
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 250 (File 343, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to submit recommendations to the Commerce Committee by January 1, 2025, on the design and establishment of a three-year Global Entrepreneur in Residence pilot program to attract or retain resident specialists in Connecticut. Under the bill, a "resident specialist" is someone who:

1. is employed part-time by a private employer in a specialty occupation (see BACKGROUND),
2. is not a United States citizen, and
3. wants to move to or remain in Connecticut as a nonimmigrant while employed by a private employer.

In addition to attracting and retaining resident specialists, the program may:

1. facilitate or support partnerships between eligible institutions (i.e., public or private higher education institutions in Connecticut) and private employers that employ resident specialists;
2. help resident specialists file visa applications; and
3. accept donated funds to support the program's purposes.

Under the bill, DECD must consult with UConn, the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU), the Office of Workforce Strategy, and the governor's office to make pilot program

recommendations. It also allows DECD to consult other eligible institutions, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit businesses to make recommendations.

The bill also requires DECD, UConn, and CSCU to, by January 1, 2025, conduct a joint survey of noncitizen students at UConn and CSCUs to assess interest in the Global Entrepreneur in Residence Program. They may do so in collaboration with other eligible institutions and any other parties.

*Senate Amendment "A" replaces the underlying bill, which directed DECD to develop a Global Entrepreneur in Residence pilot program and outlined specific program and reporting requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Specialty Occupation Visas

To qualify for certain visas (e.g., an H-1B visa), a foreign worker must have a bachelor's degree or higher and be employed in a specialty occupation by a U.S.-based employer who will file the visa petition. A specialty occupation is generally one that requires highly specialized knowledge and a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) to work in the occupation in the United States.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 0 (03/22/2024)