OFA Bill Analysis

HB 6865

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

SUMMARY:

The bill makes various changes to statute, implementing the provisions of sHB 6864.

EFFECTIVE DATE: VARIOUS, SEE BELOW

§§ 1-6 — CREDIT CARD SERVICE FEES

The bill generally codifies current practice by modifying the requirement that state agencies charge a service fee for credit or debit card transactions. Current law requires agencies to charge such fees but also allows the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to waive this requirement, which it has generally done for new fees since July 1, 2022 (the current waiver runs through June 30, 2025).

Specifically, sections 1-4 remove the general requirement to charge credit card service fees and, instead, provide OPM the authority to require agencies to charge such fees. For sections 5 and 6, the authority to charge such fees (made optional under the bill) is with the Probate Court Administration and the Judicial Department, respectively.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 7 — STATE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The bill changes the membership of the State Health Information Technology Advisory Council, which advises the Commissioner of Health Strategy and the health information technology officer on matters related to the state-wide health information technology plan

and the State-wide Health Information Exchange. The section adds the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (or the Secretary's designee) to the Council, which will now made up of twenty-nine members appointed by various executive and legislative bodies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: FROM PASSAGE

§ 8 — MIRA TRANSFER TO OPM

The bill moves the balance of Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) Dissolution Authority to a nonlapsing account within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). (See BACKGROUND)

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 9 — GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE COUNCIL

The bill expands the Governor's Workforce Council by adding six members, appointed by the Governor, who either:

1. are owners of a business, chief executives or operating officers of a business, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy-making or hiring authority;

2. represent businesses or organizations representing businesses that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupation in the state; or

3. have been nominated by state business organizations or business trade associations. The bill also requires that at least one such member be an expert in residential construction.

Under current law, the council is a group consisting of 55 stakeholders, legislators, and government agency representatives that advises the governor on workforce development issues. Its statutory duties include, among other things, convening state agencies, educational institutions, business leaders, and others to (1) inform state workforce development policy, (2) help state agencies and educational institutions align with employers' needs, and (3) help businesses

understand how to contribute to the state's workforce efforts (CGS § 31-3h).

EFFECTIVE DATE: FROM PASSAGE

§ 10 — FEE WAIVER FOR ANY CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION SEARCH OR FINGERPRINT SEARCH

The bill creates a fee waiver for any criminal history record information search or fingerprint search for any individual (1) whose records were required to be erased under C.G.S. § 54-142a or (2) who had previously paid for a prior search which included records that have been deemed erased. This waiver is only effective through June 30, 2026, and these fees may not be waived more than twice per person.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 11 — REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS FOR ERASURE

The bill changes the process by which the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) processes requests for erasure of criminal records by (1) changing the requirements of a request and (2) making procedural changes to erasure hearings.

Under current law, a person who believes that their criminal history record information was required to be erased under law must submit to DESPP such person's criminal history record information search showing that such information has not been erased to initiate a review. Under the bill, such a person must instead submit an application to the department to initiate a review.

Under current law, upon receiving a request for records erasure, DESPP is required to hold a hearing to decide whether such information should be erased. Under the bill, DESPP is only required to hold a hearing if relief cannot be immediately granted. If a hearing is held, DESPP is required to provide the applicant with any criminal history record information the department will consider not later than 15 days

before the hearing. Following the hearing, DESPP has 15 days to issue a written notice of its determination.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 12 — TIME-PERIOD EVALUATION CRIMINAL RECORD ERASURE

The bill excludes certain violations of probation from the time-period evaluation component of criminal record erasure (See BACKGROUND).

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 13 — CIVIL LAW WORKING GROUP

The bill creates a working group to study civil laws of the state. It requires the working group to submit its findings and recommendations to the Judiciary Committee on or before January 1, 2026.

The bill requires the working group to have the following members, who have familiarity with and expertise in the state's civil laws:

1. One appointed by the House speaker
2. One appointed by the Senate president pro tempore
3. One appointed by the House majority leader
4. One appointed by the Senate majority leader
5. One appointed by the House minority leader
6. One appointed by the Senate minority leader

EFFECTIVE DATE: FROM PASSAGE

§§ 14 – 17 — JUDICIAL COMPENSATION AND ASSOCIATED IMPACTS

Increases to Judicial Compensation

The bill alters the statutes that set the annual salaries for judges beginning in FY 27. The table below provides the judges' salaries under

the law and under the bill.

Table 1: Judicial Compensation Under the Current Law and Under the Bill

Position	Under Current Law ($)	Under the Bill in FY 27 ($)
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court	240,518	248,936
Chief Court Administrator	231,121	239,210
Associate Judge Supreme Court	222,545	230,334
Chief Judge Appellate Court	220,084	227,786
Judge Appellate Court	209,046	216,336
Deputy Chief Court Administrator	205,199	212,381
Superior Court Judge	201,023	208,059
Chief Family Support Magistrate	174,976	181,101
Family Support Magistrate	166,533	172,361

The bill makes corresponding increases to the additional compensation that certain judges receive for being an administrative judge, the per diem rate for judge trial referees, and the per diem rate for family support referees.

CGS §§ 45a-95 and 45a-95a set the salaries of Probate Court judges based on a percentage of the salary of a Superior Court judge.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

Associated Impacts of Judicial Compensation Increases

CGS § 31-277 ties the salaries of administrative law judges in the Workers' Compensation Commission to the salaries of Superior Court judges by a fixed amount. Therefore, this change also results in corresponding increase to the salaries of administrative law judges.

Additionally, CGS § 3-2 ties the salary of the Governor to that of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the salary of the Lieutenant Governor to that of a Superior Court judge. All other constitutional officers' salaries are tied to that of a Superior Court judge (CGS §§ 3-11, 3-77, 3-111, and 3-124). The new salaries will not go into effect until after the next election for each position which next takes place in November 2026.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§§ 18 – 25 — SOCIAL EQUITY AND INNOVATION ACCOUNT

The bill eliminates the Social Equity and Innovation Fund, an appropriated fund. The bill establishes in the fund's place the "social equity and innovation account" as a separate, nonlapsing account that shall contain any money the law requires. The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management must allocate the account's funding for purposes that further principles of equity, as determined by the Social Equity Council. This includes, but is not limited to, providing (1) access to capital for businesses in any industry, (2) technical assistance for the start-up and operation of a business in any industry, (3) funding for workforce education in any industry, (4) funding for community investments, and (5) funding for investments in disproportionately impacted areas.

Cannabis Tax Revenue Distribution (§ 19)

The bill eliminates the transfer of cannabis tax revenues to the Social Equity and Innovation Fund and instead transfers the same percentage of cannabis tax revenues to the social equity and innovation account. The percentage transfers to the Prevention and Recovery Services Fund and the General Fund remain unchanged under the bill. The table below provides the percentage transfer by fund and account.

Table 2: Cannabis Tax Revenue Distribution

Fund/Account	FY 26	FY 27 - FY 28	FY 29+
Social Equity and Innovation Account	60%	65%	75%
Prevention and Recovery Services Fund	25%	25%	25%
General Fund	15%	10%	0%

FY 25 Social Equity and Innovation Fund Transfer and Comptroller Records (§§ 20 - 21)

The bill requires the Comptroller to transfer the balance remaining in the Social Equity and Innovation Fund at the end of FY 25 to the social equity and innovation account.

Additionally, the bill authorizes the Comptroller to record as revenue for each fiscal year the amounts of cannabis tax that is received by the

Commissioner of Revenue Services not later than five business days from the July thirty-first immediately following the end of such fiscal year.

The bill makes other technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 26 — CHRO TRANSFER FROM DOL TO DAS

The bill transfers the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) from the Department of Labor (DOL) to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for administrative purposes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2026

§ 27 — PARAEDUCATOR HEALTH PLAN ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE

The bill removes the requirement that the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) assist local and regional boards of education enroll paraeducators in certain health care plans. OHS is still required to assist these boards in enrolling paraeducators in the Covered Connecticut program and Medicaid.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

§ 28 — MUNICIPAL VIDEO COMPETITION TRUST ACCOUNTS

The bill repeals offsetting $5 million transfers (1) to the municipal video competition trust account from the General Fund (CGS § 16-331bb), and (2) from the municipal video competition trust account to the General Fund (CGS § 16-331hh).

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

MIRA Dissolution Authority

The MIRA Dissolution Authority was created by the State of Connecticut effective July 1, 2023, via PA 23-170.

Automatic or Petition Process for Criminal Record Erasure

Existing law provides for record erasure of most misdemeanor convictions and certain felony convictions after a specified period following the person's most recent conviction. The erasure generally applies to (1) related police, court, and prosecutor records (including those from any prosecuting grand jury) and (2) records held by the Board of Pardons and Paroles regarding court obligations arising from the conviction. Generally, the law provides for (1) automatic erasure for eligible offenses that occurred on or after January 1, 2000, or (2) erasure upon the person's filing of a petition for offenses occurring before then.

Related Bills

SB1559, reported favorably by the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, transfers $5 million of the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) Dissolution Authority's balance an existing nonlapsing account administered by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the remainder to the Capital Region Development Authority which the bill designates the successor agency to MIRA.

sHB6864 (§39), reported favorably by the Appropriations Committee, if passed, would not allow for constitutional officers to receive the salary increase resulting from this bill.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Appropriations

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 40 Nay 14 (4/24/2025)