

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 24-81—HB 5523
Emergency Certification

AN ACT CONCERNING ALLOCATIONS OF FEDERAL AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO GENERAL GOVERNMENT, HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION AND THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025

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§ 34 — DESPP MISSING PERSONS CLEARINGHOUSE

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Narrows the type of hospital DSS must select for a two-year pilot program on ASD to one in Hartford County with an established program for children and adolescents

§ 36 — HUMAN SERVICES CAREER PIPELINE

Removes the July 1, 2024, deadline to establish the career pipeline program and requires the CWO to report on its plan for the program by that date; requires the CWO to establish the pipeline program within available appropriations

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Eliminates the local voluntary public safety registration system for children with IDD and the requirement that PSAP emergency dispatchers search this system's database when dispatching emergency services to a residential address

§§ 38 & 39 — INCOME LIMITS FOR HUSKY A PARENTS AND CARETAKER RELATIVES AND HUSKY C

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§§ 40-43 — PASSPORT TO THE PARKS

Increases the Passport to the Parks motor vehicle registration fee; provides funding from the Passport to the Parks account for operating (1) Batterson Park and (2) the Thames River Heritage Park water taxi; requires DEEP to enter into MOAs for related purposes

§ 44 — UCONN HEALTH CENTER EMPLOYEE FRINGE BENEFITS

Requires the comptroller to (1) use up to \$4.5 million of funds appropriated for State Comptroller-Fringe Benefits to fund a portion of the fringe benefits for UCHC employees and (2) enter into an MOU with UCHC for providing operational support

§§ 45 & 46 — EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE TOWARDS PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM PEOPLE

Requires DPH to develop educational materials on intimate partner violence toward pregnant and postpartum people (PA 24-151 changes this terminology to “expectant and postpartum mothers and persons”); requires DPH to distribute the educational materials to certain health care providers and facilities to give to patients; transfers, from the Maternal Mortality Review Committee to DPH, responsibility for developing educational materials on certain other topics

[§§ 47 & 48 — XL CENTER](#)

Specifies that the XL Center includes the adjoining garage for CRDA’s operating and capital project agreements with contractors; exempts from the sales and use taxes personal property or services needed for the XL Center’s operations and sold to the contractor operating the center; increases the maximum amount that the state, CRDA, or both must contribute to the center’s renovation

[§ 49 — NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES](#)

Contains identical provisions as in § 18; see above for analysis

[§ 50 — ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING](#)

Requires OHE to (1) disburse Roberta B. Willis scholarship program funds for FYs 24 and 25 according to a plan developed by the office and (2) reserve up to \$15 million from the program’s FY 25 appropriation for disbursement during FY 26

[§ 51 — CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY REPORT](#)

Requires the CPA, by January 1, 2025, to begin quarterly reporting to the Transportation and Appropriations committees on a staffing plan to handle its needs and its efforts for certain activities and programs

[§ 52 — THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN’S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE](#)

Expands the Transforming Children’s Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee’s membership by adding two representatives from the federally recognized Indian tribes in the state; extends, by two years, the committee’s reporting deadlines

[§ 53 — 2024-25 ACADEMIC YEAR CHANGES TO THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM](#)

Prohibits OHE from requiring that Roberta B. Willis scholarship program need-based grants be reduced based on a student’s initial qualifications as determined from his or her FAFSA; pauses the requirement that the program’s need and merit-based grants be awarded in a higher amount than its need-based grants

[§§ 54 & 55 — CONNECTICUT HYDROGEN AND ELECTRIC AUTOMOBILE PURCHASE REBATE \(CHEAPR\) PROGRAM](#)

Modifies the CHEAPR rebate amount for residents of environmental justice communities; requires certain proceeds from RGGI to be used for the CHEAPR program (rather than the CHEAPR account) and other programs that support DEEP’s engagement with environmental justice communities

§ 56 — DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITY DESIGNATION

Generally extends, from five years to 10, the time period for which municipalities with a population exceeding 100,000 are deemed to be distressed municipalities after being removed from DECD's annual list

§§ 57-59 — CIGARETTE DEALER LICENSES AND RENEWALS

Requires cigarette dealer license applicants to post certain notices at their businesses; provides a process to object to a dealer's license application; allows municipalities to adopt ordinances to require these dealers to notify the chief law enforcement official of license renewals and allows the official to comment; requires DRS to consider these comments and report certain statistics on these notifications to the legislature

§ 60 — UNION AVENUE DETENTION CENTER

Starting in 2026, requires that the Union Avenue detention center in New Haven be under the jurisdiction of an OPM-determined state agency rather than that of the local police

§§ 61-63 — MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES

Requires DSS to amend the Medicaid state plan to expand coverage for health care services provided to eligible students (1) by or on behalf of a LEA or (2) in school nurses' offices; establishes an interagency coalition to coordinate and make recommendations to maximize federal funding for Medicaid-eligible health care services in public schools

§ 64 — PHASING OUT MED-CONNECT INCOME AND ASSET LIMITS

Increases income and asset eligibility limits in the Med-Connect program starting in April 2025 and annually starting in July 2026, and eliminates them in July 2029

§§ 65 & 68 — BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFBLIND OR HARD OF HEARING

Establishes the bureau within ADS and requires the department to hire a bureau director; requires state agencies to appoint an employee to serve as a point of contact for concerns related to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing

§§ 66, 67, 69 & 71 — ADVISORY BOARD FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFBLIND OR HARD OF HEARING

Renames the board, changes its membership, and expands its duties and reporting requirements

§§ 70 & 72 — ADS SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAFBLIND

Expands ADS responsibilities to include providing services for people who are deafblind, generally conforming to practice

§ 73 — METHADONE MAINTENANCE RATE INCREASE

Requires DSS to increase Medicaid rates, within available appropriations, for chemical maintenance providers who currently receive the lowest weekly reimbursement rate

[§ 74 — MEDICAID AMBULANCE RATES](#)

Requires DSS to increase FY 25 ambulance rates within available appropriations, including increasing the mileage rate for Medicaid-covered ambulance transportation by \$1.18 and providing mileage reimbursement for in-town trips

[§ 75 — PACT PROGRAM](#)

Expands the PACT Program’s eligibility to include transition program students; increases the program’s minimum award amounts; names the awards the “Mary Ann Handley Award”; requires BOR’s upcoming semesterly reports on certain program metrics by November 1, 2024, and March 1, 2025

[§ 76 — DEADLINE EXTENSION TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS ON CREATING A NEW SOLID WASTE-RELATED ENTITY](#)

Extends, until July 1, 2025, the deadline for OPM to give the Environment and Energy and Technology committees recommendations on the feasibility and advisability of creating a new solid waste-related quasi-public state agency, waste authority, or other entity

[§ 77 — SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM](#)

Increases, from \$500,000 to \$1 million, the maximum STEAP grant amount a municipality can receive per fiscal year

[§ 78 — VACATION AND PERSONAL DAYS DURING WORKING TEST PERIODS](#)

Gives full-time permanent state employees paid vacation days and personal days during their initial working test periods

[§ 79 — STATE AGENCY DUAL EMPLOYMENT](#)

Eliminates a provision that prohibits certain state agency deputies from having other employment

[§§ 80 & 81 — JUDICIAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM AMORTIZATION](#)

Changes the method for determining the state’s contribution for JRS unfunded liability from a 40-year amortization to a 15-year layered amortization, which effectively extends the contributions for an additional seven years; requires the state retirement commission to revise the JRS actuarial valuation using the new amortization method

[§§ 82-85 — CONNECTICUT MUNICIPAL REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY](#)

Requires MRDA to provide members, by request, assistance on developing project criteria and regulations to increase housing production; authorizes it to establish criteria to evaluate its projects’ potential impacts; eliminates a requirement that members appoint a local development board

[§ 86 — INVESTMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL “GIFTS”](#)

Allows the IAC’s public members to receive travel expenses, lodging, food, beverages, and other benefits customarily provided in the course of employment without violating the state code of ethics

[§ 87 — REPEAL OF STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT AND RELATED PROGRAMS](#)

Repeals several student loan reimbursement, scholarship, and related programs

[§ 88 — REPEAL OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNER EDUCATOR INCENTIVE PROGRAM](#)

Repeals the multilingual learner educator incentive program

[§ 89 — CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT REVIEW](#)

Eliminates the requirement that DAS and OPM review and comment on the Port Authority's quarterly report before it is submitted to the Transportation Committee

[§§ 90, 91 & 131-232 — HEALTH STRATEGY AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS](#)

Renames the title of OHS's and OHE's executive heads as "commissioners" rather than "executive directors"

[§ 92 — TOBACCO AND HEALTH TRUST FUND TRANSFER](#)

Suspends the annual \$12 million disbursement from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund for FY 25 and redirects it to the General Fund

[§§ 93 & 94 — DSS PHARMACY APPROVALS](#)

Increases, from 2 to 24 hours, how much time DSS has to grant or deny pharmacy requests for prior authorization or dispensing name brand drug products before they are deemed approved

[§§ 95-97 — BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH TRUST FUND](#)

Eliminates the Biomedical Research Trust Fund and requires the state comptroller to transfer its remaining balance to the General Fund

[§ 98 — EMS REGIONAL COORDINATOR POSITIONS TO CLASSIFIED SERVICE](#)

Requires DAS to transition EMS regional coordinators and assistant regional coordinators to classified service

[§ 99 — INFORMATION REQUESTS TO STATE AGENCIES](#)

Requires requests for certain information to be directed to the state agency where the information originated

[§ 100 — AGREEMENTS OR SOLICITATIONS TO LOCATE UNCLAIMED PROPERTY](#)

Expands requirements and processes for agreements and solicitations to locate unclaimed property

[§§ 101-104 — COPAYMENT-ONLY HEALTH PLANS](#)

Exempts copayment-only health plans from the insurance law's copayment limitations for certain in-network imaging services and physical and occupational therapy services

[§ 105 — PRESUMPTIVE MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMECARE](#)

Eliminates Section 10 of PA 24-39 and replaces it with generally similar provisions; requires the DSS commissioner to establish a presumptive Medicaid eligibility system for people applying to the Medicaid-funded portion of CHCPE; requires the state to pay for up to 90 days of home care for applicants found presumptively Medicaid eligible

[§ 106 — MEN'S HEALTH PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN](#)

Requires the DPH commissioner to create and annually report on a campaign promoting community-based screening and education for common diseases affecting high-risk male populations

[§ 107 — HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD](#)

Establishes the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board, designates its members, assigns the board powers and duties, and requires public higher education institutions and the UConn Health Center to submit certain information to the board at the chairpersons' request

[§ 108 — EDUCATION MANDATE REVIEW ADVISORY COUNCIL](#)

Modifies criteria for two of the council's 10 appointees

[§ 109 — POPULATION DATA FOR MUNICIPAL GRANTS](#)

For FY 25, requires OPM to use DPH's 2021 population estimates to calculate municipal grants

[§ 110 — BOR MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION](#)

Expands BOR to include the OPM secretary as an ex-officio, nonvoting member

[§ 111 — TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS DURING CODIFICATION](#)

Requires LCO to make necessary technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes when codifying the act and other public acts

[§§ 112-119 — REVISIONS TO MAGNET SCHOOL AND VO-AG CENTER FUNDING PROGRAMS; CREATION OF NEW CHOICE PROGRAM GRANT](#)

Makes significant changes to education funding grant programs for (1) interdistrict magnet schools and (2) regional agricultural science and technology centers (i.e., "vo-ag centers"); eliminates, for FY 25, the existing magnet school and vo-ag center grants, and replaces them with new grants under the choice program

[§ 120 — SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING AMOUNTS FOR ECS, CHARTER SCHOOL, MAGNET SCHOOL, OPEN CHOICE, AND VO-AG CENTER GRANTS](#)

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Requires SDE to apportion the \$150 million appropriated for FY 25 for “Education Finance Reform” in specific amounts for (1) supplemental funds for the following grants: ECS, charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, the Open Choice Program, and vo-ag centers, and (2) grants for specific projects, programs, towns, and agencies

§ 121 — PLAN TO CONVERT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION INTO AN ADVISORY BOARD

Requires the SDE commissioner to develop a plan to convert SBE into an advisory board and make the SDE commissioner the department head

§ 122 — ASSET AND CAPACITY MAPPING FOR NONPROFITS

Requires UConn’s School of Public Policy to conduct a study and comprehensive asset and capacity mapping for nonprofit organizations to support information-sharing and collaboration between nonprofits and communities; requires the school to provide an interim report and a final report to the Education Committee

§ 123 — SDE DISTRIBUTION OF PARAEDUCATOR FUNDING

Sets a September 1, 2024, deadline for SDE to distribute to school boards the FY 23 amount allocated to the department from ARPA funding for paraeducator professional development

§§ 124 & 126 — PARAEDUCATOR HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Extends by one year an HSA subsidy program for paraeducators and expands it to cover HDHPs for Medicare-eligible paraeducators; requires the comptroller to establish a one-year premium subsidy program for school boards that provide paraeducators with certain health plans; requires the comptroller and SDE commissioner to enter into an MOU related to these programs; repeals a program giving stipends to paraeducators to purchase a qualified health plan through Access Health CT

§ 125 — SERC FUNDING ALLOCATION

Requires, rather than allows, the SDE commissioner to allocate funds to SERC

§§ 127-130 — DEEP PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROJECTS

For certain transportation capital projects, requires specified information to be included in a petition for a DEEP public hearing on an application for a (1) tidal or inland wetland activity permit; (2) structures, dredging, or fill permit; or (3) certification to conduct certain work in a floodplain

§§ 233-239 — FY 24 BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Makes deficiency appropriations for FY 24 in the General Fund and STF and reduces appropriations in five appropriated funds

§§ 240 & 241 — CARRYFORWARD OF CERTAIN CANNABIS-RELATED APPROPRIATIONS

Carries forward certain unspent funds appropriated to OPM for costs associated with cannabis legalization and requires them to be used for other purposes (however, a separate act repeals these provisions and carries forward these funds for different purposes)

§ 242 — SCHOOL MEALS

For FY 25, makes SDE financially responsible for school boards' portion of the cost for reduced price meals for students not enrolled in a school that qualifies for maximum federal reimbursement under the CEP

§ 243 — MRDA REQUIREMENT REPEALED

Repeals the requirement that MRDA review and approve a member municipality's economic development master plan before executing an MOA with it, as well as related provisions

§§ 1, 6 & 7 — ARPA PROVISIONS

Reallocates \$365,077,512 in ARPA funding and authorizes the OPM secretary to reallocate ARPA funds subject to specified parameters

Reallocations (§ 1)

The act reallocates \$365,077,512 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for various purposes in FY 25. These allocations include the following additional amounts:

1. \$80,000,000 to the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU);
2. \$57,700,000 and \$22,300,00 to UConn and the UConn Health Center, respectively, for temporary support;
3. \$50,000,000 to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) for private providers;
4. \$41,100,000 to OPM for municipal aid to specified towns; and
5. \$18,800,000 to the Office of Early Childhood for Care 4 Kids.

The act also changes the purposes for which certain previous allocations may be used.

Unobligated Funds (§ 7)

Federal law generally requires that states obligate their ARPA funds by December 31, 2024, and spend them by December 31, 2026. (Under the law, “obligation” generally means (1) an order placed for property and services or (2) entering into contracts, subawards, and similar transactions requiring payment.) Starting October 15, 2024, the act requires the OPM secretary to reallocate ARPA funds that he reasonably believes will not be obligated or spent by these deadlines in the manner specified in the act.

More specifically, if the comptroller's last cumulative monthly statement before October 15, 2024, projects a General Fund deficit, the act requires the OPM secretary to reallocate ARPA funds to cover deficiencies, up to the amount of the projected deficit. If there is no projected deficit, or if funds remain after addressing

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the deficit, the OPM secretary must reallocate \$40,000,000 to CSCU (\$20,000,000), UConn (\$10,000,000), and the UConn Health Center (\$10,000,000), with amounts reduced proportionately if less than \$40,000,000 is available. If funds still remain after these allocations, OPM may reallocate the funds for any use allowable under ARPA.

Under the act, at least 10 days before any reallocation, the OPM secretary must submit to the Appropriations Committee a list of funds to be reallocated and the uses for which they will be allocated.

Unspent or Unallowed Allocations (§ 6)

Starting January 1, 2025, the act allows the OPM secretary to reallocate any ARPA funds that are (1) obligated for an allowable use by December 31, 2024, but not spent or (2) obligated by that date but spent on a use determined to be unallowable. These funds may be reallocated and obligated to any use allowable under ARPA.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provision allowing the OPM secretary to reallocate ARPA allocations that are unspent or unallowed is effective January 1, 2025.

§§ 2, 8-11, 19 & 20 — CARRYFORWARDS

Carries forward certain agencies' unspent funds and requires that they be used in FY 25 for specified purposes

As shown in the table below, the act carries forward unspent amounts appropriated or carried forward for FY 24 and requires that they be used for specified purposes in FY 25 rather than lapsing at the end of FY 24.

Funds Carried Forward to FY 25

§	Agency	FY 24 Purpose	FY 25 Purpose	Amount
8	Office of Legislative Management (OLM)	Minor capital improvements	Same as FY 24	Up to \$3,000,000
9	OLM	Statues	Support removal of the John Mason statue from the Capitol building	Up to \$100,000
10	Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP)	Other expenses: for Marlborough Fire Department facility upgrades	Other expenses: for Marlborough Fire Department facility upgrades and equipment at the facility	Unspent balance
11(a)	Commission on Women, Children, Seniors,	Personal services	Support staff positions	Up to \$120,000

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§	Agency	FY 24 Purpose	FY 25 Purpose	Amount
	Equity and Opportunity			
11(b)	Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity	Other expenses	Support a study on community-based bereavement and grief counseling services	Up to \$50,000
19	Judicial Department	Youth Services Prevention	Support University of New Haven’s performance-based accountability project youth services grants	Up to \$125,000
20	Judicial Department	Youth Services Prevention and Youth Violence Initiative	Juvenile justice system needs, as the Chief Court Administrator determines	Unspent balance

The act also reserves \$250,000 from funds that the FY 24-25 budget act (PA 23-204) appropriated to the Labor Department for the Youth Employment Program for FY 24 and carried forward to FY 25 for the same purpose (§ 2). The reserved funds must be allocated to Capital Workforce Partners for administration related to establishing new programming.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 3 & 5 — SPENDING REDUCTIONS AND BUDGETED LAPSES

Prohibits the OPM secretary from achieving FY 25 budgeted lapses by reducing spending related to certain constitutional offices; expands the OPM secretary’s authority to reduce General Fund executive branch expenditures by \$129 million for FY 25

The FY 24-25 budget act (PA 23-204) authorizes the OPM secretary to reduce spending for the executive and judicial branches to achieve specified budgeted lapses in the General Fund. This act prohibits OPM from reducing spending (e.g., reducing allotment requisitions or allotments in force) for the state treasurer, secretary of the state, state comptroller, or attorney general in FY 25, regardless of this authority.

The act also expands the OPM secretary’s authority to reduce General Fund executive branch expenditures by \$129 million for FY 25 by eliminating the requirement that these reductions be made in personal services. (This reduction corresponds to a required \$129 million lapse to “Reflect Historical Staffing” for FY 25, unchanged by this act.) The FY 24-25 budget act additionally authorizes the OPM secretary to reduce allotments for the executive branch by \$48.7 million in FY 25 to achieve budgeted lapses in the General Fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 4 — GOVERNOR’S AUTHORITY TO MAKE INTRA- AND INTER-AGENCY TRANSFERS FOR FY 25

For FY 25, (1) increases the cap on the amount the governor may transfer between an agency’s appropriations without the FAC’s approval and (2) authorizes the governor to transfer appropriations between agencies, with FAC approval, for retirement system contributions

If an agency’s appropriation is insufficient to pay the necessary expenses for which the appropriation was made, existing law authorizes the governor, at the agency’s request, to transfer funds from one of the agency’s other appropriations to cover the expenses. But the law generally requires the Finance Advisory Committee’s (FAC) approval for transfers exceeding \$175,000 or 10% of the specific appropriation, whichever is less. For FY 25 only, the act increases this threshold to the lesser of \$350,000 or 25% of the specific appropriation. As under existing law, FAC approval is not required for transfers from fringe benefit appropriations to the operating funds of the higher education constituent units.

The act also allows the governor to make inter-agency transfers for FY 25, with the FAC’s consent, to fund the actuarially determined employer contribution for the State Employees Retirement Fund, Teachers’ Retirement Fund, or State Judges’ Retirement Fund. As under existing law for intra-agency transfers, the governor must notify the Appropriations Committee and the Office of Fiscal Analysis director of these transfers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 12 — COMPENSATION ADJUSTMENTS FOR NONPARTISAN LEGISLATIVE EMPLOYEES

Requires OLM to give nonpartisan legislative employees the same wage adjustments provided to other state employees under the SEBAC Wage Re-Opener Agreement

The act requires OLM, for FY 25, to apply to nonpartisan legislative employees terms consistent with those in the SEBAC 2022 Wage Re-Opener Agreement between the state and the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) ratified on March 29, 2024. Under that agreement, most state employees receive a 2.5% general wage increase and an annual increment in FY 25. The act specifies that its provisions apply regardless of the laws on legislative agencies and any personnel policies adopted under them.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 13 — PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATION FUND

Requires that at least \$12 million of the Probate Court Administration Fund’s balance at the end of FY 24 remain in the fund rather than be transferred to the General Fund even if the balance exceeds the existing threshold

Under existing law, if there is a balance in the Probate Court Administration Fund on each June 30 exceeding 15% of its authorized expenditures for the coming fiscal year, then that excess must be transferred to the General Fund.

Regardless of this provision, the act requires that at least \$12 million from the

probate fund stay in the fund on June 30, 2024, rather than be transferred to the General Fund, even if the probate fund's balance exceeds the 15% threshold.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 14 — FUNDING FOR BRIDGEPORT ELECTION MONITOR

Transfers \$150,000 from SEEC to the secretary of the state to fund an election monitor position in Bridgeport

The act transfers \$150,000 appropriated to the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) under PA 23-204, § 1, for FY 25, to the secretary of the state to fund an election monitor position in Bridgeport.

For the 2024 state election, PA 23-1, September Special Session, § 7, requires the secretary to contract with an individual to serve as an election monitor in any municipality with a population of at least 140,000 (i.e., Bridgeport). The act requires the secretary to contract with the election monitor until December 31, 2024, unless the secretary terminates the contract for any reason before then.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 15 — MEDICAID BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Makes available \$7 million from the FY 25 Medicaid appropriation to increase rates for behavioral health services for children

The act requires \$7 million from the FY 25 Medicaid appropriation to the Department of Social Services (DSS) in last year's budget act to be made available for rate increases for providers of behavioral health services to children, including all family therapy services.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 16 — MICROGRID FUNDING

Allows DEEP to use up to \$5,224,415 from bond funding authorized in 2013 to reimburse design and construction costs for a microgrid at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London

PA 13-239, § 13, authorized \$15 million in bond funding for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) program to establish microgrids to support critical and municipal infrastructure, since renamed as the Microgrid and Resilience Grant and Loan Program. Regardless of the law setting requirements for this program, the act authorizes DEEP to use a portion of these funds to reimburse design and construction costs for a microgrid at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, up to \$5,224,415.

Under existing law, DEEP's Microgrid and Resilience Grant and Loan Program awards grants or loans to eligible participants for local distributed energy generation or resilience projects (CGS § 16-243y). A microgrid is a group of interconnected loads and distributed energy resources within clearly defined electrical boundaries that acts as a single controllable entity with respect to the grid.

Microgrids can connect and disconnect from the grid to operate in either grid-connected or island mode.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 17 — DOC VOCATIONAL VILLAGE PROGRAM

Requires the DOC commissioner to prepare and equip the department and its post-secondary education partners to use allocated funding under the vocational village program for programs that produce economic and other benefits, including inmate employment opportunities

By law, the Department of Correction (DOC), in consultation with the Department of Economic and Community Development, administers a vocational village program to provide skilled trades training to inmates, including opportunities to earn nationally recognized industry certifications and credentials. OPM must allocate funds to DOC for the program from the federal funds the state has received under certain laws, including ARPA.

The act requires the DOC commissioner to prepare and equip the department and its post-secondary education partners to use this allocated funding for programs that produce economic and other benefits, including employment opportunities for inmates.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 18 — NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Requires OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, in consultation with DOC, to do a needs assessment of the facilities, materials, and staffing required to deliver postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities

The act requires OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, in consultation with DOC, to do a needs assessment of the facilities, materials, and staffing required to deliver postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities. The assessment must include at least the following:

1. feedback solicitation from higher education institutions that provide postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities to understand current needs;
2. an analysis of DOC's policies on incarcerated individuals' postsecondary education;
3. an estimate of the level of unmet demand for this type of education;
4. an inventory of (a) correctional facilities (including classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, libraries, and study rooms); (b) staffing; and (c) materials currently available for education delivery (including education technology and internet access);
5. recommendations for and a cost analysis of improving facilities, staffing, and materials to meet the unmet demand;
6. a survey of (a) students of postsecondary education programs in correctional facilities; (b) former students of these programs, in consultation with

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regional reentry programs; and (c) any person or group the division deems necessary; and

7. any other barriers to the effective delivery of these education programs.

The act requires the OPM secretary to report on the needs assessment to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee by January 1, 2025.
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 21 — YOUTH SERVICES PREVENTION GRANTS

Specifies Youth Services Prevention grant amounts for various organizations in FY 25

The FY 24-25 budget act (PA 23-204) appropriated \$7.28 million to the Judicial Department in FY 25 for Youth Services Prevention. The act specifies the grant amounts that must be awarded from this appropriation to various organizations.
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 22 — STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Modifies requirements for the OHE Student Loan Reimbursement Program, including (1) expanding the program to include students who have attended and graduated with an associate degree, (2) requiring the OHE executive director to establish hardship waiver qualifications and post program forms online, and (3) requiring specific documentation from participants as part of their annual reporting requirements

PA 23-204, § 174, requires the Office of Higher Education (OHE) executive director, by January 1, 2025, to establish a student loan reimbursement program to annually reimburse eligible people for up to \$5,000 of their student loan payments, within available appropriations, for up to four years per participant. This act expands the program and adjusts its eligibility and documentation requirements.
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

Program Expansion

Under prior law, OHE could allow anyone to participate in the program who has a student loan and, among other eligibility criteria, attended and graduated with a bachelor's degree from an in-state college (public or private). The act expands eligibility for the program to also include those who have attended and graduated with an associate degree.

Verification Requirements

The act requires each program participant to annually submit to OHE, in a manner the executive director sets, a statement from a student loan servicer that includes the amounts for the outstanding loan balance for each student loan and the total of the year-to-date payments made on each student loan, rather than student loan payment receipts as prior law required.

The law also requires participants to (1) be state residents as defined under state

income tax law and (2) have been so for at least five years. The act specifies that the OHE executive director determines whether applicants meet this residency requirement.

Hardship Waiver and Program Application Forms

The act removes provisions on OHE allowing program participation by students who left a college or university in good academic standing before graduation, and instead allows the OHE executive director to grant a hardship waiver as part of the program eligibility requirements.

It requires the OHE executive director, by January 1, 2025, to post on the office's website (1) hardship waiver qualifications and (2) required application forms for the student loan reimbursement program and hardship waiver. The program application must include an option for a person to disclose their demographic information.

Volunteer Requirement

Existing law requires each program participant to volunteer at a nonprofit for at least 50 unpaid hours per year. The act requires the nonprofit to be registered with the Department of Consumer Protection or a municipal government.

Under the act, program participants must annually submit to OHE, in a manner the executive director sets, a notarized form documenting the number of volunteer hours they completed, signed by their supervisor or another employee of the nonprofit or municipal entity for which they volunteered (or their commanding officer, for military service). Prior law required participants to submit evidence of having completed volunteer hours but did not specify the form of that evidence.

§§ 23 & 24 — SEWERAGE GRANT PROGRAM FOR HARTFORD RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

Primarily changes the Hartford Sewerage System Repair and Improvement Fund program by (1) capping at \$50,000 the grant amount each applicant may receive for real and personal property that was used for business purposes; (2) limiting eligibility for real property assistance to those who have requested an assessment from the MDC's sewer back-up prevention program by April 30, 2025; and (3) establishing procedures for judge trial referees, rather than the comptroller, to hear appeals of the program administrator's decisions about an applicant's eligibility or grant amount

The act makes several changes to the Hartford Sewerage System Repair and Improvement Fund and its associated grant program. By law, the program must provide grants to (1) give financial assistance to eligible owners of real property in Hartford to pay for necessary repairs from flood damage caused on or after January 1, 2021, and (2) reimburse residents for costs associated with damage to personal property due to flooding occurring on or after that date.

The act eliminates a prior requirement that owners of eligible real property be Hartford residents. It also:

1. caps grant amounts for damages to certain types of property;

2. generally limits eligibility for real property assistance to individuals who have requested a sewer back up assessment by a specified date;
3. designates judge trial referees, rather than the comptroller, as the hearing authority for applicants' appeals of decisions about their eligibility or grant amounts; and
4. modifies who may conduct assessments of applicants' damages.

The act additionally authorizes the program administrator to make grant payments directly to a contractor or vendor an applicant hired to make repairs. It also makes minor and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Grant Amount Cap

The act caps at \$50,000 the grant amount each applicant may receive for costs incurred for repairs to real property and damage to personal property that was used for business purposes when the damage occurred.

Eligibility Requirement

Beginning May 1, 2025, to be eligible for financial assistance for real property repairs under the act, new applicants generally must have requested an assessment from the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) sewer backup prevention program by April 30, 2025. (This program provides free technical assistance, on-site plumbing surveys, and other assistance to help customers avoid sewer backups into their homes.)

Under the act, an applicant who did not request this assessment may still be eligible for assistance if the grant program administrator determines, under criteria the comptroller approves, that extenuating circumstances prevented the applicant from doing so. Otherwise, the administrator must, in consultation with MDC, verify that applicants requested an assessment by the specified date.

Appeals

By law, a grant program applicant may appeal the administrator's decision on the applicant's eligibility or the grant amount awarded to him or her. Under prior law, the applicant could appeal to the comptroller, who was authorized to hire an administrator to conduct these appeals. Under the act, these appeals must continue to be filed with the comptroller but must instead be heard by a judge trial referee the chief court administrator assigns. The referee must be paid according to existing law governing their compensation.

The act specifies that the applicant has the burden of showing that he or she is eligible for the grant program and payment for real property repairs or personal property reimbursement. The judge trial referee may consider evidence (e.g., testimony and reports) presented by the applicant, program administrator, or other interested party.

If the applicant shows his or her eligibility, by a preponderance of the evidence,

the judge trial referee must award the applicant the grant amount he or she is owed under the law. The judge trial referee must issue a decision within 60 days after the hearing ends, and as under prior law, the decision is final.

Inspectors

Under existing law, certain inspectors must evaluate damage to each eligible applicant’s property and give the program administrator a report on it. The act specifies that these inspectors must be licensed home inspectors or insurance adjusters. It allows the comptroller to contract with these inspectors (rather than using inspectors employed by MDC to serve this function and reimbursing MDC from the fund). Alternatively, under existing law and the act, applicants may hire a licensed home inspector or insurance adjuster that meets certain criteria and be reimbursed from the fund for the associated costs.

§§ 25-30 — RESTRICTIONS ON RECOVERY OF COSTS OF CARE FOR DECEASED STATE HUMANE INSTITUTION RESIDENT

Prohibits DAS from recovering from a deceased person’s estate charges for care in a state humane institution except under certain circumstances; requires DAS to release any liens filed for recovery of these charges

Beginning July 1, 2024, the act prohibits the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner from recovering from a deceased person’s estate charges for the aid, care, or treatment the person received in a state humane institution unless the (1) recovery is required by federal law or (2) billing rate for care in the institution was set using fraudulent or concealed information. If the rate was set this way, DAS may recover the difference between the amount billed and paid and the amount that would have been billed if not for the fraud or concealment.

Under the act, the DAS commissioner must release any liens filed for recovery of charges the act prohibits. However, the act does not authorize the commissioner to return to any person or estate payments recovered before July 1, 2024, for charges related to care in a state humane institution.

The act also makes related technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

Background — State Humane Institutions

A “state humane institution” is a state mental hospital, community mental health center, treatment facility for children and adolescents, or any other facility or program administered by the departments of Children and Families, Developmental Services, or Mental Health and Addiction Services.

§§ 31-33 — COST OF INCARCERATION

Regarding the state’s claim for an individual’s incarceration costs, generally (1) terminates claims associated with crimes on an erased criminal record and prohibits the reimbursement of

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claims paid before July 1, 2024; (2) exempts up to \$50,000 from the lien the state may place on an inmate's inheritance; and (3) specifies that any property the probate court deems an asset must be used to pay the state's claim against the estate of certain inmates

The law requires the DOC commissioner to charge an inmate for the cost of his or her incarceration. The act makes the following changes to the mechanisms through which the commissioner recovers incarceration costs:

1. terminates the state's claims for incarceration costs that it incurred during the time the inmate was serving for crimes that were later erased from his or her criminal record and specifies that these inmates are not entitled to reimbursement for state claims paid before July 1, 2024;
2. exempts up to \$50,000 from the lien the state may place on an inmate's inheritance, except in cases where the inmate was incarcerated for a capital felony, murder with special circumstances, felony murder, 1st or 2nd degree sexual assault, 1st degree aggravated sexual assault, or 1st degree aggravated sexual assault of a minor; and
3. specifies that any property the probate court deems an asset must be used to pay the state's claim against the estate of a former inmate who dies within 20 years after his or her release.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 34 — DESPP MISSING PERSONS CLEARINGHOUSE

Removes children with IDD from the missing persons information clearinghouse

By law, DESPP administers a missing persons information clearinghouse that holds information to help law enforcement agencies locate those (1) ages 65 or older or (2) ages 18 or older with a mental impairment. Prior law also required that the clearinghouse include information on missing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The act modifies this prior requirement by limiting it to those who are at least age 18 with IDD. It also makes a conforming change.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 35 — HOSPITAL PILOT FOR ASD SERVICES

Narrows the type of hospital DSS must select for a two-year pilot program on ASD to one in Hartford County with an established program for children and adolescents

Prior law required DSS to establish a two-year pilot program in partnership with a hospital to provide nonresidential outpatient day services for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The act specifically requires DSS to partner with a free-standing, long-term acute care hospital in Hartford County with an established, specialized interdisciplinary program for younger children and adolescents with an ASD diagnosis. By law, and under the act, DSS must select a hospital by September 1, 2024, and the hospital must start providing services under the pilot program by October 1, 2024.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 36 — HUMAN SERVICES CAREER PIPELINE

Removes the July 1, 2024, deadline to establish the career pipeline program and requires the CWO to report on its plan for the program by that date; requires the CWO to establish the pipeline program within available appropriations

Prior law required the chief workforce officer (CWO) to establish the Human Services Career Pipeline by July 1, 2024. The act requires the CWO to do this within available appropriations and eliminates the deadline. By law, the career pipeline must (1) ensure enough trained providers are available to serve elderly people and people with IDD, physical disabilities, cognitive impairment, or mental illness and (2) include training and certification in specified areas and incentives to retain workers in the human services sector after the program ends.

By law, the CWO must develop a plan for the career pipeline program that includes (1) a strategy to increase the number of state residents pursuing careers in human services, (2) recommended salary and working conditions needed to retain an adequate number of human services providers to serve state residents, and (3) estimated funding needed to support the program. The act requires the CWO to report on the plan by July 1, 2024, to the Aging, Appropriations, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Human Services, Labor and Public Employees, and Public Health committees. The report must include the CWO's recommendations for establishing the career pipeline and estimated funding needed to implement it.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 37 — LOCAL VOLUNTARY PUBLIC SAFETY REGISTRATION SYSTEM

Eliminates the local voluntary public safety registration system for children with IDD and the requirement that PSAP emergency dispatchers search this system's database when dispatching emergency services to a residential address

The act eliminates the 2023-enacted local voluntary public safety registration system for children with IDD, including ASD, cognitive impairments, and nonverbal learning disorders, as well as related provisions (CGS § 7-294qq). It correspondingly eliminates the requirement that, starting July 15, 2024, each emergency dispatcher employed by a public safety answering point (PSAP), when practicable, search the system when dispatching emergency services to a residential address (CGS § 28-25c).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 38 & 39 — INCOME LIMITS FOR HUSKY A PARENTS AND CARETAKER RELATIVES AND HUSKY C

Lowers the income limit for HUSKY A parents and caretaker relatives from 155% of FPL to 133% of FPL; reduces the scheduled October 1 HUSKY C income limit increase from 105% of FPL to 159% of the TFA monthly cash benefit

O L R P U B L I C A C T S U M M A R Y

The act reduces the income limit for HUSKY A parents and caretaker relatives from 155% of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) to 133% of FPL. (In 2024, 155% of FPL for a family of three is \$40,021 annually, while 133% of FPL for a family of three is \$34,340 annually.)

The act reduces the scheduled October 1 HUSKY C income limit increase as shown in the table below. It does so by repealing a provision that would have increased the HUSKY C income limit from 143% of the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) monthly cash benefit to 105% of FPL after income disregards, effective October 1, 2024. The act instead increases the income limit to 159% of the TFA monthly cash benefit, also effective October 1, 2024.

Monthly HUSKY C Income Limits (2024)

	Current Limit: 143% of the TFA Monthly Cash Benefit	Beginning October 1, 2024	
		Under Prior Law: 105% of FPL, After Disregards	Under the Act: 159% of the TFA Monthly Cash Benefit
Single	\$699	\$1,317	\$778
Married Couple	945	1,788	1,051

(The table does not account for differences in income methodology (e.g., disregards) unless they are explicit in statute.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024, except the provision that reduces the scheduled October 1 HUSKY C income limit increase is effective upon passage.

§§ 40-43 — PASSPORT TO THE PARKS

Increases the Passport to the Parks motor vehicle registration fee; provides funding from the Passport to the Parks account for operating (1) Batterson Park and (2) the Thames River Heritage Park water taxi; requires DEEP to enter into MOAs for related purposes

Fee Increase

The act increases the Passport to the Parks fee that people registering vehicles in the state must pay. Under prior law, the fee was \$15 for a triennial registration, \$10 for a biennial registration, and \$5 for an annual registration. (Annual registrations are only available to those age 65 or over.) The act increases the fee to \$24 for a triennial registration, \$16 for a biennial registration, and \$8 for an annual registration. By law, collected fees must be deposited in the Passport to the Parks account (see *Background — Passport to the Parks Account*).

Account Purposes Expanded

The act expands the purposes for which money in the Passport to the Parks account must be spent. It requires the account to fund the (1) care, maintenance,

and operation of Batterson Park and (2) operation of the Thames River Heritage Park taxi for FY 26 through FY 31. For the heritage park taxi service, funding cannot exceed (1) \$200,000 in each fiscal year for FY 26 to FY 28; (2) \$100,000 for FY 29 and FY 30; and (3) \$50,000 in FY 31.

Batterson Park is a public park owned by Hartford and located in Farmington and New Britain. Thames River Heritage Park consists of numerous historic sites along the Thames River. The heritage park’s foundation operates water taxis to sites in New London and Groton.

Memoranda of Agreement

The act requires DEEP, Hartford, and Riverfront Recapture to enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) about the care, maintenance, and operation of Batterson Park by Riverfront Recapture. (Riverfront Recapture is a nonprofit organization that manages, maintains, and operates four riverfront parks and their connected riverwalks and trails.)

Under the act, the agreement may authorize (1) Riverfront Recapture’s agents and employees to enter, maintain, and operate Batterson Park and (2) DEEP to give Riverfront Recapture a grant each fiscal year from the Passport to the Parks account for these purposes.

Additionally, the act requires DEEP to enter into an MOA with the Thames River Heritage Park Foundation to fund the operation and administration of a water taxi boat and tour operations in New London and Groton in FYs 25 to 31 from the Passport to the Parks account.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, except the MOA requirements take effect upon passage and the Passport to the Parks fee increase takes effect July 1, 2025.

Background — Passport to the Parks Account

Under existing law, the Passport to the Parks account is a separate, nonlapsing General Fund account. It must be used to (1) pay for the care, maintenance, operation, and improvement of state parks and campgrounds; (2) fund soil and water conservation districts and environmental review teams; and (3) pay the Council on Environmental Quality’s expenses. In addition, the law requires DEEP to pay \$100,000 from the account each fiscal year to each of the following entities:

1. Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District,
2. Eastern Conservation District,
3. North Central Conservation District,
4. Northwest Conservation District,
5. Southwest Conservation District,
6. Connecticut Environmental Review Team, and
7. Connecticut Council on Water and Soil Conservation.

§ 44 — UCONN HEALTH CENTER EMPLOYEE FRINGE BENEFITS

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Requires the comptroller to (1) use up to \$4.5 million of funds appropriated for State Comptroller-Fringe Benefits to fund a portion of the fringe benefits for UCHC employees and (2) enter into an MOU with UCHC for providing operational support

For FY 24 and each fiscal year after it, the act requires the comptroller to use up to \$4.5 million of the resources appropriated for State Comptroller-Fringe Benefits to fund the fringe benefit cost differential between the average rate for fringe benefits of private hospitals in the state and the fringe benefit rate for University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC) employees. Under the act, the “fringe benefit cost differential” is the difference between the (1) state fringe benefit rate calculated on UCHC payroll and (2) average member fringe benefit rate of all of Connecticut’s acute care hospitals as contained in the annual reports submitted to the Office of Health Strategy’s Health Systems Planning Unit as required by law.

The act also requires the comptroller to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with UCHC for providing operating support.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 45 & 46 — EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE TOWARDS PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM PEOPLE

Requires DPH to develop educational materials on intimate partner violence toward pregnant and postpartum people (PA 24-151 changes this terminology to “expectant and postpartum mothers and persons”); requires DPH to distribute the educational materials to certain health care providers and facilities to give to patients; transfers, from the Maternal Mortality Review Committee to DPH, responsibility for developing educational materials on certain other topics

The act requires the Department of Public Health (DPH), by January 1, 2025, to develop educational materials on intimate partner violence toward pregnant and postpartum people. In doing so, the department must consult with organizations that advocate on behalf of domestic violence victims. (PA 24-151, §§ 141 & 142, modifies terminology in this act by replacing (1) “pregnant and postpartum persons” with “expectant and postpartum mothers and persons” and (2) “postpartum person” with “postpartum mother or person.”)

Under the act, DPH must distribute the educational materials (1) in print to each birthing hospital and birth center in the state and (2) electronically to obstetricians and other health care providers who practice obstetrics. It correspondingly requires these facilities and providers to give the educational materials to their pregnant and postpartum patients.

The act also transfers, from the state’s Maternal Mortality Review Committee to DPH, the responsibility for developing educational materials on the following topics required under existing law:

1. the health and safety of pregnant and postpartum persons with mental health disorders, including perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, for DPH to distribute to the state’s birthing hospitals;
2. evidence-based screening tools for screening patients for intimate partner violence, peripartum mood disorders, and substance use disorder for DPH to distribute to obstetricians and other health care providers who practice

obstetrics; and

3. indicators of intimate partner violence for DPH to distribute to (1) hospitals for emergency department health care providers and social workers to use and (2) obstetricians and other health care providers who practice obstetrics.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 47 & 48 — XL CENTER

Specifies that the XL Center includes the adjoining garage for CRDA's operating and capital project agreements with contractors; exempts from the sales and use taxes personal property or services needed for the XL Center's operations and sold to the contractor operating the center; increases the maximum amount that the state, CRDA, or both must contribute to the center's renovation

PA 23-204, §§ 393 & 394, allows the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) to enter into separate agreements on the XL Center's (1) management and operation and (2) reconstruction and renovation. This act specifies that for these projects, agreements, and related requirements (e.g., for the management and operation agreement, allocating profits and losses between the contractor and CRDA), the XL Center includes the adjoining CRDA-owned garage on Church Street, in addition to the civic center and coliseum complex as existing law provides.

For operations, existing law allows CRDA, by December 31, 2025, to enter into an agreement with the contractor managing and operating the XL Center on July 1, 2023, to continue doing so. The act exempts from the sales and use taxes tangible personal property or services needed for the XL Center's operation and sold to the contractor while it is operating the center. Existing law exempts, among other things, sales of personal property or services to political subdivisions (CGS § 12-412(1)). (The City of Hartford owns the XL Center.)

For the reconstruction and renovation, existing law allows CRDA to enter into one or more agreements by December 31, 2025, for a project to renovate and reconstruct the XL Center. The act increases, from \$80 million to \$125 million, the maximum amount of funding that CRDA, the state, or both together, must contribute under the agreement toward the cost of any renovation or reconstruction occurring after January 1, 2023. By law, the contractor must contribute at least \$20 million.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 49 — NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Contains identical provisions as in § 18; see above for analysis

§ 50 — ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

Requires OHE to (1) disburse Roberta B. Willis scholarship program funds for FYs 24 and 25 according to a plan developed by the office and (2) reserve up to \$15 million from the program's FY 25 appropriation for disbursement during FY 26

Prior law required OHE to use Roberta B. Willis scholarship program funds appropriated or allocated for FY 24 to make its awards for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years. Additionally, it required all American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated for the program to be used by December 31, 2024.

The act instead requires OHE to disburse the funds appropriated or allocated for the program for FYs 24 and 25 according to a plan developed by the office. It also requires that all ARPA funds allocated for the program be disbursed, rather than used, by December 31, 2024.

Additionally, the act requires OHE to reserve up to \$15 million from the amount appropriated for the program for FY 25 for disbursement during FY 26.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 51 — CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY REPORT

Requires the CPA, by January 1, 2025, to begin quarterly reporting to the Transportation and Appropriations committees on a staffing plan to handle its needs and its efforts for certain activities and programs

The act requires the Connecticut Port Authority (CPA), starting by January 1, 2025, to submit quarterly reports to the Transportation and Appropriations committees that describe its (1) work to support grants under the Small Harbor Improvement Projects Program, (2) dredging activities and the dredging needs of harbors in the state, and (3) marketing activities for maritime communities. The report must also include a staffing plan to handle CPA's needs.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 52 — THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Expands the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee's membership by adding two representatives from the federally recognized Indian tribes in the state; extends, by two years, the committee's reporting deadlines

By law, the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee must evaluate the availability and efficacy of prevention, early intervention, and behavioral health treatment services and options for children from birth to age 18. The act expands the committee's membership by adding two members jointly appointed by the Appropriations Committee chairpersons, each of whom must be a representative of one of the two federally recognized Indian tribes in the state (i.e., the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes).

The act also extends, by two years, certain reporting deadlines for the committee. Under the act the committee must report to the Appropriations, Children's, Human Services, and Public Health committees and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) (1) by December 1, 2025 (rather than by December 1, 2023), on specific subjects (e.g., recommendations on needed statutory or budgetary changes to the behavioral health system, gaps in services, and disproportionate access and outcomes for certain children) and (2) by December 1,

2026 (rather than by December 1, 2024), the strategic plan it must develop, the overall implementation of that plan, and any recommendations for implementing the plan's identified goals.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 53 — 2024-25 ACADEMIC YEAR CHANGES TO THE ROBERTA B. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Prohibits OHE from requiring that Roberta B. Willis scholarship program need-based grants be reduced based on a student's initial qualifications as determined from his or her FAFSA; pauses the requirement that the program's need and merit-based grants be awarded in a higher amount than its need-based grants

This act prohibits OHE, for the academic year beginning July 1, 2024, from requiring higher education institutions participating in the Roberta B. Willis scholarship program to reduce the amount of a need-based grant awarded under the program to an eligible student based on the initial qualifications determined from the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), even if the U.S. Department of Education subsequently revises the qualifications. The act relatedly requires OHE to deem participating higher education institutions compliant with the state law governing the program if an eligible student initially qualified for the need-based grant he or she received.

Additionally, for the academic year beginning July 1, 2024, the act pauses the requirement that the scholarship program's need and merit-based grants be awarded in a higher amount than its need-based grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 54 & 55 — CONNECTICUT HYDROGEN AND ELECTRIC AUTOMOBILE PURCHASE REBATE (CHEAPR) PROGRAM

Modifies the CHEAPR rebate amount for residents of environmental justice communities; requires certain proceeds from RGGI to be used for the CHEAPR program (rather than the CHEAPR account) and other programs that support DEEP's engagement with environmental justice communities

Rebate Amount

By law, the CHEAPR program gives rebates and vouchers to residents, municipalities, businesses, nonprofits, and tribal entities that buy or lease new or used battery electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles, and fuel cell electric vehicles. CHEAPR rebate or voucher amounts are set administratively by DEEP, subject to certain statutory parameters, including a requirement to provide a larger rebate to residents of environmental justice communities. Prior law required the rebate or voucher amount for these residents to be up to 100% more than a standard rebate (see *Background — Environmental Justice Communities*). The act instead requires the amount to be at least 200% more than the standard amount.

Funding From Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)

Prior law diverted a portion of RGGI (see *Background — RGGI*) proceeds to the CHEAPR account, which is used to fund CHEAPR and certain activities related to the zero-emission school bus program. The act instead requires that this funding be diverted to DEEP to fund the CHEAPR program and other programs established to support the department’s engagement with environmental justice communities.
EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Background — Environmental Justice Communities

By law, an “environmental justice community” is (a) any U.S. census block group, as determined by the most recent census, for which at least 30% of the population consists of low-income people who are not institutionalized and have an income below 200% of the federal poverty level or (b) a distressed municipality (CGS § 22a-20a).

Background — RGGI

RGGI is a regional interstate “cap and trade” program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program subjects the region’s power plants to a declining cap on the amount of carbon dioxide they may emit and requires them to purchase emission allowances at quarterly auctions. Those that exceed the cap may buy credits from those that do not. Auction sale proceeds fund energy efficiency and renewal programs.

§ 56 — DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITY DESIGNATION

Generally extends, from five years to 10, the time period for which municipalities with a population exceeding 100,000 are deemed to be distressed municipalities after being removed from DECD’s annual list

Distressed municipalities are those that the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) determines have the highest levels of fiscal and economic distress. DECD annually designates 25 municipalities as distressed using certain statistical indicators that generally measure municipal fiscal capacity (e.g., tax base, residents’ income, and, indirectly, the residents’ need for public services). The designation is used to direct assistance to these municipalities (and businesses and people in them), as an eligibility criteria for additional designations, and for other purposes.

Under existing law, a municipality removed from the list of distressed municipalities in a given year does not immediately lose its designation but is instead deemed to be a distressed municipality for an additional five years. The act extends this period to 10 years for municipalities whose populations exceed 100,000 when they were removed from the list, based on the most recent U.S. census. By law, a municipality may reject the continued designation by a vote of its legislative body within three months after the DECD commissioner notifies it of its removal from the list.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

§§ 57-59 — CIGARETTE DEALER LICENSES AND RENEWALS

Requires cigarette dealer license applicants to post certain notices at their businesses; provides a process to object to a dealer's license application; allows municipalities to adopt ordinances to require these dealers to notify the chief law enforcement official of license renewals and allows the official to comment; requires DRS to consider these comments and report certain statistics on these notifications to the legislature

The act (1) requires applicants for a Department of Revenue Services (DRS) cigarette dealer's license to notify the town where their businesses will be located and post certain notices at their businesses about their license applications, and (2) provides a process for 10 or more people to object to an initial or renewal applicant's suitability or the proposed place of business. Similar provisions apply under existing law for liquor permits.

The act also allows municipalities to adopt ordinances requiring anyone applying to renew a cigarette dealer's license to simultaneously give written notice of the application to the chief law enforcement official or his or her designee in the municipality where the business is located. (By law, municipalities may already do this for those applying to renew an alcoholic liquor permit that allows on-premises serving or consumption.) The act (1) allows the official or designee to send written comments on the application to the DRS commissioner within 15 days after receiving the notice and (2) requires the DRS commissioner to consider the comments before renewing the license.

Lastly, the act requires the DRS commissioner to report, by January 1, 2026, to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding; Planning and Development; and Public Safety and Security committees on:

1. the number and copies of written comments submitted;
2. a summary of actions DRS took in granting or denying any cigarette dealer's license renewal applications for which written comments were submitted; and
3. the commissioner's conclusions and recommendations, after consulting with chief law enforcement officials or their designees, about this notice requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

Notice of Application for Cigarette Dealer's License

Under the act, DRS is prohibited from issuing an initial license to an applicant until the applicant complies with the following notice provision.

The act requires a cigarette dealer's license applicant, after filing the application with DRS, to give notice of the application to the clerk of the municipality where the applicant's business is to be located. The notice must contain the applicant's name and residential address and the place of business for which the license is to be issued. Upon receiving the notice, the clerk must post and maintain the notice on the municipality's website for at least two weeks.

By the day following the date an applicant provides the notice, the applicant

must affix a copy of the notice, in legible condition, on the outer door of the proposed business location. When a license application is filed for an unconstructed building, the applicant must build and maintain a legible sign that is at least six feet by four feet. The sign must include the license applied for and the proposed licensee’s name and be clearly visible from the street.

The applicant must make a return to DRS, under oath, of compliance with the notice requirements, in a manner DRS sets. The department may require additional proof of compliance. Upon receiving sufficient evidence of compliance, DRS may hold a hearing on the proposed location’s suitability.

Objections to a Proposed or Renewed Cigarette Dealer’s License

The act allows any 10 individuals who are at least age 18 and reside in the town in which the cigarette dealer’s business is proposed or currently located, to file a “remonstrance” (i.e., objection) with DRS. For initial licenses, they must file a remonstrance within three weeks after the last day the license applicant’s notice was posted on the municipality’s website. For renewals, they must file it at least 21 days before the license renewal date.

The remonstrance must include any objection to the suitability of the applicant or proposed business place, provided the issue is not controlled by local zoning. If a remonstrance is filed and the individuals apply for a hearing in writing, DRS must hold a hearing and give at least five days’ notice.

The remonstrants (i.e., the people making the objection) must designate one or more agents for service to receive all DRS notices. At any time before DRS issues a decision, the remonstrants or their agents may withdraw a remonstrance and DRS may cancel the hearing or withdraw the case. The DRS decision on the application is final for the remonstrance.

The act allows the remonstrants who are aggrieved by the granting of a license to appeal to court under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act.

§ 60 — UNION AVENUE DETENTION CENTER

Starting in 2026, requires that the Union Avenue detention center in New Haven be under the jurisdiction of an OPM-determined state agency rather than that of the local police

Starting on January 1, 2026, the act places New Haven’s Union Avenue detention center under the jurisdiction of a state agency, as the OPM secretary determines. Under current practice, the facility is under local police jurisdiction.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 61-63 — MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH SERVICES

Requires DSS to amend the Medicaid state plan to expand coverage for health care services provided to eligible students (1) by or on behalf of a LEA or (2) in school nurses’ offices; establishes an interagency coalition to coordinate and make recommendations to maximize federal funding for Medicaid-eligible health care services in public schools

The act makes several changes to expand access to Medicaid-covered health care for Connecticut schoolchildren. Specifically, it:

1. requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner, in consultation with the education commissioner and within available appropriations, to seek federal approval to amend the Medicaid state plan to expand Medicaid coverage for health services provided by or on behalf of a local educational agency (LEA; i.e., a public board of education or other public school administrative authority) to any student enrolled in Medicaid;
2. requires the DSS commissioner, within available appropriations and subject to federal approval, to amend the Medicaid state plan to cover health care services in school nurses' offices for eligible students enrolled in Medicaid; and
3. establishes an interagency coalition to coordinate and make recommendations on maximizing federal funding for Medicaid-eligible health services in Connecticut public schools.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except that the provision on nurses' offices is effective July 1, 2024.

Medicaid Coverage for School-Based Health Services

The act requires the DSS commissioner, in consultation with the education commissioner, to seek federal approval to amend the Medicaid state plan to give Medicaid coverage for health services provided by or on behalf of a LEA to any student enrolled in Medicaid, regardless of whether a student qualifies for services under federal laws for students with disabilities. The commissioner must submit the amendment by October 1, 2025.

The act authorizes a LEA, subject to federal approval and within available appropriations, to submit Medicaid claims for each Medicaid-eligible student who receives Medicaid-covered school-based services unless the student's parent or legal guardian opts out of authorizing the LEA to do so.

Under the act, the DSS commissioner, in consultation with the education commissioner, must develop and distribute to each local or regional school board written guidance on health care services eligible for Medicaid reimbursement.

The act requires the DSS commissioner, annually by January 1, and in consultation with the education commissioner, to report to the Appropriations, Children's, Education, and Human Services committees on Medicaid reimbursement for school-based health services and recommendations for expanding Medicaid services provided in schools.

It also requires the commissioner, within available appropriations and subject to federal approval, to amend the Medicaid state plan to cover health care services in school nurses' offices for eligible students enrolled in Medicaid. This amendment may be part of that described above for LEAs.

Interagency Coalition

OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

The act establishes an interagency coalition consisting of the education and DSS commissioners and the OPM secretary, or their designees, to coordinate and make recommendations on maximizing federal Medicaid funding for health services in public schools. The coalition must (1) hold its first meeting within 60 days after the act passes (i.e., by July 29, 2024) and (2) meet at least quarterly.

The act requires the coalition to report annually by January 1 to the Appropriations, Children's, Education, and Human Services committees on the following:

1. the number of students receiving Medicaid-covered health services in the previous school year and any change in their proportion of the school's total enrollment;
2. steps taken to expand Medicaid coverage for student health services, including any Medicaid waivers or state plan amendments; and
3. a survey of what other states are doing to expand Medicaid-covered health services for students.

§ 64 — PHASING OUT MED-CONNECT INCOME AND ASSET LIMITS

Increases income and asset eligibility limits in the Med-Connect program starting in April 2025 and annually starting in July 2026, and eliminates them in July 2029

The act phases out income and asset eligibility limits in Med-Connect, DSS's medical assistance program for working people with disabilities.

The act increases prior law's income limit, from \$75,000 to \$85,000, and doubles the asset limit for individuals and married couples to \$20,000 and \$30,000, respectively.

Beginning July 1, 2026, the act requires DSS to phase out income and asset limits for Med-Connect by annually increasing the (1) income limit by \$10,000 and (2) asset limit by \$10,000 for individuals and \$15,000 for married couples. Under the act, income and asset limits must be eliminated from the program starting on July 1, 2029.

The act also conforms to current practice by requiring DSS to post required notices of its intent to adopt regulations on the eRegulations system rather than in the Connecticut Law Journal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2025

§§ 65 & 68 — BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFBLIND OR HARD OF HEARING

Establishes the bureau within ADS and requires the department to hire a bureau director; requires state agencies to appoint an employee to serve as a point of contact for concerns related to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing

The act establishes a Bureau of Services for Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing within the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS). It also requires ADS, in consultation with the Advisory Board for Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing (see below) to hire a bureau director by October

1, 2024, who reports to the ADS commissioner. The commissioner must also hire the bureau director's administrative assistant. The act requires the bureau director to (1) have professional experience serving deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing people; (2) be able to communicate in American Sign Language; and (3) be familiar with effective interpretation methods to help deafblind people.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, except the provision on state agency points of contact is effective October 1, 2024.

Bureau Director Duties

Under the act, the bureau director's duties include the following:

1. assisting in overseeing ADS employees who provide counseling, interpreting, and other help to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, excluding federally-funded vocational rehabilitation employees;
2. creating a separate webpage for the bureau on ADS's website that includes (a) the advisory board's meeting schedule, agenda, minutes, and other board resources; (b) an instructional video with audio and captions on the home page on how to navigate the webpage, resources, and tools; and (c) other materials under the act;
3. annually updating a resource guide for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, and publishing it on the ADS website and the bureau's webpage;
4. helping register interpreters, including by maintaining a list of interpreters categorized by the settings where they are qualified to interpret and publishing it on the ADS website and the bureau's webpage;
5. coordinating ADS's efforts to provide information and referral services on available resources to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing;
6. coordinating responses to consumer concerns, requests for help, and referrals to resources, including from state agencies;
7. coordinating education and training initiatives (e.g., working with local and state public safety and public health officials and first responders on best practices to serve and communicate with deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing people or working with interpreters to maintain or enhance their skills in various settings);
8. collaborating with interpreting services providers and training organizations to increase opportunities for mentorships, internships, apprenticeships, and specialized training in interpreting services;
9. partnering with civic and community organizations serving deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing people on workshops and information sessions on new laws, regulations, or developments related to services, programs, or health care needs;
10. raising public awareness about programs and services available to deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing people;
11. working with the governor and Connecticut television stations on ways to make television broadcasts more accessible to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing; and

12. consulting with the advisory board to identify needs and address needed policy changes.

The act also requires the bureau director to help the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) implement telecommunication relay service (TRS) programs for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing. The act requires PURA to consult with ADS and the bureau director when awarding a contract for this service. TRS enables telephone communication between (1) a hearing or speech impaired person using a text telephone or a telecommunications device for the deaf and (2) a person using a telephone. In practice, PURA opens a docket every five years to review proposals and choose a TRS provider.

State Agency Point of Contact

The act requires each state agency to (1) appoint an employee to serve as point of contact for concerns related to people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing; (2) identify the employee’s name and contact information in a prominent place on the agency’s website; and (3) require this employee to collaborate with the bureau director to resolve these concerns. This requirement applies to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, including their offices, departments, boards, councils, commissions, institutions, constituent units of the state system of higher education, or technical education and career schools.

The act also requires the bureau director to help each state agency appoint an employee to serve as this point of contact and coordinate with them to resolve concerns.

§§ 66, 67, 69 & 71 — ADVISORY BOARD FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFBLIND OR HARD OF HEARING

Renames the board, changes its membership, and expands its duties and reporting requirements

The act renames the advisory board from “the Advisory Board for Persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deafblind” to “the Advisory Board for Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing” and makes conforming changes. Among other related changes, the act also modifies the board’s membership and expands its duties and reporting requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

Membership and Administration

The act replaces two members on the 15-member board. It does so by (1) removing the ADS commissioner or her designee and the Connecticut Chapter of We the Deaf People director and (2) adding the president of Hear Here Hartford (the Connecticut chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America) or her designee and a Connecticut hospital organization representative appointed by the House speaker. The act makes conforming changes to allow appointing authorities to fill vacancies.

The act requires the bureau director to serve as the advisory board’s

administrator beginning October 1, 2024.

Annual Leadership Roundtable Meeting

The act requires the advisory board to hold an annual leadership roundtable meeting with various executive branch agencies to discuss best practices and gaps in services for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, and make recommendations to rectify these gaps. The meeting must include the following participants or their designees:

1. commissioners of aging and disability services, public health, social services, mental health and addiction services, education, developmental services, children and families, early childhood, economic and community development, emergency services and public protection, correction, housing, and labor;
2. the Office of Higher Education (OHE) executive director; and
3. the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR).

The act eliminates a similar requirement that the advisory board meet periodically with some of the same agencies to discuss similar topics.

Reporting Requirement

Existing law requires the advisory board to make recommendations for (1) technical assistance and resources for state agencies to serve people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing; (2) public policy and legislative changes needed to address gaps in services; and (3) interpreter qualifications and registration.

Prior law required the advisory board to submit these recommendations to the governor and the Human Services Committee but did not set a deadline or frequency for this requirement. The act requires the board to submit a report on these recommendations annually, starting by January 1, 2025, to the Appropriations, Aging, Commerce, Education, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Housing, Human Services, Judiciary, Labor and Public Employees, Public Health, and Public Safety and Security committees. It also requires the report to include the bureau's activities in the previous calendar year.

§§ 70 & 72 — ADS SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAFBLIND

Expands ADS responsibilities to include providing services for people who are deafblind, generally conforming to practice

By law, ADS is responsible for providing services to, among others, people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The act additionally makes ADS responsible for providing services to people who are deafblind.

Under the act and prior law, ADS must annually report on its services to the governor and the Appropriations and Human Services committees.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

§ 73 — METHADONE MAINTENANCE RATE INCREASE

Requires DSS to increase Medicaid rates, within available appropriations, for chemical maintenance providers who currently receive the lowest weekly reimbursement rate

Existing law sets the minimum weekly Medicaid reimbursement rate at \$88.52 for chemical maintenance providers who give methadone maintenance treatment to Medicaid beneficiaries. For FY 25, the act requires DSS to amend the Medicaid state plan to increase rates, within available appropriations, to those providers who receive the lowest weekly reimbursement rate for this treatment. The act prohibits its rate increase for the lowest paid providers from causing a rate decrease for higher paid providers.

By law, methadone maintenance is a chemical maintenance program under which an addiction to one drug (e.g., heroin) is treated with methadone in a weekly program that includes methadone administration, drug testing, and counseling. Chemical maintenance providers are certified and licensed by state and federal agencies and must meet state and federal requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 74 — MEDICAID AMBULANCE RATES

Requires DSS to increase FY 25 ambulance rates within available appropriations, including increasing the mileage rate for Medicaid-covered ambulance transportation by \$1.18 and providing mileage reimbursement for in-town trips

For FY 25, the act requires DSS to increase the following rates, within available appropriations:

1. the Medicaid ambulance mileage rate for all emergency and nonemergency transports by \$1.18 and
2. all other emergency and nonemergency ambulance service rates.

The act also requires the DSS commissioner to provide mileage reimbursement for in-town trips for FY 25, within available appropriations. The act authorizes her to seek federal approval for a Medicaid state plan amendment if needed to implement these rates.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 75 — PACT PROGRAM

Expands the PACT Program's eligibility to include transition program students; increases the program's minimum award amounts; names the awards the "Mary Ann Handley Award"; requires BOR's upcoming semesterly reports on certain program metrics by November 1, 2024, and March 1, 2025

The act makes various changes to the Pledge to Advance CT (PACT) program, which gives eligible high school graduates the opportunity to attend a Connecticut community college debt-free by awarding them grants for the difference between the cost of tuition and fees and their scholarships, grants, and federal, state, or institutional aid.

Program Expansion and Award Increase

The act eliminates the requirement that a student must graduate from a Connecticut high school to participate in the program, therefore extending eligibility to out-of-state high school graduates. It also expands PACT eligibility to transition program students who (1) are state residents, (2) have not graduated from high school, (3) are enrolled in a transition program under their individualized education program, and (4) enroll in one or more courses at a regional community-technical college.

The act also increases the program's minimum awards from \$250 to \$500 for full-time students, and from \$150 to \$300 for part-time students.

Mary Ann Handley Award

The act requires all grants made to eligible students under the PACT program to be designated as the "Mary Ann Handley Award."

Reporting Requirements

Existing law requires BOR to report certain information about the PACT program to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement and Appropriations committees each semester. The act sets specific deadlines of November 1, 2024, and March 1, 2025, for two of the upcoming reports. Existing law requires the reports to include information on, among other things, the (1) number of qualifying students enrolled at the regional community-technical colleges, (2) number of qualifying students receiving minimum awards, and (3) completion rates of qualifying students by degree or certificate program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 76 — DEADLINE EXTENSION TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS ON CREATING A NEW SOLID WASTE-RELATED ENTITY

Extends, until July 1, 2025, the deadline for OPM to give the Environment and Energy and Technology committees recommendations on the feasibility and advisability of creating a new solid waste-related quasi-public state agency, waste authority, or other entity

The act extends by one year, from July 1, 2024, to July 1, 2025, the deadline for OPM to submit recommendations to the Environment and Energy and Technology committees on the feasibility and advisability of creating a new quasi-public state agency, waste authority, or other entity for developing new solid waste infrastructure, operating and maintaining new or existing solid waste infrastructure, and other purposes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 77 — SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Increases, from \$500,000 to \$1 million, the maximum STEAP grant amount a municipality can receive per fiscal year

The act increases, from \$500,000 to \$1 million, the maximum total Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant amount a municipality may receive in a fiscal year. By law, STEAP grants provide funding to municipalities that are ineligible for Urban Action grants and must be used for economic development, community conservation, and quality-of-life capital projects.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 78 — VACATION AND PERSONAL DAYS DURING WORKING TEST PERIODS

Gives full-time permanent state employees paid vacation days and personal days during their initial working test periods

Existing law gives full-time permanent state employees 21 paid vacation days annually once they have worked at least one full calendar year (which, in practice, accrue incrementally throughout the year) and three paid personal days each calendar year (which are granted all at once).

The act gives this same paid time off to these employees during their initial working test period (i.e., a trial working period used to determine whether an employee deserves a permanent appointment). For those that begin working on or after July 1, it requires the number of personal days to be prorated during their first calendar year of employment. The proration must be based on the number of full calendar months remaining in the year after the month the employee began working, divided by six.

The act requires the administrative services commissioner, by June 30, 2025, to adopt or amend regulations to implement these provisions on vacation and personal days during employees' initial working test periods. Before adopting the regulations and by January 1, 2025, she must also adopt policies and procedures to implement them, which have the force and effect of law. The act requires the commissioner to post the policies and procedures on the department's website and submit them to the secretary of the state to post on the eRegulations System at least 15 days before their effective date. The policies and procedures stop being effective once they are adopted as final regulations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2025

§ 79 — STATE AGENCY DUAL EMPLOYMENT

Eliminates a provision that prohibits certain state agency deputies from having other employment

Existing law requires each department head (e.g., state agency commissioner) to designate one deputy to exercise the department's head's powers and duties during his or her absence or disqualification. The act removes a (1) requirement for these deputies to devote their full time to their department or agency duties and (2) prohibition on them having any other employment. It also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 80 & 81 — JUDICIAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM AMORTIZATION

Changes the method for determining the state’s contribution for JRS unfunded liability from a 40-year amortization to a 15-year layered amortization, which effectively extends the contributions for an additional seven years; requires the state retirement commission to revise the JRS actuarial valuation using the new amortization method

Starting July 1, 2024, the act requires the state’s contribution for the Judicial Retirement System’s (JRS) unfunded past service liability to be based on a 15-year layered amortization of the unfunded liability. The 15-year period for the amortization must begin with the valuation for FY 23. Under prior law, the unfunded liability payment was based on a 40-year amortization, which began on July 1, 1991. In effect, the act extends the unfunded liability’s repayment from 2032 to 2039. In general, a layered amortization creates a new amortization schedule for each year’s actuarial experience and helps reduce volatility in the required amortization payments.

The law generally prohibits the legislature from liberalizing JRS benefits unless the retirement commission certifies the unfunded liability created by the change and the change’s cost. Prior law required the commission to do this using full normal cost plus a 30-year amortization, and the act instead requires it to use a 15-year layered amortization. It correspondingly requires that any unfunded liability created by the change be amortized over a 15-year, rather than 30-year, period.

The act also requires the State Employees Retirement Commission, which oversees the JRS, to prepare and submit (presumably, to the legislature) a revised actuarial valuation for the JRS as of June 30, 2023, that incorporates the act’s change to the 15-year layered amortization. The commission must do this by June 30, 2024.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 82-85 — CONNECTICUT MUNICIPAL REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Requires MRDA to provide members, by request, assistance on developing project criteria and regulations to increase housing production; authorizes it to establish criteria to evaluate its projects’ potential impacts; eliminates a requirement that members appoint a local development board

The act requires the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA) to provide, by request, member municipalities (and joint member entities) with technical support on developing project criteria and local regulations to substantially increase housing production. (By law, municipalities that opt to collaborate with MRDA must establish an area (a “housing growth zone”) in which zoning regulations facilitate substantial new housing development.)

The act also authorizes MRDA to set criteria to evaluate the potential impact of its projects. If it does so, the criteria must include the impact the project may have on the tax base of the municipality or municipalities involved. The act additionally (1) eliminates the requirement that MRDA’s member municipalities appoint a local

development board to serve as liaison to the authority and (2) separately repeals certain requirements related to economic development master plans (see § 243 — MRDA REQUIREMENT REPEALED).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

§ 86 — INVESTMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL “GIFTS”

Allows the IAC’s public members to receive travel expenses, lodging, food, beverages, and other benefits customarily provided in the course of employment without violating the state code of ethics

The act exempts certain items received by the Investment Advisory Council’s (IAC) public members from being considered “gifts” under the state code of ethics for public officials. More specifically, it exempts travel expenses, lodging, food, beverage, and other benefits customarily provided in the course of employment when given to these members. The act’s exemption generally allows the members to receive these items without violating the code.

By law, the IAC generally advises the state treasurer on investing the state’s pension and other trust funds, including reviewing the treasurer’s investment policy statement and trust fund investment. The 12-member council has five public members, all of whom must have investment experience. The governor, Senate president pro tempore and minority leader, and House speaker and minority leader each appoint one of the public members.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 87 — REPEAL OF STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT AND RELATED PROGRAMS

Repeals several student loan reimbursement, scholarship, and related programs

The act repeals the following programs that prior law required OHE to administer:

1. the “Engineering Connecticut” student loan reimbursement program, which gave grants to people with undergraduate or graduate degrees in engineering and who were newly employed in the state as engineers (CGS § 10a-19e);
2. the “You Belong” student loan reimbursement program, which gave grants to people who (a) had been awarded a doctoral degree from any higher education institution and (b) were newly employed in the state in an economically valuable field as determined by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) or by a company or higher education institution that had registered with or been qualified by DECD (CGS § 10a-19f);
3. the Connecticut green technology, life science, and health information technology student loan reimbursement program, which provided student loan reimbursements to eligible residents who held degrees in and worked in these fields (CGS § 10a-19i); and
4. a program to give grants in FYs 23-25 to public and private colleges and universities for the delivery of student mental health services on campus

(CGS § 10a-164b).

The act also repeals the information technology student loan reimbursement pilot program administered by BOR. (This program was restricted to a cohort that received grants in FY 02 (CGS § 10a-169b).)

Additionally, the act repeals (1) a state scholarship program that forgave loans provided by the state to residents for nursing education if the resident remained in the nursing field in the state for five years (CGS § 10a-162a); and (2) a scholarship fund for Vietnam-era veterans who had been accepted for full-time admission in a degree granting program at any independent, nontheological college in the state as long as the veteran was a state resident at the time of acceptance (CGS § 10a-167).

Lastly, the act repeals the Department of Public Health's (DPH) primary care direct services program. Prior law required the program to give, within available resources, three-year grants to community-based primary care providers to expand health care access to the uninsured by (1) funding direct services, (2) recruiting and retaining primary care clinicians and registered nurses through salary subsidies or a loan repayment program, and (3) funding capital expenditures (CGS § 19a-7d).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 88 — REPEAL OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNER EDUCATOR INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Repeals the multilingual learner educator incentive program

The act repeals the OHE-administered multilingual learner educator incentive program. Prior law required the program to give a grant, within available appropriations, to any student who was (1) in the last two years of a teacher preparation program leading to professional certification at any four-year higher education institution in the state, and (2) pursuing an endorsement in bilingual education or teaching English to speakers of other languages. Under the program, students received a grant of up to \$5,000 a year for up to two years, and after graduating were eligible for up to \$2,500 of student loan reimbursement for up to four years if they taught at an in-state public school.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 89 — CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT REVIEW

Eliminates the requirement that DAS and OPM review and comment on the Port Authority's quarterly report before it is submitted to the Transportation Committee

By law, the Connecticut Port Authority must submit a quarterly report to the Transportation Committee on the status of current and pending contracts, small harbor projects, and the State Pier project in New London. The act eliminates a requirement that the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and OPM jointly review and comment on the report before it is submitted to the committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 90, 91 & 131-232 — HEALTH STRATEGY AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSIONERS

Renames the title of OHS's and OHE's executive heads as "commissioners" rather than "executive directors"

The act renames the title of the Office of Health Strategy's (OHS) head as a "commissioner" rather than an "executive director." It makes the same change to the title of OHE's head. The act also makes numerous conforming changes.

Existing law already classifies these two positions as statutory department heads, subject to the same nomination and appointment process, terms, and general qualifications, duties, and powers as other agency commissioners (see § 177 and CGS §§ 4-6 to 4-8).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 92 — TOBACCO AND HEALTH TRUST FUND TRANSFER

Suspends the annual \$12 million disbursement from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund for FY 25 and redirects it to the General Fund

For FY 25, the act suspends the annual \$12 million disbursement from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund and instead redirects this amount to the General Fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 93 & 94 — DSS PHARMACY APPROVALS

Increases, from 2 to 24 hours, how much time DSS has to grant or deny pharmacy requests for prior authorization or dispensing name brand drug products before they are deemed approved

The act increases the length of time, from two hours to 24 hours, during which DSS may approve or deny certain pharmacy requests before they are deemed approved under DSS's medical assistance programs (e.g., Medicaid). This applies to a (1) physician's or pharmacist's prior authorization request for prescription drugs and (2) pharmacist's request to dispense a name-brand drug when a chemically equivalent generic drug product substitution is available.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 95-97 — BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH TRUST FUND

Eliminates the Biomedical Research Trust Fund and requires the state comptroller to transfer its remaining balance to the General Fund

The act eliminates the Biomedical Research Trust Fund and requires the state comptroller to transfer its remaining balance to the General Fund by June 30, 2025.

Under prior law, the DPH commissioner could make grants from this fund to Connecticut-based (1) nonprofit colleges and universities and (2) hospitals doing biomedical research on heart disease, cancer, and other tobacco-related diseases;

Alzheimer's disease; strokes; and diabetes. The fund was a separate, nonlapsing fund that could accept transfers from the Tobacco Settlement Fund and receive funds from public or private sources.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except that the funds transfer is effective upon passage.

§ 98 — EMS REGIONAL COORDINATOR POSITIONS TO CLASSIFIED SERVICE

Requires DAS to transition EMS regional coordinators and assistant regional coordinators to classified service

The act requires the DAS commissioner to transition the regional emergency medical services (EMS) coordinator and assistant regional EMS coordinator positions and incumbents into the classified service. To the extent these employees are performing jobs that would normally be within a current executive branch bargaining unit, the act requires (1) the jobs to be added to the bargaining unit's descriptions and (2) employees in the jobs to be deemed part of the bargaining unit. The DAS commissioner must transition these employees beginning June 30, 2024, and do so in consultation with the DPH commissioner.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 99 — INFORMATION REQUESTS TO STATE AGENCIES

Requires requests for certain information to be directed to the state agency where the information originated

The act requires anyone requesting data, records, or files that were shared between state agencies under a statute, regulation, data sharing agreement, memorandum of agreement or understanding, or court order, including requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), to direct the request to the state agency where the information originated. For this provision, a "state agency" is any office; department; board; council; commission; institution; constituent unit of the state system of higher education; technical education and career school; or other agency in the state's executive, legislative, or judicial branch.

Under the act and regardless of FOIA, when a state agency receives one of these requests but is not the originating agency, it must (1) promptly refer the request to the state agency where the information originated and (2) notify the requestor that the request has been referred to the originating agency. The notification must be in writing and include the originating agency's name, address, and phone number, and the date the referral was made.

Lastly, the act specifies that this provision does not (1) require disclosure of any data, records, or files if the disclosure would not have been required had the request been made directly to the originating agency or (2) apply to certain requests for data in the criminal justice information system available to the public under FOIA (by law, this data must be obtained from the originating agency).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 100 — AGREEMENTS OR SOLICITATIONS TO LOCATE UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

Expands requirements and processes for agreements and solicitations to locate unclaimed property

The act establishes additional disclosure requirements for agreements to locate unclaimed property. Under existing practice, people, businesses, and other entities assist property owners, for payment, in finding unclaimed property and reclaiming it on the owner's behalf.

Under prior law, these agreements were only valid if they were (1) in writing, (2) signed by the owner, (3) disclosed the nature and value of the property, and (4) clearly stipulated the owner's share after subtracting the fee or compensation.

The act establishes additional requirements for these agreements entered into on or after January 1, 2025. In addition to the existing requirements, these agreements must also conspicuously and clearly disclose that the owner may file a claim directly with the treasurer at no cost and the method for doing so. The act also requires that the disclosure of the property's nature and value and the owner's share be clear and conspicuous.

In addition, the act requires that any solicitation to locate unclaimed property clearly and conspicuously disclose in writing that anyone may search for and file a claim directly with the treasurer at no cost and how to do so.

Under the act, any claim for property filed with the treasurer under such an agreement or solicitation must include an unredacted version of the document to allow the treasurer to determine if the requirements under the act and existing law have been met. The treasurer may withhold payment of a claim to anyone except an owner if the agreement or solicitation (1) is not provided or (2) fails to meet these requirements.

As under existing law, nothing in these provisions may be construed to prevent an owner from asserting that an agreement to locate or obtain an interest in unclaimed property is based upon excessive or unjust consideration. By law, the maximum fee or compensation for a person helping to locate unclaimed property is 10% of its value.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 101-104 — COPAYMENT-ONLY HEALTH PLANS

Exempts copayment-only health plans from the insurance law's copayment limitations for certain in-network imaging services and physical and occupational therapy services

Existing law limits the copayments that certain fully insured individual and group health insurance policies can charge for specified in-network imaging services (i.e., MRIs, CAT or PET scans) and in-network physical and occupational therapy services. For the imaging services, the law exempts high-deductible health plans from the copayment limitations.

The act exempts copayment-only health plans from the copayment limitations

for in-network (1) MRIs and CAT or PET scans and (2) physical and occupational therapy services. Under the act, a “copayment-only health plan” is a health plan that (1) imposes a specific dollar amount that the insured pays for a covered health care service or prescription drug and (2) does not include deductibles or coinsurance.

For MRIs and CAT or PET scans, the act applies to all fully insured individual and group health insurance plans. For physical and occupational therapy services, the act applies to individual and group health insurance policies delivered, issued, renewed, amended, or continued in Connecticut that cover (1) basic hospital expenses; (2) basic medical-surgical expenses; (3) major medical expenses; or (4) hospital or medical services, including those provided under an HMO plan. Because of the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), state insurance benefit mandates do not apply to self-insured benefit plans.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2025

§ 105 — PRESUMPTIVE MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMECARE

Eliminates Section 10 of PA 24-39 and replaces it with generally similar provisions; requires the DSS commissioner to establish a presumptive Medicaid eligibility system for people applying to the Medicaid-funded portion of CHCPE; requires the state to pay for up to 90 days of home care for applicants found presumptively Medicaid eligible

The act eliminates Section 10 of PA 24-39 and replaces it with generally similar provisions. It requires the DSS commissioner to establish a presumptive Medicaid eligibility system for people applying to the Medicaid-funded portion of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE). It requires the commissioner to adopt regulations to implement and administer the system.

A presumptive eligibility determination makes an applicant immediately eligible for CHCPE services before a full Medicaid-eligibility determination. Under the act, the state must pay for up to 90 days of care for applicants who (1) require a skilled level of nursing care and (2) are determined presumptively eligible for Medicaid.

The act requires the commissioner, as federal law allows, to seek a federal Medicaid waiver or state plan amendment needed to try to get federal reimbursement for the costs of providing the presumptive eligibility coverage above. Under the act, the presumptive eligibility system does not take effect until the commissioner gets the federal reimbursement.

The act allows the commissioner, in her discretion, to discontinue the system if (1) it has been operational for at least two years and (2) she determines it is not cost effective.

The act also makes related minor, technical, and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

Eligibility Determinations

By law, DSS contracts with “access” agencies to determine CHCPE participants’ service needs and develop individualized care plans. The act requires

the commissioner to develop a screening tool for these agencies to use to determine if a presumptive eligibility applicant is (1) functionally able to live in a home or community setting (“functionally eligible”) and (2) likely to be financially eligible for Medicaid.

Under the act, applicants must complete a Medicaid application on the day of their functional eligibility screening or within 10 days after it.

If the applicant meets these criteria, DSS must make a presumptive eligibility determination and approve a care plan authorizing home care services within 10 days. The act (1) requires DSS to make a final Medicaid-eligibility determination by the end of the 90-day presumptive eligibility period and (2) allows the department to do so before then if it receives information that the applicant is ineligible for Medicaid.

For a person determined presumptively eligible for Medicaid, the commissioner must, in keeping with federal law, determine the person retroactively eligible for Medicaid for up to 90 days before the date of the person’s Medicaid application.

Written Agreement

The act requires applicants to sign a written agreement (1) attesting to the accuracy of the information they provide; (2) acknowledging that they will receive state-funded services up to 90 days after the home care services begin; and (3) waiving any right to continued coverage while waiting for a hearing they request in response to the department’s determination (during or at the end of the presumptive eligibility period) that they are either ineligible for Medicaid or did not provide information necessary for DSS to make the determination.

Reporting Requirements

By law, the commissioner must annually report certain CHCPE information to the Human Services Committee. The act adds the following to this required information:

1. the number of people determined presumptively eligible for Medicaid,
2. state savings based on institutional care costs that were averted by correctly determining people presumptively eligible, and
3. the number of people incorrectly determined presumptively eligible and the costs to provide them with the home care services before the final eligibility determination.

§ 106 — MEN’S HEALTH PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Requires the DPH commissioner to create and annually report on a campaign promoting community-based screening and education for common diseases affecting high-risk male populations

The act requires the DPH commissioner to develop a public awareness and educational campaign promoting community-based screening and education for

common diseases (e.g., colorectal or prostate cancer, hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, infectious diseases, depression, and anxiety) affecting high-risk male populations. She must annually report on the campaign to the Public Health Committee starting by January 1, 2025.
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 107 — HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD

Establishes the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board, designates its members, assigns the board powers and duties, and requires public higher education institutions and the UConn Health Center to submit certain information to the board at the chairpersons' request

Membership and Administration

The act establishes, within the legislative department, the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board. The advisory board must consist of the:

1. chairpersons and ranking members of the Appropriations Committee,
2. chairpersons and ranking members of the Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee,
3. chairpersons and ranking members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, and
4. OPM secretary.

The Appropriations Committee chairpersons and the OPM secretary must jointly serve as board chairpersons and schedule and hold the first board meeting by September 1, 2024. The board must meet at least quarterly, and a majority of its members constitutes a quorum.

The Appropriations Committee's administrative staff must serve in that capacity for the board.

Board Powers and Duties

Under the act, the board has the following powers and duties:

1. meet with public higher education institution and UConn Health Center administrators to accept and review financial and related reports (see below) and to discuss (a) barriers to meeting state workforce needs, (b) developing economic growth, and (c) achieving or maintaining affordable tuition;
2. obtain from any executive department, board, commission, or other state agency the assistance and data needed to carry out board powers and duties; and
3. perform other acts that may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the board's duties.

Reporting Requirements

The act requires each public higher education institution and the UConn Health

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Center to submit to the board, at the request of the board's chairpersons, the following information:

1. a detailed financial report for the current fiscal year, subsequent fiscal year, and five preceding fiscal years, that identifies each revenue source, expense category, and any assumptions upon which the reports are based;
2. a detailed plan that eliminates a deficiency if the current or subsequent year's financial report projects one;
3. a summary and general ledger account code analysis of the institution's unrestricted net position for the most recently completed fiscal year;
4. the number of full- and part-time enrolled students disaggregated by in-state and out-of-state;
5. the number of vacant and filled employment positions disaggregated by bargaining unit and management confidential type with corresponding average salaries from the first payroll in October of the most recently completed fiscal year;
6. a summary of the institution's cost drivers;
7. a summary of budget constraints affecting (a) workforce developments, economic development efforts, and student quality of life, including time required for degree completion, and (b) research productivity and faculty retention and recruitment; and
8. any other financial, operational, performance, or other outcome information, metrics, or data the board requests.

Under the act, the board may require an institution to submit the above information on a disaggregated basis.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 108 — EDUCATION MANDATE REVIEW ADVISORY COUNCIL

Modifies criteria for two of the council's 10 appointees

PA 24-45, § 1, establishes an Education Mandate Review Advisory Council to advise and annually report to the Education Committee on the (1) cost and implementation of existing education mandates on local and regional boards of education and (2) impact of proposals to add to or revise these mandates. The council consists of 10 legislative appointees (six by the legislative leaders and four by the Education Committee's leadership).

The act modifies the criteria for the Education Committee's Senate members' appointments. PA 24-45 required each to appoint a public school teacher in Connecticut. The act instead requires the (1) chairperson to appoint a representative of the Connecticut Education Association and (2) ranking member to appoint a representative of the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 109 — POPULATION DATA FOR MUNICIPAL GRANTS

For FY 25, requires OPM to use DPH's 2021 population estimates to calculate municipal grants

For FY 25, the act requires OPM to use DPH's 2021 population estimates when

calculating municipal grants that are based, at least in part, on a municipality's current population.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 110 — BOR MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION

Expands BOR to include the OPM secretary as an ex-officio, nonvoting member

By law, BOR is the governing body for CT State (i.e., the recent consolidation of the state's 12 regional community-technical colleges), the Connecticut State Universities, and Charter Oak State College. The act increases BOR's membership from 22 to 23 members by requiring the OPM secretary, or his designee, to serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member. Under existing law and unchanged by the act, the chief workforce officer and the commissioners of the education, economic and community development, labor, and public health departments also serve as ex-officio, nonvoting members.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 111 — TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS DURING CODIFICATION

Requires LCO to make necessary technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes when codifying the act and other public acts

The act requires the Legislative Commissioners' Office (LCO) to make technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes as necessary to codify the act, including internal reference corrections. It also requires LCO, when codifying any 2024 public act, to make any necessary technical, grammatical, and punctuation changes to effectuate the act's renaming of the executive directors of OHS and OHE as commissioners.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 112-119 — REVISIONS TO MAGNET SCHOOL AND VO-AG CENTER FUNDING PROGRAMS; CREATION OF NEW CHOICE PROGRAM GRANT

Makes significant changes to education funding grant programs for (1) interdistrict magnet schools and (2) regional agricultural science and technology centers (i.e., "vo-ag centers"); eliminates, for FY 25, the existing magnet school and vo-ag center grants, and replaces them with new grants under the choice program

The act makes significant changes to education funding grant programs for (1) interdistrict magnet schools and (2) regional agricultural science and technology centers (i.e., "vo-ag centers").

The act eliminates, for FY 25, the existing magnet school and vo-ag center grants and replaces them with new grants under the choice program, which the act creates. Under the act, the choice program grant provides funding for local or regional boards of education (i.e., "school boards") that operate a magnet school or a vo-ag center. It also creates a grant for any magnet school operated by an entity that is not a board of education, such as an independent institution of higher

education. The act creates the new grants for one year, allowing them to sunset at the end of FY 25 (June 30, 2025).

The act uses student need weightings in the choice program grants that mirror existing law's weighting for education cost sharing (ECS) grants and charter school grants. This gives additional weight for students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals or free milk (FRPM) or designated as English language learners. By doing this, these grants give added funding for students that meet those criteria.

Finally, the act requires the State Department of Education (SDE), by June 30, 2024, and again on February 1, 2025, to calculate and give estimates to the relevant operators or towns for the new grants. It creates a similar estimate requirement for SDE regarding ECS and state charter school grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, unless otherwise specified below.

New Choice Program Grants (§ 112)

For FY 25, the act provides choice program grants for vo-ag centers and two different interdistrict magnet school grants, based on who operates the magnet school.

The state's vo-ag centers serve high school students from multiple sending towns and provide an agricultural career education in addition to the comprehensive high school education.

Under the act, one magnet school grant is for school board-operated magnets and the other is for operators that are not school boards, such as an independent institution of higher education. By law, an inter-district magnet school (i.e., magnet school) must (1) enroll no more than 75% of its students from the same district with at least 25% coming from other districts; (2) maintain an enrollment that meets state standards for a reduced-isolation setting; (3) support racial, ethnic, and economic diversity; and (4) enroll students who are at least half time.

Grant Student Weights. For choice program grants, the act creates a grant formula that applies weights for certain students, such as whether the students are (1) from families that qualify for FRPM or (2) English language learners.

The weights increase the grant amounts for those students because the grant amount is produced by multiplying the need student number by the foundation number (see below). For example, the act uses a 30% weighting for student poverty (i.e., students that qualify for FRPM) for each of these grants. If 100 students from a district qualify, then those students count as 130 students for grant purposes. This increases the grant as the weighted number becomes the new student number that is multiplied by the foundation amount.

Foundation. Under the act, the foundation amount is \$11,525 per pupil, which is the same as in the ECS law.

Host Magnet and Vo-Ag Grants. Under the act, grants for the magnets operated by a school board (i.e., a host magnet) and vo-ag center use similar factors.

For FY 25, the new amount the magnet operator or vo-ag center receives must be (1) the grant they would receive with the FY 24 grant method (under prior law) using FY 25 enrollment plus (2) 42% of the difference between the new grant calculation (see below) and the amount they would have received if using the FY

24 method.

New Grant Calculation. For FY 25, the new grant calculation is the sum of the (1) sending town adjustment factors for each sending town added together and (2) number of in-district students for the choice program multiplied by the applicable per-student grant (magnet or vo-ag). The sending town is the student’s town of residence that would otherwise be responsible for educating the student.

Sending Town Adjustment Factor. The “sending town adjustment factor” is the number of the town’s resident choice program students multiplied by the greater of the sending town’s (1) weighted funding amount per pupil or (2) total revenue per pupil. The “weighted funding amount per pupil” is the (1) foundation amount multiplied by a town’s total need students for the fiscal year before the grant payment year and (2) resulting product divided by the number of a town’s resident students. The “total revenue per pupil” is the sum of the (1) per-pupil amount of state grants for FY 24; (2) tuition received for choice students for FY 24; and (3) where appropriate, tuition received for children in a regional educational service center (RESC)-operated preschool program at a magnet school for FY 24. This means the FY 24 total revenue per pupil amount becomes the hold harmless per pupil amount for these grants.

Additional Definitions. Additionally, the act defines the following terms for the new grants:

1. “total need students” is a student poverty weighting (as under ECS law) of (a) 30% of students eligible for FRPM plus 15% of any FRPM-eligible students above 60% of the total number of resident students and (b) 25% of the number of students identified as English language learners;
2. “resident students” is generally the number of students in a town enrolled in its public schools at the town’s expense as of October 1 of each year (as under the ECS law);
3. “resident choice program students” is the number of part-time and full-time students of a town enrolled or participating in a particular choice program; and
4. “out-of-district student” is a student (a) enrolled or participating in a choice program operated or maintained by a local or regional board of education and (b) who does not reside in the town or a member town of the local or regional board.

Non-Board of Education Magnet Schools. For this FY 25 grant, a magnet school operator is an entity that is (1) not a board of education (presumably, this includes RESCs); (2) a nonprofit private institution of higher education that has its main campus in the state; or (3) a third-party nonprofit corporation that the SDE commissioner approves.

Under the act, a magnet school operator that is not a board of education is entitled to a grant for FY 25 that is (1) the grant amount it would receive with the FY 24 grant method (current law) using FY 25 student enrollment plus (2) 42% of the difference between the non-board of education grant calculation (see below) and the amount it would have received using the FY 24 method with the FY 25 enrollment.

Non-Board of Education Grant Calculation. This grant calculation equals the

product of the foundation and its total magnet school program need students.

Hold Harmless Provision. The act includes a specific hold harmless provision for FY 25 grants for operators that are not boards of education. This hold harmless grant is triggered when the revenue per student for FY 24 is greater than the per student revenue for FY 25.

The first measure for the comparison to make this determination is the sum of the total revenue per pupil during FY 24, divided by the total number of students enrolled in the same program during FY 24. The second measure is the sum of the adjusted total revenue per pupil divided by the number of students enrolled in the same program during FY 25. If the first measure is greater than the second, then the operator receives a hold harmless grant that is the sum of the (1) new grant as calculated above and (2) product of the (a) difference between total revenue per pupil for FY 24 and the new grant plus tuition for FY 25 (i.e., the adjusted total revenue per pupil) and (b) total number of students enrolled in the program during FY 25.

Under the act, the “adjusted total revenue per pupil” is the sum of the following three things:

1. per student grant amount for a choice program student for FY 25,
2. per student amount of any general education tuition for a student in the choice program for FY 25, and
3. per child amount of any tuition charged for a child enrolled in a preschool program offered by a RESC operating an interdistrict magnet school preschool program for FY 25.

The act creates a formula for calculating total magnet school program need students that (1) counts full- and part-time students at the magnet schools, (2) generally uses the ECS student weighting percentages, and (3) includes a *Sheff* region additional student weighting (see *Background — Sheff Region*). The foundation component for this grant also has an annual cost-of-living factor that potentially increases the foundation from one year to the next.

Student Weighting. The student need weighting reflects the ECS formula weighting as follows: (1) student poverty weighting is 30% of students eligible for FRPM plus 15% of any FRPM-eligible students above 60% of the total number of resident students and (2) a 25% weighting for the number of students identified as English language learners.

For FY 25, the act includes a 30% additional student weighting for magnet schools that help the state meet its obligations under the *Sheff v. O’Neill* desegregation decision and related agreements or orders (see *Background — Sheff v. O’Neill State Supreme Court Decision*).

Choice Program, ECS, and Charter School Grant Estimates (§ 113)

The act requires SDE, by June 30, 2024, to calculate and give the relevant operators or towns estimates for the following grants for the next fiscal year (FY 25):

1. each choice program grant the act establishes (SDE must notify each local and regional board of education and interdistrict magnet school program

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- operator that is not a local or regional board of education),
- 2. ECS grants (SDE must notify each town), and
- 3. charter school grants (SDE must notify the fiscal authority for each school).

The act also requires SDE to prepare the estimates by December 31, 2024, for the ECS grants, and by February 1, 2025, for the charter school grants. For each of these calculations, SDE must calculate the estimates for the next fiscal year using data collected during the current one.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Magnet School Grant Programs and Tuition (§§ 114 & 115)

For FY 25, the act eliminates the prior law per-student magnet school grants and replaces them with the new choice program grants the act creates. It sunsets the new grant at the end of FY 25.

Under prior law, a magnet school generally received a \$3,060 state grant for each student from the district that hosts the school (home district) and, depending on the type of magnet school, one of the grants listed in the table below for students from sending towns. In 2023, the legislature added a provision, beginning in FY 25, that instead set these amounts as the minimum per-student grant amounts, which allows SDE to increase the grants within available appropriations.

In addition to repealing the \$3,060 grant for host district students, the act repeals the magnet school grants shown in the below table for students from sending districts. It also deletes obsolete provisions.

Magnet School Grants Repealed Under the Act

Type of Magnet	Prior Law §	Prior Law Minimum Amount for Sending Students
Non- <i>Sheff</i> host magnet	114(c)(1)	\$7,227
Non- <i>Sheff</i> RESC magnet with less than 55% enrollment from one town	114(c)(3)(A)	8,058
Non- <i>Sheff</i> RESC magnet with 55% or more of enrollment from one town	114(c)(3)(B)	7,227
<i>Sheff</i> host magnet	114(c)(3)(F)	13,315
RESC magnet enrolling less than 60% of its students from Hartford (i.e., <i>Sheff</i> magnet)	114(c)(3)(D)(i)	10,652
RESC magnet enrolling less than 50% of its students from Hartford (i.e., <i>Sheff</i> magnet)	114(c)(3)(D)(ii)	8,058 (for half of the non-Hartford students enrolled over 50% of total enrollment) 10,652 (for all the other students)
Magnet operated by independent institution of higher education and that meets certain criteria (i.e., Goodwin University)	114(c)(3)(E)	65% of the 10,652 grant for students enrolled in both semesters each year 32.5% of 10,652 for those enrolled in one semester a year
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts	114(c)(3)(H)	65% of 8,058 (the grant for RESC magnets with less than 55% from a single town)

The act eliminates the requirement that magnet school programs operating at least half-time, but at less than full-time, receive a grant equal to 65% of what a full-time program would receive. (The act’s provisions on choice grants treat half-time students the same as full-time students.)

The act repeals a provision that limits the total grant SDE can pay to a magnet school operator to no more than the aggregate of the operator’s reasonable operating budget, less revenue from other sources.

Magnet Tuition Charged to Boards of Education. The act grants independent higher education institutions or approved nonprofits operating a magnet school the same authority and limits that RESCs have to charge tuition to sending boards of education (this conforms to existing practice). As with the RESCs, an independent higher education institution beginning with FY 25 may not charge tuition more than 58% of the tuition charged for FY 24.

Magnet Preschool Tuition Charged to Parents. Under prior law, RESC magnets (both in and outside the *Sheff* region) could charge FY 24 tuition of up to \$4,053 to parents or guardians of children attending preschool, but they could not charge tuition to any parent or guardian with a family income at or below 75% of the state median income. The act instead limits the tuition amount beginning in FY 25 to no more than 58% of the tuition charged during FY 24.

Beginning in FY 25, the act creates the same tuition provisions mentioned above (58% tuition limit for FY 25 and the following years and a ban on charging tuition to any family below 75% of the state median income) for an independent higher education institution or an approved nonprofit operating a preschool as part of a magnet school.

Under the act, SDE is responsible for any unpaid tuition charged to a parent or guardian with a family income at or below 75% of the state median. The commissioner may conduct a comprehensive financial review of the operating budget of any magnet school charging tuition to verify the tuition rate.

Magnet Students and ECS Count. Under the act, magnet school students are counted in the town where they reside for the student count for ECS grants, which codifies existing practice.

Vo-Ag Center Grants and Tuition (§§ 116-119)

For FY 25, the act repeals the \$5,200 per-student state grant minimum for vo-ag centers under prior law and replaces it with the vo-ag choice program grant the act creates (see § 112 above). It sunsets the new grant at the end of FY 25. It also repeals related supplementary grants for vo-ag centers ranging from \$60 to \$500 per student.

The act repeals the requirement that a sending district give students in its district the same number of seats from one year to the next to enroll in the vo-ag program. Prior law required the districts to make available (1) at least the same number of seats as in any written agreement or, in the absence of one, the average number enrolled over the last three school years and (2) specifically for each ninth-grade class, either the agreement number or the average number that enrolled in ninth grade in each of the last three years.

The act also specifies that for a town’s student count for the ECS grant, a student enrolled in a vo-ag center is counted in the town where the student resides, which codifies current practice.

For vo-ag grants under prior law, the act removes the requirement that they be within available appropriations for FY 24 (§ 119).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, except the section addressing vo-ag grants for FY 24 (§ 119) is effective upon passage.

Background — Sheff v. O’Neill State Supreme Court Decision

In this 1996 decision, the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled that the state had a constitutional obligation to remedy the educational inequities in Hartford schools caused by racial and ethnic isolation (*Sheff v. O’Neill*, 238 Conn. 1 (1996)). The

court ordered the state legislature and governor to craft a solution and legislation was passed to create voluntary desegregation in Hartford by creating magnet schools and using other programs, such as Open Choice.

Background — Sheff Region

This region includes the school districts for the towns of Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Manchester, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, South Windsor, Suffield, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.

§ 120 — SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING AMOUNTS FOR ECS, CHARTER SCHOOL, MAGNET SCHOOL, OPEN CHOICE, AND VO-AG CENTER GRANTS

Requires SDE to apportion the \$150 million appropriated for FY 25 for “Education Finance Reform” in specific amounts for (1) supplemental funds for the following grants: ECS, charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, the Open Choice Program, and vo-ag centers, and (2) grants for specific projects, programs, towns, and agencies

The 2023 budget act required SDE to apportion the \$150 million appropriated for “Education Finance Reform” for FY 25 to five major education grants: ECS, charter schools, magnet schools, Open Choice, and vo-ag centers. The act modifies how the money is allocated, including by providing funds for new projects and programs.

The act allocates \$139,626,522 to (1) supplement ECS grants and charter school grants and (2) provide the choice program grants the act establishes (see § 112 above).

The act specifically provides \$1,473,478 to supplement the amount appropriated to SDE’s charter schools account and to be used for grants for the following charter school seat expansion:

1. Brass City Charter School, 40 seats;
2. Odyssey Community School, 36 seats;
3. Interdistrict School for the Arts and Communication, 52 seats; and
4. Integrated Day Charter School, 22 seats.

This charter school supplement must take into account reducing the funds for Booker T. Washington Academy by 40 seats.

Funds for Plan, Database, and Mapping Project

The act allocates the following funds for certain plans, a database, and a mapping project and requires SDE to make all payments below by September 30, 2024:

1. \$50,000 to be used by the SDE commissioner to develop a plan to convert the State Board of Education (SBE) into an advisory board and make the SDE commissioner the department head (see § 121 below);

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2. \$400,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education to develop a new, or expand an existing, database to collect and retain educator professional development records; and
3. \$100,000 for SDE to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) (under a statute that allows one agency to designate another through an MOU to use funds for a purpose) with UConn to provide the funds to the UConn School of Public Policy to conduct a study and comprehensive asset and capacity mapping for nonprofit organizations (see § 122 below).

Funds for Programs, Municipalities, and Organizations

The act allocates the following funds for certain programs, municipalities, or organizations and requires SDE to make all the payments below by September 30, 2024:

1. \$175,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the New Haven Board of Education to buy bus passes for state-owned or state-controlled bus public transportation service for students enrolled in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, in New Haven public schools;
2. \$175,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Hartford Board of Education to buy bus passes for state-owned or state-controlled bus public transportation service for students enrolled in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, in Hartford public schools;
3. \$5,000,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Hartford board of education for magnet school tuition assistance;
4. \$1,200,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc. for student enrollment expansion and compliance with the *Sheff* decision and settlement, as determined by the SDE commissioner;
5. \$650,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to InterCommunity Health Care to provide mental health services to students at the school-based health centers in the East Hartford school district;
6. \$200,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Connecticut Association of Schools for operating and personnel expenses, including hiring an assistant director of leadership and development;
7. \$150,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Artist Collective for arts enrichment for students in grades kindergarten to 12, inclusive; and
8. \$800,000 to provide a grant-in-aid to the Brother Carl (Hardick) Institute for tutoring and mentoring services for students in grades 4 to 12, inclusive, and development of a summer college preparation program.

Under the prior budget act, the funds were allocated as shown below:

1. \$68,499,497 to the ECS grants account in SDE to provide ECS grants;
2. \$9,378,313 to SDE's Charter Schools account to provide charter school operating grants;
3. \$40,188,429 to SDE's Magnet Schools account to increase per-student grant amounts to magnet school operators that are not local or regional school boards (including magnet schools operated by RESCs, independent institutions of higher education, or other approved operators);

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4. \$13,254,358 to SDE's Magnet Schools account to increase per-student grant amounts to local and regional school boards that operate magnet schools;
 5. \$11,430,343 to SDE's Open Choice Program account to increase per-student grant amounts to local and regional school boards that are receiving districts under the Open Choice program; and
 6. \$7,249,060 to school boards of education that operate vo-ag centers.
- EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 121 — PLAN TO CONVERT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION INTO AN ADVISORY BOARD

Requires the SDE commissioner to develop a plan to convert SBE into an advisory board and make the SDE commissioner the department head

The act requires the SDE commissioner to develop a plan to (1) convert SBE from its legal status as the agency department head to an advisory board within the department and (2) empower the SDE commissioner to become the department head. By January 1, 2026, the commissioner must submit the plan and any legislative recommendations to the Education Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 122 — ASSET AND CAPACITY MAPPING FOR NONPROFITS

Requires UConn's School of Public Policy to conduct a study and comprehensive asset and capacity mapping for nonprofit organizations to support information-sharing and collaboration between nonprofits and communities; requires the school to provide an interim report and a final report to the Education Committee

The act requires UConn's School of Public Policy to conduct a study and comprehensive asset and capacity mapping for nonprofit organizations in Connecticut to support information-sharing and collaboration between the nonprofits and the communities they serve. The School of Public Policy must consult with state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic associations while doing this work.

Under the act, the study and mapping must do the following:

1. assess the nonprofit organizations' capacity to help the state address public needs and identifying assets' availability and strength and services' gaps or weaknesses;
2. provide an effective tool for sharing data, documents, and communication among the nonprofit organizations to strengthen their capacity to serve state residents;
3. provide a resource for policymakers to determine gaps in services and capacity and enhance collaboration among different nonprofit organizations working in the same geographic areas and serving the same target populations;
4. provide information to policymakers on ways to ensure that resources are

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- invested in areas and populations with the greatest need; and
5. present data by town, by county, and statewide, as well as by each regional council of government, and include a summary of available resources, including nonprofit organizations and state agencies, to create a database of the state's nonprofit organizations by target service population, mission, and geography.

The act requires OPM, the Department of Consumer Protection, the secretary of the state, and any other state agency that contracts with nonprofits to provide the School of Public Policy, upon its request, with any data needed to conduct the study and mapping.

The school must submit to the Education Committee a preliminary report by October 1, 2024, and a final report by June 30, 2025.

The final report must include the following:

1. the comprehensive asset and capacity mapping for nonprofit organizations in Connecticut;
2. recommendations, including a model to enhance collaboration among nonprofit organizations to ensure that state investments are addressing service gaps and not contributing to duplicative efforts or competition among the organizations, and the extent that the lack of resources, including budget deficits or other fiscal shortfalls, or state agency policies or regulations impede collaboration and lead to duplicative efforts and services; and
3. guidance on how to use the comprehensive asset and capacity mapping to create a continuum of care document.

The act also requires the School of Public Policy to make the final report and the comprehensive asset and capacity mapping available on its website by June 30, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 123 — SDE DISTRIBUTION OF PARAEDUCATOR FUNDING

Sets a September 1, 2024, deadline for SDE to distribute to school boards the FY 23 amount allocated to the department from ARPA funding for paraeducator professional development

The act requires SDE, by September 1, 2024, to distribute to local and regional boards of education the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocated to the department for paraeducator professional development for FY 23. SDE must distribute the funds to school boards, proportionately based on the number of paraeducators each board employs, to cover the cost of providing them professional development and in-service training.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 124 & 126 — PARAEDUCATOR HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Extends by one year an HSA subsidy program for paraeducators and expands it to cover HDHPs for Medicare-eligible paraeducators; requires the comptroller to establish a one-year premium subsidy program for school boards that provide paraeducators with certain health plans; requires

the comptroller and SDE commissioner to enter into an MOU related to these programs; repeals a program giving stipends to paraeducators to purchase a qualified health plan through Access Health CT

HSA and High-Deductible Health Plan Subsidy Program

PA 23-204, § 203, required the comptroller to establish a program for FY 24, within available appropriations, giving subsidies to paraeducators who (1) open a health savings account (HSA) and (2) are employed by a local or regional board of education.

The act extends the program to FY 25 and expands it to also give subsidies to paraeducators who (1) are employed by boards of education, (2) are Medicare-eligible, and (3) enroll in a high deductible health plan (HDHP).

Under prior law, the subsidy was a percentage of the initial investment made to open the account. The act instead sets the subsidy as a percentage of the deductible for the paraeducator's health plan, minus the amount of any employer contributions to an HSA or health reimbursement account. As under prior law, (1) the comptroller specifies the percentage and maximum subsidy and (2) no paraeducator may receive more than one subsidy.

The act (1) allows the comptroller to work with boards of education to distribute the subsidies and (2) eliminates the requirement for paraeducators to apply to the comptroller to participate in the program.

Premium Subsidy Program for School Boards

The act requires the comptroller, for FY 25, to set up a program giving subsidies to school boards that provide coverage to paraeducators and their dependents under a health benefit plan (generally, a health insurance plan) or partnership plan (a health benefit plan the comptroller offers to nonstate public employers and certain others), but not under an HDHP. The subsidies must be given from any funds appropriated for this purpose.

Under this program, the subsidy must be no more than 10% of the aggregate premium cost, including the employee and employer shares, that the board paid for coverage under the plan, divided by the number of paraeducators employed by the board and enrolled in health coverage. The subsidy must be used to offset the employee's share of the premium that is deducted from the paychecks of each paraeducator the board employed during any pay period in FY 25.

MOU

To implement these two subsidy programs, the act requires the comptroller and SDE commissioner to enter into an MOU, under existing procedures, to allow the comptroller to use the \$5 million appropriated to SDE for assistance to paraeducators under the FY 24-25 budget act.

Repealer

The act also repeals a program that, under prior law, gave stipends to eligible paraeducators to buy silver-level health insurance plans through Access Health CT. EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024, except the repealer is effective upon passage.

§ 125 — SERC FUNDING ALLOCATION

Requires, rather than allows, the SDE commissioner to allocate funds to SERC

Prior law allowed the SDE commissioner to allocate funds to the State Education Resource Center (SERC) so that it may provide professional development services, technical assistance and evaluation activities, policy analysis, and other forms of assistance to the following entities: (1) local and regional boards of education, (2) SDE, (3) state and local charter schools, (4) the Technical Education and Career System, (5) school readiness program providers, and (6) other education entities and providers. The act makes the commissioner’s fund allocation to SERC required rather than optional.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 127-130 — DEEP PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROJECTS

For certain transportation capital projects, requires specified information to be included in a petition for a DEEP public hearing on an application for a (1) tidal or inland wetland activity permit; (2) structures, dredging, or fill permit; or (3) certification to conduct certain work in a floodplain

Under certain circumstances, existing law requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to hold a public hearing on an application for authorization to:

1. conduct a regulated activity in a tidal or inland wetland (e.g., draining, dredging, excavating, removing soil, depositing material);
2. perform certain work in the tidal, coastal, or navigable waters of the state waterward of the coastal jurisdiction line (e.g., dredge, erect structures, place fill); or
3. undertake activities or critical activities (i.e., those with a certain chance of flooding) by a state agency in or affecting a floodplain (generally, a “regulated activity”).

One of these circumstances is when the commissioner receives a petition signed by at least 25 people asking for a hearing.

The act, however, requires the inclusion of specified information in public hearing petitions about certain transportation capital projects. Under the act, the additional information is required if the:

1. project is not at an airport;
2. federal government requires public participation in the activity; and
3. person proposing to do the activity (a) sought public input on it by implementing a plan a federal agency approved and (b) gave the commissioner a copy of the plan, a written summary of the public

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participation opportunities involved, and a copy or record of the comments received and how they were responded to or addressed.

In this case, the act only requires the commissioner to hold the hearing if the petition alleges aggrievement or unreasonable pollution, or destruction of the public trust, which must include specific facts to show either that the:

1. legal rights, duties, or privileges of at least one signatory will or may reasonably be expected to be affected by the regulated activity or
2. regulated activity involves conduct that has or is reasonably likely to unreasonably pollute, impair, or destroy the public trust in the state's air, water, or other natural resources.

In the above cases, the petition must identify the relevant law or regulation that the proposed regulated activity is alleged to not meet. The commissioner must give a copy of the petition to the person proposing the activity, who then has seven business days to object to it for failing to have the specific facts required above.

Under the act, the commissioner must (1) determine if the petition meets the above requirements and (2) give written notice of her decision to the person who submitted the petition and the person who proposed the regulated activity.

Lastly, the act specifies that its public hearing petition requirements for transportation capital projects do not change or limit requirements for public scoping (i.e., soliciting public input), a public hearing, or public participation under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§§ 233-239 — FY 24 BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Makes deficiency appropriations for FY 24 in the General Fund and STF and reduces appropriations in five appropriated funds

The act appropriates a total of \$333,556,789 from the General Fund and \$6,600,000 from the Special Transportation Fund (STF) to cover deficiencies in various state agencies and programs for FY 24. It also reduces FY 24 appropriations in the (1) General Fund by \$244,300,000; (2) STF by \$22,350,000; (3) Banking Fund by \$4,800,000; (4) Insurance Fund by \$9,450,000; and (5) Workers' Compensation Fund by \$2,800,000.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 240 & 241 — CARRYFORWARD OF CERTAIN CANNABIS-RELATED APPROPRIATIONS

Carries forward certain unspent funds appropriated to OPM for costs associated with cannabis legalization and requires them to be used for other purposes (however, a separate act repeals these provisions and carries forward these funds for different purposes)

The act requires that up to \$800,000 in unspent funds made available to OPM for costs associated with cannabis legalization and carried forward to FY 24 be made available in FY 24 for (1) up to \$500,000 to implement executive branch agency process improvements and (2) up to \$300,000 for pension consultation

services. It also carries forward the unspent balance of these funds for the same purposes for FY 25.

The act also carries forward up to \$1,500,000 in unspent funds that were previously made available to OPM for costs associated with cannabis legalization and carried forward to FY 24. These funds must be transferred to the Department of Social Services for FY 25 and used for Community Action Agencies.

(PA 24-151, §§ 148-150, repeals these provisions and carries forward these funds for other purposes.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 242 — SCHOOL MEALS

For FY 25, makes SDE financially responsible for school boards' portion of the cost for reduced price meals for students not enrolled in a school that qualifies for maximum federal reimbursement under the CEP

For FY 25, the act makes SDE financially responsible for local and regional school boards' portion of the cost for reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Specifically, it makes the agency responsible for the costs for students who are not enrolled in a school that qualifies for maximum federal reimbursement for all meals served under the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

The CEP, a provision in federal law governing school feeding programs, allows certain schools to serve free breakfast and lunch to all students in the entire school without collecting household applications (P.L. 111-296, § 104). Eligible schools that choose to participate are reimbursed by the state using federal funds. Reimbursement amounts are determined using a formula that is tied to the percentage of students categorically eligible for free meals based on their participation in other specific means-tested programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

§ 243 — MRDA REQUIREMENT REPEALED

Repeals the requirement that MRDA review and approve a member municipality's economic development master plan before executing an MOA with it, as well as related provisions

By law, member municipalities that opt to join the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA) must enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with MRDA to establish at least one development district.

The act eliminates the requirements that member municipalities develop an economic development master plan (generally a plan designed to increase the municipality's tax base to a level allowing it to provide an adequate level of municipal services) and submit it for the authority's review and approval before executing the MOA.

The act also eliminates the requirement that projects receiving authority support must be consistent with the (1) members' economic development master plans and

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plans of conservation and development and (2) applicable Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024