adopted by this section using full
194 normal cost plus [thirty-year] fifteen-year layered amortization. Any
195 unfunded liability created by such change shall be amortized over a
196 period of [thirty] fifteen years.

197 Sec. 8. (*Effective from passage*) Notwithstanding the provisions of
198 section 51-49d of the general statutes, as amended by this act, not later
199 than June 30, 2024, the State Employees Retirement Commission shall
200 prepare and submit a revised actuarial valuation as of June 30, 2023, for
201 the retirement system for judges, family support magistrates and
202 administrative law judges that incorporates the change to fifteen-year
203 layered amortization, as described in section 51-49d of the general
204 statutes, as amended by this act.

205 Sec. 9. Subdivision (5) of section 1-79 of the 2024 supplement to the
206 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
207 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

208 (5) "Gift" means anything of value, which is directly and personally
209 received, unless consideration of equal or greater value is given in
210 return. "Gift" does not include:

211 (A) A political contribution otherwise reported as required by law or
212 a donation or payment as described in subdivision (9) or (10) of
213 subsection (b) of section 9-601a;

214 (B) Services provided by persons volunteering their time, if provided
215 to aid or promote the success or defeat of any political party, any
216 candidate or candidates for public office or the position of convention
217 delegate or town committee member or any referendum question;

218 (C) A commercially reasonable loan made on terms not more
219 favorable than loans made in the ordinary course of business;

220 (D) A gift received from (i) an individual's spouse, fiancé or fiancée,
221 (ii) the parent, grandparent, brother or sister of such spouse or such
222 individual, or (iii) the child of such individual or the spouse of such
223 child;

224 (E) Goods or services (i) that are provided to a state agency or quasi-
225 public agency (I) for use on state or quasi-public agency property, or (II)
226 that support an event or the participation by a public official or state
227 employee at an event, and (ii) that facilitate state or quasi-public agency
228 action or functions. As used in this subparagraph, "state property"
229 means property owned by the state or a quasi-public agency or property
230 leased to a state agency or quasi-public agency;

231 (F) A certificate, plaque or other ceremonial award costing less than
232 one hundred dollars;

233 (G) A rebate, discount or promotional item available to the general
234 public;

235 (H) Printed or recorded informational material germane to state
236 action or functions;

237 (I) Food or beverage or both, costing less than fifty dollars in the
238 aggregate per recipient in a calendar year, and consumed on an occasion
239 or occasions at which the person paying, directly or indirectly, for the
240 food or beverage, or his representative, is in attendance;

241 (J) Food or beverage or both, costing less than fifty dollars per person
242 and consumed at a publicly noticed legislative reception to which all

243 members of the General Assembly are invited and which is hosted not
244 more than once in any calendar year by a lobbyist or business
245 organization. For the purposes of such limit, (i) a reception hosted by a
246 lobbyist who is an individual shall be deemed to have also been hosted
247 by the business organization which such lobbyist owns or is employed
248 by, and (ii) a reception hosted by a business organization shall be
249 deemed to have also been hosted by all owners and employees of the
250 business organization who are lobbyists. In making the calculation for
251 the purposes of such fifty-dollar limit, the donor shall divide the amount
252 spent on food and beverage by the number of persons whom the donor
253 reasonably expects to attend the reception;

254 (K) Food or beverage or both, costing less than fifty dollars per person
255 and consumed at a publicly noticed reception to which all members of
256 the General Assembly from a region of the state are invited and which
257 is hosted not more than once in any calendar year by a lobbyist or
258 business organization. For the purposes of such limit, (i) a reception
259 hosted by a lobbyist who is an individual shall be deemed to have also
260 been hosted by the business organization which such lobbyist owns or
261 is employed by, and (ii) a reception hosted by a business organization
262 shall be deemed to have also been hosted by all owners and employees
263 of the business organization who are lobbyists. In making the
264 calculation for the purposes of such fifty-dollar limit, the donor shall
265 divide the amount spent on food and beverage by the number of
266 persons whom the donor reasonably expects to attend the reception. As
267 used in this subparagraph, "region of the state" means the established
268 geographic service area of the organization hosting the reception;

269 (L) A gift, including, but not limited to, food or beverage or both,
270 provided by an individual for the celebration of a major life event,
271 provided any such gift provided by an individual who is not a member
272 of the family of the recipient does not exceed one thousand dollars in
273 value;

274 (M) Gifts costing less than one hundred dollars in the aggregate or

275 food or beverage provided at a hospitality suite at a meeting or
276 conference of an interstate legislative association, by a person who is not
277 a registrant or is not doing business with the state of Connecticut;

278 (N) Admission to a charitable or civic event, including food and
279 beverage provided at such event, but excluding lodging or travel
280 expenses, at which a public official or state employee participates in his
281 or her official capacity, provided such admission is provided by the
282 primary sponsoring entity;

283 (O) Anything of value provided by an employer of (i) a public official,
284 (ii) a state employee, or (iii) a spouse of a public official or state
285 employee, to such official, employee or spouse, provided such benefits
286 are customarily and ordinarily provided to others in similar
287 circumstances;

288 (P) Anything having a value of not more than ten dollars, provided
289 the aggregate value of all things provided by a donor to a recipient
290 under this subdivision in any calendar year does not exceed fifty dollars;

291 (Q) Training that is provided by a vendor for a product purchased by
292 a state or quasi-public agency that is offered to all customers of such
293 vendor;

294 (R) Travel expenses, lodging, food, beverage and other benefits
295 customarily provided by a prospective employer, when provided to a
296 student at a public institution of higher education whose employment
297 is derived from such student's status as a student at such institution, in
298 connection with bona fide employment discussions; [or]

299 (S) Expenses of a public official, paid by the party committee of which
300 party such official is a member, for the purpose of accomplishing the
301 lawful purposes of the committee. As used in this subparagraph, "party
302 committee" has the same meaning as provided in subdivision (2) of
303 section 9-601 and "lawful purposes of the committee" has the same
304 meaning as provided in subsection (g) of section 9-607; or

305 (T) Travel expenses, lodging, food, beverage and other benefits
306 customarily provided in the course of employment, when provided to a
307 public member of the Investment Advisory Council established under
308 section 3-13b.

309 Sec. 10. (*Effective from passage*) The Secretary of the Office of Policy
310 and Management, in consultation with the Commissioner of
311 Administrative Services and the Attorney General, shall conduct a
312 review of the state contracting process for all state agency contracts and
313 payment policies concerning state agency contracts with service
314 providers and nonprofits, and shall examine ways to streamline and
315 expedite such process and policies. Such review and examination shall
316 include, but need not be limited to: (1) A determination of whether state
317 agency staffing levels are adequate to draft and process such contracts,
318 and, if not, what staffing levels would be adequate; (2) an identification
319 of complications that result from the tiered process of procurement that
320 may require multiple agencies and the Attorney General to review such
321 contracts; (3) an identification of complications that result from payment
322 policies concerning state agency contracts with service providers and
323 nonprofits that may prevent such payments from being processed in a
324 timely manner after contracts are approved; (4) the feasibility of
325 utilizing master contracts that can be amended as needed; and (5) the
326 feasibility of allocating funds carried forward from the previous fiscal
327 year to such service providers or nonprofits to sustain the operation of
328 existing programs when state agency contracts with such providers or
329 nonprofits are delayed. The secretary shall report, in accordance with
330 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, the results and
331 findings of such review and examination, including the secretary's
332 recommendations for streamlining the state contracting process and
333 payment policies, to the joint standing committee of the General
334 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations not
335 later than January 1, 2025.

336 Sec. 11. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a Higher
337 Education Financial Oversight Committee. The committee shall be an

338 independent body within the Legislative Department for administrative
339 purposes only.

340 (b) The committee shall consist of the following members:

341 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

342 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

343 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
344 Representatives;

345 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

346 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
347 Representatives;

348 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

349 (7) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
350 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
351 relating to appropriations;

352 (8) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
353 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
354 relating to higher education; and

355 (9) Two appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall have
356 experience in higher education operations, and one of whom shall have
357 experience in higher education financial management.

358 (c) Any member of the committee appointed under subdivisions (1)
359 to (6), inclusive, of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the
360 General Assembly.

361 (d) All initial appointments to the committee shall be made not later
362 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall
363 be filled by the appointing authority.

364 (e) The members of the committee shall serve without compensation,
365 but shall be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the
366 performance of their duties.

367 (f) The members of the committee shall select the chairperson of the
368 committee from among the members of the committee. Until such
369 selection, the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
370 pro tempore of the Senate shall select an acting chairperson of the
371 committee from among the members of the committee. Such acting
372 chairperson shall schedule the first meeting of the committee, which
373 shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this
374 section.

375 (g) The committee shall have the following powers and duties: To (1)
376 review and evaluate the financial status of the constituent units of the
377 state system of higher education, as defined in section 10a-1 of the
378 general statutes, and The University of Connecticut Health Center; (2)
379 assess the future financial needs and financial challenges for such
380 constituent units of the state system of higher education and The
381 University of Connecticut Health Center, and make recommendations
382 concerning fiscal constraints and budget priorities for any such
383 constituent unit or The University of Connecticut Health Center; (3)
384 request and obtain financial information and documents from any such
385 constituent unit or The University of Connecticut Health Center; and (4)
386 conduct public hearings and meetings with officials from any such
387 constituent unit or The University of Connecticut Health Center. The
388 review and evaluation conducted pursuant to subdivision (1) of this
389 subsection shall be the committee's primary duty.

390 (h) The committee may, with the approval of the Joint Committee on
391 Legislative Management, retain such staff as may be necessary for the
392 discharge of its duties.

393 (i) The committee is authorized to accept gifts, donations and grants
394 from the federal government or other public or private sources, for the
395 purpose of funding the operations of the committee, as approved by the

396 Governor and the Joint Committee on Legislative Management.

397 (j) Not later than January 1, 2025, and at least annually thereafter, the
398 committee shall submit a report that sets forth its findings and
399 recommendations for improving the financial management of the
400 constituent units of the state system of higher education and The
401 University of Connecticut Health Center to the Governor and to the joint
402 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
403 matters relating to appropriations and higher education, in accordance
404 with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. Each such
405 report shall contain recommendations for cost-saving measures,
406 strategies to increase revenue and any other strategies and
407 recommendations for ensuring the long-term financial stability of the
408 state system of higher education and The University of Connecticut
409 Health Center. Such report may include recommendations for
410 legislation and any other policy recommendations to address issues or
411 challenges identified by the committee.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	PA 23-170, Sec. 23
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	4-66g(b)
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	4-9d(a)
Sec. 5	<i>January 1, 2025</i>	5-250
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	10a-173(b)
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	51-49d(c) and (d)
Sec. 8	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	1-79(5)
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	New section