



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 153

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1158

Senate, March 20, 2025

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. LESSER of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEPARTMENT ON AGING.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,
2 "older person" means a person age sixty-two or older. There shall be
3 established a Department on Aging that shall be under the direction and
4 supervision of the Commissioner on Aging, who shall be appointed by
5 the Governor in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8,
6 inclusive, of the general statutes, as amended by this act, with the
7 powers and duties prescribed in said sections. The commissioner shall
8 be knowledgeable and experienced with respect to the conditions and
9 needs of older persons and shall serve on a full-time basis.

10 (b) The Department on Aging shall constitute a successor department
11 to the Department of Aging and Disability Services in accordance with
12 the provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39 of the general statutes
13 with respect to those powers, duties and functions concerning the
14 provision of services to older persons as described in subsections (c) and
15 (d) of this section, but excluding the services described in section 17a-
16 780 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

17 (c) The Commissioner on Aging shall administer all laws under the
18 jurisdiction of the Department on Aging and shall employ the most
19 efficient and practical means for the provision of care and protection of
20 older persons. The commissioner shall have the power and duty to do
21 the following: (1) Administer, coordinate and direct the operation of the
22 department; (2) adopt and enforce regulations, in accordance with
23 chapter 54 of the general statutes, as necessary to implement the
24 purposes of the department as established by statute; (3) establish rules
25 for the internal operation and administration of the department; (4)
26 establish and develop programs and administer services to achieve the
27 purposes of the department; (5) contract for facilities, services and
28 programs to implement the purposes of the department; (6) act as
29 advocate for necessary additional comprehensive and coordinated
30 programs for older persons; (7) assist and advise all appropriate state,
31 federal, local and area planning agencies for older persons in the
32 performance of their functions and duties pursuant to federal law and
33 regulation; (8) plan services and programs for older persons; (9)
34 coordinate outreach activities by public and private agencies serving
35 older persons, including area agencies on aging, as described in section
36 17a-850 of the general statutes, as amended by this act; and (10) consult
37 and cooperate with area and private planning agencies.

38 (d) The Department on Aging is designated as the State Unit on
39 Aging to administer, manage, design and advocate for benefits,
40 programs and services for older persons and their families pursuant to
41 the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to time. The
42 department shall study continuously the conditions and needs of older
43 persons in this state in relation to nutrition, transportation, home care,
44 housing, income, employment, health, recreation and other matters. The
45 department shall be responsible, in cooperation with federal, state, local
46 and area agencies on aging, for the overall planning, development and
47 administration of a comprehensive and integrated social service
48 delivery system for older persons. The Department on Aging is
49 designated as the state agency for (1) the administration of nutritional
50 programs for older persons described in section 17a-852 of the general
51 statutes, as amended by this act, (2) the fall prevention program

52 described in section 17a-859 of the general statutes, as amended by this
53 act, (3) the CHOICES program described in section 17a-857 of the
54 general statutes, as amended by this act, (4) the Aging and Disability
55 Resource Center Program described in section 17a-858 of the general
56 statutes, as amended by this act, and (5) the Alzheimer's respite program
57 described in section 17b-860 of the general statutes.

58 (e) The functions, powers, duties and personnel of the Department of
59 Aging and Disability Services dedicated to the provision of services
60 described in subsections (c) and (d) of this section, but excluding the
61 services described in section 17a-780 of the general statutes, as amended
62 by this act, shall be transferred to the Department on Aging pursuant to
63 the provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39 of the general statutes.

64 (f) The Governor may, with the approval of the Finance Advisory
65 Committee, transfer funds between the Department of Aging and
66 Disability Services and the Department on Aging pursuant to subsection
67 (b) of section 4-87 of the general statutes during the fiscal year ending
68 June 30, 2027.

69 (g) Any order or regulation of the Department of Aging and
70 Disability Services relating to services described in subsections (c) and
71 (d) of this section that is in force on July 1, 2026, but excluding the
72 services described in section 17a-780 of the general statutes, as amended
73 by this act, shall continue in force and effect as an order or regulation of
74 the Department on Aging until amended, repealed or superseded
75 pursuant to law. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, the
76 Commissioner on Aging may implement policies and procedures
77 consistent with the provisions of this section while in the process of
78 adopting the policies or procedures in regulation form, provided notice
79 of intention to adopt regulations is posted on the Department on Aging's
80 Internet web site and the eRegulations System not later than twenty
81 days after implementation. Any such policies or procedures shall be
82 valid until the time final regulations are effective.

83 Sec. 2. Section 17a-780 of the general statutes is repealed and the
84 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

85 (a) There is created a Department of [Aging and] Disability Services.
86 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall be responsible
87 for providing the following: (1) Services to persons who are deaf,
88 deafblind or hard of hearing; (2) services for persons who are blind or
89 visually impaired; and (3) rehabilitation services in accordance with the
90 provisions of the general statutes concerning the Department of [Aging
91 and] Disability Services. [; and (4) services for older persons and their
92 families.] The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
93 constitute a successor authority to the Department of [Rehabilitation
94 Services] Aging and Disability Services in accordance with the
95 provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39 with respect to the powers
96 and duties described in subdivisions (1) to (3), inclusive, of this
97 subsection, but excluding the provision of services to older persons as
98 described in section 1 of this act.

99 (b) The department head shall be the Commissioner of [Aging and]
100 Disability Services, who shall be appointed by the Governor in
101 accordance with the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive, as
102 amended by this act, and shall have the powers and duties described in
103 said sections. The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
104 appoint such persons as may be necessary to administer the provisions
105 of public act 11-44 and the Commissioner of Administrative Services
106 shall fix the compensation of such persons in accordance with the
107 provisions of section 4-40. The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability
108 Services may create such sections within the Department of [Aging and]
109 Disability Services as will facilitate such administration, including a
110 disability determinations section for which one hundred per cent federal
111 funds may be accepted for the operation of such section in conformity
112 with applicable state and federal regulations. The Commissioner of
113 [Aging and] Disability Services may adopt regulations, in accordance
114 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the purposes of the
115 department as established by statute.

116 (c) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall,
117 annually, in accordance with section 4-60, submit to the Governor a
118 report in electronic format on the activities of the Department of [Aging

119 and] Disability Services relating to services provided by the department
120 to persons who (1) are blind or visually impaired, (2) are deaf, deafblind
121 or hard of hearing, or (3) receive vocational rehabilitation services. [, or
122 (4) are older persons or their families.] The report shall include the data
123 the department provides to the federal government that relates to the
124 evaluation standards and performance indicators for the vocational
125 rehabilitation services program. The commissioner shall submit the
126 report in electronic format, in accordance with the provisions of section
127 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
128 cognizance of matters relating to human services and appropriations
129 and the budgets of state agencies.

130 (d) Any order or regulation of the Department of Aging and
131 Disability Services relating to the services described in this section that
132 is in force on July 1, 2026, shall continue in force and effect as an order
133 or regulation of the Department of Disability Services until amended,
134 repealed or superseded pursuant to law. Notwithstanding the
135 provisions of this subsection, the Commissioner of Disability Services
136 may implement policies and procedures consistent with the provisions
137 of this section while in the process of adopting the policies or procedures
138 in regulation form, provided notice of intention to adopt regulations is
139 posted on the Department of Disability Services' Internet web site and
140 the eRegulations System not later than twenty days after
141 implementation. Any such policies or procedures shall be valid until the
142 time final regulations are effective.

143 [(d) The functions, powers, duties and personnel of the former
144 Department on Aging, or any subsequent division or portion of a
145 division with similar functions, powers, duties and personnel, shall be
146 transferred to the Department of Aging and Disability Services pursuant
147 to the provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39.

148 (e) The Department of Aging and Disability Services shall constitute
149 a successor department to the former Department on Aging, in
150 accordance with the provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39.
151 Wherever the words "Commissioner on Aging" are used in the general

152 statutes, the words "Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services"
153 shall be substituted in lieu thereof. Wherever the words "Department on
154 Aging" are used in the general statutes, the words "Department of Aging
155 and Disability Services" shall be substituted in lieu thereof. Any order
156 or regulation of the former Department on Aging that is in force on June
157 14, 2018, shall continue in force and effect as an order or regulation of
158 the Department of Aging and Disability Services until amended,
159 repealed or superseded pursuant to law.

160 (f) The Governor may, with the approval of the Finance Advisory
161 Committee, transfer funds between the Department of Social Services
162 and the Department of Aging and Disability Services pursuant to
163 subsection (b) of section 4-87 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018.

164 (g) The Department of Aging and Disability Services is designated as
165 the State Unit on Aging to administer, manage, design and advocate for
166 benefits, programs and services for older persons and their families
167 pursuant to the Older Americans Act. The department shall study
168 continuously the conditions and needs of older persons in this state in
169 relation to nutrition, transportation, home care, housing, income,
170 employment, health, recreation and other matters. The department shall
171 be responsible, in cooperation with federal, state, local and area
172 planning agencies on aging, for the overall planning, development and
173 administration of a comprehensive and integrated social service
174 delivery system for older persons. The Department of Aging and
175 Disability Services is designated as the state agency for the
176 administration of nutritional programs for elderly persons described in
177 section 17a-852, the fall prevention program described in section 17a-
178 859, the CHOICES program described in section 17a-857, the Aging and
179 Disability Resource Center Program described in section 17a-858 and
180 the Alzheimer's respite program described in section 17b-860.]

181 Sec. 3. Section 17a-782 of the general statutes is repealed and the
182 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

183 (a) Vocational rehabilitation services shall be provided, with or
184 without public cost, directly or through public or private

185 instrumentalities, as part of an individual plan for employment for a
186 person with disabilities determined to be eligible by the Department of
187 [Aging and] Disability Services, in accordance with Title I of the
188 Rehabilitation Act, 29 USC 701 et seq., as amended from time to time.
189 Nothing in this section shall be construed to mean that an individual's
190 ability or inability to share in the cost of vocational rehabilitation
191 services may be taken into account during the determination of
192 eligibility for such services.

193 (b) If vocational rehabilitation services cannot be provided for all
194 eligible persons with disabilities who apply for such services, the
195 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall determine, in
196 accordance with Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 701 et
197 seq., and federal regulations, as amended from time to time, the order
198 to be followed in selecting those to whom such services will be
199 provided.

200 (c) Nothing in section 17a-781 or subsection (a) of this section shall be
201 construed to preclude provision of vocational rehabilitation services,
202 with or without public cost, to a person with a disability under an
203 extended evaluation for a total period not in excess of eighteen months,
204 in accordance with Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 701
205 et seq., as amended from time to time.

206 (d) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may adopt
207 regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 to establish
208 standards and procedures governing the provision of vocational
209 rehabilitation services and, where appropriate, a means test to
210 determine, based upon the financial need of each eligible person with
211 disabilities, the extent to which such services will be provided at public
212 cost. Any funds received by the Department of [Aging and] Disability
213 Services from individuals or third parties for the provision of vocational
214 rehabilitation services shall be used by the department to provide such
215 services. The regulations may also prescribe the procedures to be used
216 when payment is made by individuals required to contribute to the cost
217 of vocational rehabilitation services. Regulations developed to

218 implement a means test shall include, but not be limited to: (1) An
219 exemption for any individual with an income of less than one hundred
220 per cent of the state median income and assets which are less than five
221 thousand dollars; (2) an exemption for services covered in an individual
222 plan for employment in effect at the time of implementation of the
223 means test; (3) an exclusion from an individual's income of the costs of
224 necessary and reasonable disability-related expenses including, but not
225 limited to, personal attendant services and medications for which
226 payment is unavailable to the individual through other benefits or
227 resources; (4) an exclusion from the individual's assets of the value of
228 the individual's primary residence and motor vehicle; (5) a method by
229 which the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may reduce
230 the level of required contributions by an individual in the case of undue
231 hardship; and (6) a requirement that the Department of [Aging and]
232 Disability Services notify an individual of the results of the means test
233 analysis within thirty days of receipt of necessary financial information
234 from the individual. Such means test shall not apply to services covered
235 under a determination of financial need made by an institution of higher
236 education. The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
237 develop the regulations in consultation with representatives of
238 providers of vocational rehabilitation services and recipients of such
239 services or their representatives.

240 Sec. 4. Section 17a-783 of the general statutes is repealed and the
241 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

242 (a) Any applicant for or recipient of vocational rehabilitation services
243 may request an informal review of any decision made by the
244 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services pursuant to section 17a-
245 782, as amended by this act.

246 (b) Regardless of whether a person requests an informal review
247 under subsection (a) of this section, any applicant for or recipient of
248 vocational rehabilitation services who is aggrieved by a decision made
249 by the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services pursuant to
250 section 17a-782, as amended by this act, may request an administrative

251 hearing, by making written request to the Commissioner of [Aging and]
252 Disability Services.

253 (c) An individual who is aggrieved by a final agency decision made
254 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section may appeal therefrom in
255 accordance with section 4-183. Such appeals shall be privileged cases to
256 be heard by the court as soon after the return day as shall be practicable.

257 Sec. 5. Section 17a-784 of the general statutes is repealed and the
258 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

259 (a) In carrying out sections 17a-780 to 17a-790, inclusive, as amended
260 by this act, 17a-796, 17a-797, as amended by this act, 17a-799, as
261 amended by this act, and 17a-835, as amended by this act, the
262 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall cooperate with
263 other departments, agencies and institutions, both public and private,
264 in providing for the vocational rehabilitation of persons with
265 disabilities, in studying the problems involved therein and in
266 establishing, developing and providing such programs, facilities and
267 services as it deems necessary or desirable. Notwithstanding any other
268 provision of the general statutes, the Department of [Aging and]
269 Disability Services shall not be required to pay that portion of the cost
270 of a program of postsecondary education or training which is properly
271 designated as expected parental or family contribution in accordance
272 with state and federal law regarding eligibility for student financial aid.

273 (b) Subject to the approval of all real estate acquisitions by the
274 Commissioner of Administrative Services and the State Properties
275 Review Board, in carrying out said sections, the Department of [Aging
276 and] Disability Services may (1) establish, operate, foster and promote
277 the establishment of rehabilitation facilities and make grants to public
278 and other nonprofit and nonsectarian organizations for such purposes;
279 (2) assist persons with significant disabilities to establish and operate
280 small businesses; and (3) make studies, investigations, demonstrations
281 and reports, and provide training and instruction, including the
282 establishment and maintenance of such research fellowships and
283 traineeships with such stipends and allowances as may be deemed

284 necessary, in matters relating to vocational rehabilitation.

285 (c) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
286 develop and maintain a program of public education and information.
287 The program shall include, but need not be limited to, education of the
288 public concerning services available from the Department of [Aging
289 and] Disability Services, its policies and goals, an outreach effort to
290 discover persons with disabilities, including such persons who are
291 minorities as defined in subsection (a) of section 32-9n, who may benefit
292 from the services it offers and the dissemination of printed materials to
293 persons at their initial meeting with staff of the department, including a
294 statement of such person's rights.

295 Sec. 6. Section 17a-785 of the general statutes is repealed and the
296 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

297 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services is authorized to
298 cooperate with the federal government in carrying out the purposes of
299 any federal statutes pertaining to vocational rehabilitation, to adopt
300 such methods of administration as it finds necessary for the proper and
301 efficient operation of agreements or plans for vocational rehabilitation
302 and to comply with such conditions as may be necessary to secure the
303 full benefits of such federal statutes to this state.

304 Sec. 7. Section 17a-786 of the general statutes is repealed and the
305 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

306 The State Treasurer is designated as the custodian of all funds
307 received from the federal government for the purpose of carrying out
308 any federal statutes pertaining to vocational rehabilitation or any
309 agreements authorized by sections 17a-780 to 17a-790, inclusive, as
310 amended by this act, 17a-796, 17a-797, as amended by this act, 17a-799,
311 as amended by this act, and 17a-835, as amended by this act, and shall
312 make disbursements from such funds and from all state funds available
313 for vocational rehabilitation purposes upon certification by the
314 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services.

315 Sec. 8. Section 17a-787 of the general statutes is repealed and the
316 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

317 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services is authorized to
318 accept and use gifts, grants, reimbursements or bequests made by will
319 or otherwise for carrying out the purposes of the donor or of the general
320 statutes concerning the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services.
321 Gifts, grants, reimbursements or bequests made under such conditions
322 as in the judgment of the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability
323 Services are proper and consistent with the provisions of state and
324 federal law may be so accepted and shall be held, invested, reinvested
325 and used in accordance with the conditions of the gift, grant,
326 reimbursement or bequest.

327 Sec. 9. Section 17a-788 of the general statutes is repealed and the
328 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

329 Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the
330 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may, within the limits of
331 appropriations, purchase (1) wheelchairs and placement equipment
332 directly and without the issuance of a purchase order, provided the cost
333 of such purchases shall not be in excess of twenty thousand dollars per
334 unit, and (2) adaptive equipment, including equipment to modify
335 vehicles for persons with disabilities directly and without the issuance
336 of a purchase order, provided the cost of such purchases of adaptive
337 equipment shall not be in excess of one hundred twenty thousand
338 dollars per unit. All such purchases shall be made in the open market,
339 but shall, when possible, be based on at least three competitive bids.
340 Such bids shall be solicited by sending notice to prospective suppliers
341 and by posting notice on the Internet web site of the Department of
342 [Aging and] Disability Services. Each bid shall be opened publicly at the
343 time stated in the notice soliciting such bid. Acceptance of a bid by the
344 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall be based on
345 standard specifications as may be adopted by said department.

346 Sec. 10. Section 17a-791 of the general statutes is repealed and the
347 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

348 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall establish a
349 program to assist public school students with disabilities in preparing
350 for and obtaining competitive employment and to strengthen the
351 linkage between vocational rehabilitation services and public schools.
352 Under the program, the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services
353 shall provide, within the limits of available appropriations, vocational
354 evaluations and other appropriate transitional services and shall
355 provide vocational rehabilitation counselors to school districts
356 throughout the state. The counselors shall, if requested, assist those
357 persons planning in-school skill development programs. The counselors
358 shall, with planning and placement team members, develop transition
359 plans and individual education and work rehabilitation plans for
360 students with disabilities who will no longer be eligible for continued
361 public school services. Students whose termination date for receipt of
362 public school services is most immediate shall be given priority.

363 Sec. 11. Section 17a-791a of the general statutes is repealed and the
364 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

365 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall employ,
366 within available appropriations, a sufficient number of vocational
367 rehabilitation staff to provide transition services, as defined in section
368 10-74o, for children requiring special education who may be eligible to
369 receive services from the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services
370 as determined through a planning and placement team meeting
371 pursuant to subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of section 10-76d, as
372 amended by this act.

373 Sec. 12. Section 17a-793 of the general statutes is repealed and the
374 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

375 (a) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall establish
376 and maintain a state-wide network of centers for independent living.

377 (b) Not more than five per cent of the amount appropriated in any
378 fiscal year for the purposes of this section may be used by the
379 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services to provide state-wide

380 administration, evaluation and technical assistance relating to the
381 implementation of this section.

382 Sec. 13. Section 17a-794 of the general statutes is repealed and the
383 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

384 (a) The Governor shall appoint a state-wide Independent Living
385 Council, in accordance with Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,
386 29 USC 701 et seq., as amended from time to time.

387 (b) The council shall meet regularly with the Commissioner of [Aging
388 and] Disability Services and shall perform the following duties: (1) Issue
389 an annual report by January first, with recommendations regarding
390 independent living services and centers, to the Governor and the
391 chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
392 having cognizance of matters relating to human services, and (2) consult
393 with, advise and make recommendations to the Department [of Aging
394 and Disability Services] on Aging concerning independent living and
395 related policy, management and budgetary issues.

396 (c) Council members who are consumers shall be reimbursed for
397 expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as council
398 members.

399 Sec. 14. Section 17a-795 of the general statutes is repealed and the
400 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

401 (a) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services is
402 authorized to establish and administer state financing activities as
403 outlined in the federal Assistive Technology Act of 2004, P.L. 108-364,
404 as amended from time to time, to be known as the Assistive Technology
405 Loan Program. The program shall be used by the commissioner to make
406 and guarantee loans to persons with disabilities, older adults or the
407 family members of persons with disabilities or older adults for the
408 purchase of assistive technology and adaptive equipment and services.
409 Each such loan shall be made for a term of not more than ten years. Any
410 loans made under this section shall bear interest at a fixed rate not to

411 exceed six per cent. The commissioner is authorized to expend any
412 funds necessary for the reasonable direct expenses relating to the
413 administration of the program. The commissioner shall adopt
414 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
415 implement the purposes of this section.

416 (b) The State Bond Commission shall have power from time to time
417 to authorize the issuance of bonds of the state in one or more series in
418 accordance with section 3-20 and in a principal amount necessary to
419 carry out the purposes of this section, but not in excess of an aggregate
420 amount of one million dollars. All of the bonds shall (1) be payable at
421 such place or places as may be determined by the Treasurer pursuant to
422 section 3-19, (2) bear such date or dates, (3) mature at such time or times,
423 not exceeding five years from their respective dates, (4) bear interest at
424 such rate or different or varying rates and payable at such time or times,
425 (5) be in such denominations, (6) be in such form with or without
426 interest coupons attached, (7) carry such registration and transfer
427 privileges, (8) be payable in such medium of payment, and (9) be subject
428 to such terms of redemption with or without premium as, irrespective
429 of the provisions of section 3-20, may be provided by the authorization
430 of the State Bond Commission or fixed in accordance therewith. The
431 proceeds of the sale of such bonds shall be deposited in the Assistive
432 Technology Loan Program created by this section. Such bonds shall be
433 general obligations of the state and the full faith and credit of the state
434 of Connecticut are pledged for the payment of the principal of and
435 interest on such bonds as the same become due. Accordingly, and as
436 part of the contract of the state with the holders of such bonds,
437 appropriation of all amounts necessary for punctual payment of such
438 principal and interest is hereby made and the Treasurer shall pay such
439 principal and interest as the same become due. Net earnings on
440 investments or reinvestments of proceeds, accrued interest and
441 premiums on the issuance of such bonds, after payment therefrom of
442 expenses incurred by the Treasurer or State Bond Commission in
443 connection with their issuance, shall be deposited in the General Fund
444 of the state.

445 (c) The Connecticut Tech Act Project, within the Department of
446 [Aging and] Disability Services and as authorized by 29 USC 3001, as
447 amended from time to time, may provide assistive technology
448 evaluation and training services upon the request of any person or any
449 public or private entity, to the extent persons who provide assistive
450 technology services are available. The project may charge a fee to any
451 person or entity receiving such assistive technology evaluation and
452 training services to reimburse the department for its costs. The
453 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall establish fees at
454 reasonable rates that will cover the department's direct and indirect
455 costs.

456 Sec. 15. Section 17a-797 of the general statutes is repealed and the
457 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

458 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services is authorized to
459 provide such medical, diagnostic, physical restoration, training and
460 other rehabilitation services as may be needed to enable persons with
461 disabilities to attain the maximum degree of self care. The powers herein
462 delegated and authorized to the Department of [Aging and] Disability
463 Services shall be in addition to those authorized by any other law and
464 shall become effective upon authorization of federal grant-in-aid funds
465 for participation in the cost of independent living rehabilitation services
466 for persons with disabilities. The Department of [Aging and] Disability
467 Services shall be authorized to cooperate with whatever federal agency
468 is directed to administer the federal aspects of such program and to
469 comply with such requirements and conditions as may be established
470 for the receipt and disbursement of federal grant-in-aid funds which
471 may be made available to the state of Connecticut in carrying out such
472 program.

473 Sec. 16. Section 17a-798 of the general statutes is repealed and the
474 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

475 (a) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may receive
476 state and federal funds to administer, within available appropriations,
477 an employment opportunities program to serve individuals with the

478 most significant disabilities who do not meet the eligibility requirements
479 of supported employment programs administered by the Departments
480 of Developmental Services, Social Services and Mental Health and
481 Addiction Services. For the purposes of this section, "individuals with
482 the most significant disabilities" means those individuals who (1) have
483 serious employment limitations in a total of three or more functional
484 areas including, but not limited to, mobility, communication, self-care,
485 interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills, or (2) will require
486 significant ongoing disability-related services on the job in order to
487 maintain employment.

488 (b) The employment opportunities program shall provide extended
489 services, as defined in 34 CFR 361.5(b)(19), that are necessary for
490 individuals with the most significant disabilities to maintain supported
491 employment. Such services shall include coaching and other related
492 services that allow participants to obtain and maintain employment and
493 maximize economic self-sufficiency.

494 (c) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall adopt
495 regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, to implement the provisions
496 of this section.

497 Sec. 17. Section 17a-799 of the general statutes is repealed and the
498 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

499 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall inquire
500 into the criminal history of any applicant, who is not at the time of
501 application employed by the Department of [Aging and] Disability
502 Services, for a position of employment with the department's disability
503 determination services unit. Such inquiry shall be conducted in
504 accordance with the provisions of section 31-51i. The commissioner
505 shall require each such applicant to state whether the applicant has ever
506 been convicted of a crime, whether criminal charges are pending against
507 the applicant at the time of application, and, if so, to identify the charges
508 and court in which such charges are pending. Each such applicant
509 offered a position of employment with the department's disability
510 determination services unit shall be required to submit to fingerprinting

511 and state and national criminal history records checks, as provided in
512 section 29-17a.

513 Sec. 18. Subsection (b) of section 17a-810 of the general statutes is
514 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
515 *2026*):

516 (b) (1) The Advisory Board for Persons Who are Blind or Visually
517 Impaired shall consist of members appointed as follows: Six appointed
518 by the Governor, one appointed by the president pro tempore of the
519 Senate, one appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
520 one appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one appointed by
521 the minority leader of the Senate, one appointed by the majority leader
522 of the House of Representatives and one appointed by the minority
523 leader of the House of Representatives and all shall be residents of the
524 state. The Commissioner of Social Services shall be an ex-officio
525 member. One of the members appointed by the Governor shall be the
526 parent of a child who receives services provided by the Department of
527 [Aging and] Disability Services, and not less than two of the members
528 appointed by the Governor shall be persons who are blind.

529 (2) Three members appointed by the Governor shall serve a term of
530 four years. Three members appointed by the Governor shall serve a
531 term of two years. The three members appointed by the president pro
532 tempore of the Senate, the majority leader of the Senate and the minority
533 leader of the Senate shall serve a term of four years. The three members
534 appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority
535 leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the
536 House of Representatives shall serve a term of two years. Thereafter, all
537 members shall be appointed for a term of four years, commencing on
538 January fourth of the year of the appointment.

539 (3) One of the members appointed by the Governor shall be
540 designated by the Governor as the chairperson of the advisory board.
541 The advisory board shall meet annually in the month of September and
542 may meet at any other time upon the call of its chairperson; and the
543 chairperson shall call a meeting at the request of two or more members.

544 Any appointed member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings
545 or fifty per cent of all meetings held during any calendar year shall be
546 deemed to have resigned. A majority of the members in office shall
547 constitute a quorum. The appointing authority may, for reasonable
548 cause, remove any appointed member and appoint another person to
549 fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of the term. Any vacancy in
550 the advisory board shall be filled by the appointing authority for the
551 unexpired portion of the term.

552 Sec. 19. Section 17a-812 of the general statutes is repealed and the
553 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

554 (a) All residents of this state, regardless of age, who, because of
555 blindness or impaired vision, require specialized vision-related
556 educational programs, goods and services, on the signed
557 recommendation of the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability
558 Services, shall be entitled to receive such instruction, programs, goods
559 and services for such length of time as is deemed expedient by said
560 commissioner. Upon the petition of any parent or guardian of a child
561 who is blind or visually impaired, a local board of education may
562 provide such instruction within the town or it may provide for such
563 instruction by agreement with other towns as provided in subsection (d)
564 of section 10-76d. All educational privileges prescribed in part V of
565 chapter 164, not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter, shall
566 apply to the pupils covered by this subsection.

567 (b) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall expend
568 funds for the services made available pursuant to subsection (a) of this
569 section from the educational aid for children who are blind or visually
570 impaired account in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.
571 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may adopt, in
572 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, such regulations as the
573 commissioner deems necessary to carry out the purpose and intent of
574 this subsection.

575 (1) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
576 provide, upon written request from any interested school district, the

577 services of teachers who instruct students who are visually impaired,
578 based on the levels established in the individualized education or
579 service plan. The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
580 also make available resources, including, but not limited to, the braille
581 and large print library, to all teachers of public and nonpublic school
582 children. The commissioner may also provide vision-related
583 professional development and training to all school districts and cover
584 the actual cost for paraeducators from school districts to participate in
585 agency-sponsored braille training programs. The commissioner shall
586 utilize education consultant positions, funded by moneys appropriated
587 from the General Fund, to supplement new staffing that will be made
588 available through the educational aid for children who are blind or
589 visually impaired account, which shall be governed by formal written
590 policies established by the commissioner.

591 (2) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may use
592 funds appropriated to said account to provide specialized books,
593 materials, equipment, supplies, adaptive technology services and
594 devices, specialist examinations and aids, preschool programs and
595 vision-related independent living services, excluding primary
596 educational placement, for eligible children.

597 (3) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may, within
598 available appropriations, employ certified teachers who instruct
599 students who are visually impaired in sufficient numbers to meet the
600 requests for services received from school districts. In responding to
601 such requests, the commissioner shall utilize a formula for determining
602 the number of teachers needed to serve the school districts, crediting six
603 points for each child learning braille and one point for each other child,
604 with one full-time certified teacher who instructs students who are
605 visually impaired assigned for every twenty-five points credited. The
606 commissioner shall exercise due diligence to employ the needed
607 number of certified teachers who instruct students who are visually
608 impaired, but shall not be liable for lack of resources. Funds
609 appropriated to said account may also be utilized to employ additional
610 staff in numbers sufficient to provide compensatory skills, evaluations

611 and training to children who are blind or visually impaired, special
612 assistants and other support staff necessary to ensure the efficient
613 operation of service delivery. Not later than October first of each year,
614 the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall determine the
615 number of teachers needed based on the formula provided in this
616 subdivision. Based on such determination, the Commissioner of [Aging
617 and] Disability Services shall estimate the funding needed to pay such
618 teachers' salaries and related expenses.

619 (4) In any fiscal year, when funds appropriated to cover the combined
620 costs associated with providing the services set forth in subdivisions (2)
621 and (3) of this subsection are projected to be insufficient, the
622 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may collect revenue
623 from all school districts that have requested such services on a per
624 student pro rata basis, in the sums necessary to cover the projected
625 portion of these services for which there are insufficient appropriations.

626 (c) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may provide
627 for the instruction of adults who are blind in their homes, expending
628 annually for this purpose such sums as the General Assembly may
629 appropriate.

630 (d) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may expend
631 up to ten thousand dollars per fiscal year per person twenty-one years
632 of age or older who is both blind or visually impaired and deaf, in
633 addition to any other expenditures for such person, for the purpose of
634 providing community inclusion services through specialized public and
635 private entities from which such person can benefit. The commissioner
636 may determine the criteria by which a person is eligible to receive
637 specialized services and may adopt regulations necessary to carry out
638 the provisions of this subsection. For purposes of this subsection,
639 "community inclusion services" means the assistance provided to
640 persons with disabilities to enable them to connect with their peers
641 without disabilities and with the community at large.

642 (e) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may, within
643 available appropriations, purchase adaptive equipment for persons

644 receiving services pursuant to this chapter.

645 Sec. 20. Section 17a-813 of the general statutes is repealed and the
646 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

647 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may, within
648 available appropriations, contract with public or private entities,
649 individuals or private enterprises for the instruction of persons who are
650 blind.

651 Sec. 21. Section 17a-814 of the general statutes is repealed and the
652 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

653 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services is authorized to
654 aid in securing employment for persons who are legally blind. Said
655 commissioner may aid persons who are legally blind in such way as said
656 commissioner deems expedient, expending for such purpose such sum
657 as the General Assembly appropriates.

658 Sec. 22. Section 17a-815 of the general statutes is repealed and the
659 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

660 The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may make
661 grants, within available appropriations, to the Connecticut Radio
662 Information Service, Inc., for the purchase of receivers and for costs
663 related to the operation of said service.

664 Sec. 23. Section 17a-816 of the general statutes is repealed and the
665 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

666 (a) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
667 prepare and maintain a register of persons who are blind in this state
668 which shall describe their condition, cause of blindness and capacity for
669 education and rehabilitative training. The commissioner may register
670 cases of persons who are liable to become visually impaired or blind,
671 and may take such measures in cooperation with other authorities as the
672 commissioner deems advisable for the prevention of blindness or
673 conservation of eyesight and, in appropriate cases, for the education of

674 children and for the vocational guidance of adults whose eyesight
675 approaches visual impairment or blindness. The commissioner shall
676 establish criteria for low vision care and maintain a list of
677 ophthalmologists and optometrists that are exclusively authorized to
678 receive agency funds through established and existing state fee
679 schedules for the delivery of specifically defined low vision services that
680 increase the capacity of eligible recipients of such services to maximize
681 the use of their remaining vision.

682 (b) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
683 provide the Department of Motor Vehicles with the names of all
684 individuals sixteen years of age or older who, on or after October 1, 2005,
685 have been determined to be blind by a physician, an advanced practice
686 registered nurse or an optometrist, as provided in section 17a-819, as
687 amended by this act. The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability
688 Services shall provide simultaneous written notification to any
689 individual whose name is being transmitted by the [Commissioner of
690 Aging and Disability Services] commissioner to the Department of
691 Motor Vehicles. The [Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services]
692 commissioner shall update the list of names provided to the Department
693 of Motor Vehicles on a quarterly basis. The list shall also contain the
694 address and date of birth for each individual reported, as shown on the
695 records of the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services. The
696 Department of Motor Vehicles shall maintain such list on a confidential
697 basis, in accordance with the provisions of section 14-46d. The
698 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall enter into a
699 memorandum of understanding with the Commissioner of Motor
700 Vehicles to effectuate the purposes of this subsection.

701 Sec. 24. Section 17a-818 of the general statutes is repealed and the
702 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

703 (a) The authority in charge of any building or property owned,
704 operated or leased by the state or any municipality therein shall grant
705 to the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services a permit to operate
706 in such building or on such property a food service facility, a vending

707 machine or a stand for the vending of newspapers, periodicals,
708 confections, tobacco products, food and such other articles as such
709 authority approves when, in the opinion of such authority, such facility,
710 machine or stand is desirable in such location. Any person operating
711 such a stand in any such location on October 1, 1945, shall be permitted
712 to continue such operation, but upon such person's ceasing such
713 operation such authority shall grant a permit for continued operation to
714 the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services. The department may
715 establish a training facility at any such location.

716 (b) Pursuant to the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act, 49 Stat.
717 1559 (1936), 20 USC 107, as amended from time to time, the Department
718 of [Aging and] Disability Services is authorized to maintain a
719 nonlapsing account and to accrue interest thereon for federal vending
720 machine income which, in accordance with federal regulations, shall be
721 used for the payment of fringe benefits to the vending facility operators
722 by the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services.

723 (c) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may maintain
724 a nonlapsing account and accrue interest thereon for state and local
725 vending machine income which shall be used for the payment of fringe
726 benefits, training and support to vending facilities operators, to provide
727 entrepreneurial and independent-living training and equipment to
728 children who are blind or visually impaired and adults who are blind
729 and for other vocational rehabilitation programs and services for adults
730 who are blind.

731 (d) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may disburse
732 state and local vending machine income to student or client activity
733 funds, as defined in section 4-52.

734 Sec. 25. Section 17a-819 of the general statutes is repealed and the
735 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

736 Each physician, advanced practice registered nurse and optometrist
737 shall report in writing to the Department of [Aging and] Disability
738 Services not later than thirty days after a person who is blind comes

739 under his or her private or institutional care within this state. The report
740 of such person shall include the name, address, Social Security number,
741 date of birth, date of diagnosis of blindness and degree of vision. Such
742 reports shall not be open to public inspection.

743 Sec. 26. Section 17a-820 of the general statutes is repealed and the
744 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

745 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may maintain a
746 vocational rehabilitation program as authorized under the Federal
747 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 791 et seq., for the purpose of
748 providing and coordinating the full scope of necessary services to assist
749 persons who are legally blind and who receive services from the
750 department to prepare for, enter into and maintain employment
751 consistent with the purposes of said act.

752 Sec. 27. Section 17a-821 of the general statutes is repealed and the
753 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

754 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services is empowered to
755 receive any federal funds made available to this state under which
756 vocational rehabilitation is provided for a person whose visual acuity
757 has been impaired and to expend such funds for the purpose or
758 purposes for which they are made available. The State Treasurer shall
759 be the custodian of such funds.

760 Sec. 28. Section 17a-822 of the general statutes is repealed and the
761 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

762 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may cooperate,
763 pursuant to agreements, with the federal government in carrying out
764 the purposes of any federal statutes pertaining to vocational
765 rehabilitation, and is authorized to adopt such methods of
766 administration as are found by the federal government to be necessary
767 for the proper and efficient operation of such agreements or plans for
768 vocational rehabilitation and to comply with such conditions as may be
769 necessary to secure the full benefits of such federal statutes.

770 Sec. 29. Section 17a-823 of the general statutes is repealed and the
771 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

772 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall adopt
773 regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, to determine the order to be
774 followed in selecting those eligible persons to whom vocational
775 rehabilitation services will be provided, in accordance with federal
776 regulations.

777 Sec. 30. Section 17a-824 of the general statutes is repealed and the
778 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

779 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may place in
780 remunerative occupations persons whose capacity to earn a living has
781 been lost or impaired by lessened visual acuity and who, in the opinion
782 of the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, are [susceptible
783 of] appropriate for placement, and may make such regulations as are
784 necessary for the administration of the provisions of this section and
785 sections 17a-820 to 17a-823, inclusive, as amended by this act.

786 Sec. 31. Section 17a-825 of the general statutes is repealed and the
787 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

788 The case records of the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services
789 maintained for the purposes of this chapter shall be confidential and the
790 names and addresses of recipients of assistance under this chapter shall
791 not be published or used for purposes not directly connected with the
792 administration of this chapter, except as necessary to carry out the
793 provisions of sections 17a-816, as amended by this act, and 17b-6.

794 Sec. 32. Section 17a-835 of the general statutes is repealed and the
795 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

796 The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may provide
797 necessary services to persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing,
798 including, but not limited to, nonreimbursable interpreter services and
799 message relay services for persons using telecommunication devices for
800 persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing.

801 Sec. 33. Section 17a-835a of the general statutes is repealed and the
802 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

803 (a) There is established a Bureau of Services for Persons Who are
804 Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing which shall be within the
805 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services.

806 (b) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, in
807 consultation with the Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf,
808 Deafblind or Hard of Hearing established pursuant to section 17a-836,
809 as amended by this act, shall, not later than October 1, 2024, hire a
810 director of the bureau. The director shall (1) have professional
811 experience in serving the needs of deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing
812 persons, and (2) be (A) able to communicate in American Sign
813 Language, and (B) familiar with effective interpretation methods to
814 assist deafblind persons. The commissioner shall also hire an
815 administrative assistant for the director.

816 (c) The director shall report to the commissioner. The director's duties
817 shall include, but need not be limited to:

818 (1) Assisting in overseeing department employees who provide
819 counseling, interpreting and other assistance to persons who are deaf,
820 deafblind or hard of hearing, except for federally funded vocational
821 rehabilitation employees;

822 (2) Annually updating and publishing on the department's Internet
823 web site and the Internet web page of the bureau established pursuant
824 to subdivision (6) of this subsection a resource guide for persons who
825 are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing;

826 (3) Assisting in the registration of state-registered interpreters,
827 including maintaining and publishing on the Internet web page of the
828 bureau and the department's Internet web site a list of such interpreters
829 categorized by the settings in which they are qualified to interpret, in
830 accordance with section 17a-838, as amended by this act;

831 (4) Assisting each state agency, as defined in section 1-79, in

832 appointing an employee of each such agency to serve as a point of
833 contact for concerns related to persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard
834 of hearing, pursuant to section 4-61pp, and coordinating efforts to
835 resolve such concerns with such employees serving as a point of contact;

836 (5) Coordinating efforts of the Department of [Aging and] Disability
837 Services to provide information and referral services to deaf, deafblind
838 or hard of hearing persons on resources available to such persons;

839 (6) Establishing a separate Internet web page on the department's
840 Internet web site for the bureau and including on such web page (A) the
841 meeting schedule, agendas, minutes and other resources of the
842 Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of
843 Hearing established pursuant to section 17a-836, as amended by this act,
844 (B) an instructional video with audio and captions on the home page on
845 how persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing can navigate
846 the web page, resources and tools, and (C) other material pursuant to
847 this section;

848 (7) Coordinating responses to consumer concerns, requests for
849 assistance and referrals to resources, including from state agencies;

850 (8) Coordinating education and training initiatives, including, but not
851 limited to, working with (A) local and state public safety and public
852 health officials and first responders on best practices for serving and
853 communicating with deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons, and (B)
854 sign language interpreters, oral interpreters and interpreters who are
855 trained to interpret for deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons to
856 maintain or enhance the skills of such interpreters in a variety of
857 settings;

858 (9) Collaborating with interpreting services providers and training
859 organizations to increase opportunities for mentorships, internships,
860 apprenticeships and specialized training in interpreting services for
861 deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons;

862 (10) Partnering with civic and community organizations serving deaf,

863 deafblind or hard of hearing persons on workshops and information
864 sessions regarding new laws, regulations or developments regarding
865 services, programs or health care needs of such persons;

866 (11) Raising public awareness of programs and services available to
867 deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons;

868 (12) Assisting the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority in
869 implementing telecommunication relay service programs for deaf,
870 deafblind or hard of hearing persons. In awarding any contract for such
871 relay service programs, the authority shall consult with the
872 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services and the director of the
873 bureau;

874 (13) Working with the Governor and Connecticut television stations
875 on ways to make television broadcasts more accessible to persons who
876 are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing; and

877 (14) In consultation with the Advisory Board for Persons Who are
878 Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing established pursuant to section 17a-
879 836, as amended by this act, identifying the needs of deaf, deafblind or
880 hard of hearing persons and addressing policy changes that may be
881 necessary to better serve such persons.

882 Sec. 34. Subdivision (2) of section 17a-836 of the general statutes is
883 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
884 *2026*):

885 (2) Establish an annual leadership roundtable meeting with the Board
886 of Regents for Higher Education, the Commissioners of [Aging and]
887 Disability Services, Public Health, Social Services, Mental Health and
888 Addiction Services, Education, Developmental Services, Children and
889 Families, Early Childhood, Economic and Community Development,
890 Emergency Services and Public Protection, Correction, Housing and
891 Higher Education and the Labor Commissioner, or their designees, to
892 discuss best practices to serve persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard
893 of hearing, identify gaps in such services and make recommendations

894 to rectify such gaps;

895 Sec. 35. Subsection (a) of section 17a-837 of the general statutes is
896 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
897 *2026*):

898 (a) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may request
899 and shall receive from any department, division, board, bureau,
900 commission or agency of the state or of any political subdivision thereof
901 such assistance and data as will enable the Department of [Aging and]
902 Disability Services to properly carry out its activities under sections 17a-
903 835, as amended by this act, 17a-838, as amended by this act, and 17a-
904 839, as amended by this act, and to effectuate the purposes therein set
905 forth.

906 Sec. 36. Section 17a-838 of the general statutes is repealed and the
907 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

908 (a) For the purposes of this section:

909 (1) "Community setting" means any setting, other than those
910 specifically identified as educational, legal or medical, including, but
911 not limited to, any setting involving everyday life activities such as
912 information sharing, employment, social services, entertainment and
913 civic and community engagements;

914 (2) "Department" means the Department of [Aging and] Disability
915 Services;

916 (3) "Interpreting" means the translating or transliterating of English
917 concepts to a language concept used by a person who is deaf, deafblind
918 or hard of hearing or the translating of a deaf, deafblind or hard of
919 hearing person's language to English concepts through the use of
920 American Sign Language, English-based sign language, cued speech,
921 oral transliterating and information received tactually;

922 (4) "Deafblind" means combined vision and hearing impairments that
923 challenge a person's ability to communicate, interact with others, access

924 information and move about safely;

925 (5) "Educational setting" means any setting where interpretive
926 services are provided concerning education-related matters, including,
927 but not limited to, all schools, school-based programs, services and
928 activities and other educational programs;

929 (6) "Legal setting" means any criminal or civil action involving a court
930 of competent jurisdiction, any investigation or action conducted by a
931 duly authorized law enforcement agency, employment-related
932 hearings, appointments and situations requiring the presence of an
933 attorney;

934 (7) "Medical setting" means gatherings or gathering places where
935 physical health, mental health, or both are addressed, including, but not
936 limited to, hospitals, clinics, assisted living and rehabilitation facilities,
937 mental health treatment sessions, psychological evaluations, substance
938 abuse treatment sessions, crisis intervention and appointments or other
939 treatment requiring the presence of a doctor, nurse, medical staff or
940 other health care professional; and

941 (8) "Transliterating" means converting or rendering English concepts
942 to a language concept used by a person who is deaf, deafblind or hard
943 of hearing or the translating of a deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing
944 person's language concept to English concepts.

945 (b) Except as provided in subsections (g) and (h) of this section, all
946 persons providing interpreting services shall register, annually, with the
947 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services. Such registration shall
948 be on a form prescribed or furnished by the Commissioner of [Aging
949 and] Disability Services and shall include the registrant's name,
950 residential or business address, or both, contact information, including,
951 but not limited to, phone number, place of employment as interpreter
952 and interpreter certification or credentials. The department shall (1)
953 issue interpreter identification cards for those who register in
954 accordance with this section, and (2) maintain a current listing on its
955 Internet web site of such registered interpreters, categorized by

956 interpreter settings for which they are qualified. The department may
957 also require documentation of the registrant's training hours. The
958 department shall annually issue interpreter identification cards listing
959 the type of settings in which the registrant is qualified to interpret. The
960 department shall establish an Internet web page containing information
961 about services for deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals. The
962 department's Internet web page shall include, but not be limited to,
963 information related to such services provided by the department and
964 the Departments of Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction
965 Services and Children and Families.

966 (c) Except as provided in subsections (g) and (h) of this section, no
967 person shall provide interpreting services in the state, including in a
968 community setting, unless such person is registered with the
969 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services according to the
970 provisions of this section, holds recognized national or state interpreter
971 credentials determined by the department to be acceptable for
972 interpreting purposes where appropriate in Connecticut and has met at
973 least one of the following qualifications:

974 (1) (A) Has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
975 written generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National
976 Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge
977 examination, (B) holds a level three certification provided by the
978 National Association of the Deaf, and (C) (i) documents the achievement
979 of two continuing education units per year for a maximum of five years
980 of training approved by the Commissioner of Aging and Disability
981 Services, and (ii) on or before the fifth anniversary of having passed the
982 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written generalist test or
983 the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters
984 for the Deaf certification knowledge examination, has passed the
985 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf performance examination
986 or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters
987 for the Deaf national interpreter certification examination;

988 (2) (A) Has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

989 written generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National
990 Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge
991 examination, (B) is a graduate of an accredited interpreter training
992 program and documents the achievement of two continuing education
993 units per year for a maximum of five years of training approved by the
994 commissioner, and (C) on or before the fifth anniversary of having
995 passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written
996 generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry
997 of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge examination, has
998 passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf performance
999 examination or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry
1000 of Interpreters for the Deaf national interpreter certification
1001 examination;

1002 (3) Holds a level four or higher certification from the National
1003 Association of the Deaf;

1004 (4) Holds certification by the National Registry of Interpreters for the
1005 Deaf;

1006 (5) For situations requiring an oral interpreter only, holds oral
1007 certification from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf;

1008 (6) For situations requiring a cued speech transliterator only, holds
1009 certification from the National Training, Evaluation and Certification
1010 Unit and has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
1011 written generalist test;

1012 (7) Holds a reverse skills certificate or is a certified deaf interpreter
1013 under the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf;

1014 (8) Holds a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of
1015 Interpreters for the Deaf national interpreting certificate; or

1016 (9) Holds the credential of Approved Deaf Interpreter, Approved
1017 American Sign Language-English Interpreter, or Approved Sign
1018 Language Transliterator by the Massachusetts Commission on the Deaf
1019 and Hard of Hearing.

1020 (d) No person shall provide interpreting services in a medical setting
1021 unless such person is registered with the Department of [Aging and]
1022 Disability Services according to the provisions of this section and holds
1023 (1) a comprehensive skills certificate from the National Registry of
1024 Interpreters for the Deaf, (2) a certificate of interpretation or a certificate
1025 of transliteration from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf,
1026 (3) a level four or higher certification from the National Association of
1027 the Deaf, (4) a reverse skills certificate or certification as a deaf
1028 interpreter under the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (5)
1029 for situations requiring an oral interpreter only, an oral certification
1030 from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (6) for situations
1031 requiring a cued speech transliterator only, a certification from the
1032 National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit and has passed the
1033 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written generalist test, (7)
1034 a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters for
1035 the Deaf national interpreting certificate, or (8) the credential of
1036 Approved Deaf Interpreter by the Massachusetts Commission on the
1037 Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

1038 (e) No person shall provide interpreting services in a legal setting
1039 unless such person is registered with the Department of [Aging and]
1040 Disability Services according to the provisions of this section and holds
1041 (1) a comprehensive skills certificate from the National Registry of
1042 Interpreters for the Deaf, (2) a certificate of interpretation and a
1043 certificate of transliteration from the National Registry of Interpreters
1044 for the Deaf, (3) a level five certification from the National Association
1045 of the Deaf, (4) a reverse skills certificate or is a certified deaf interpreter
1046 under the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (5) for
1047 situations requiring an oral interpreter only, an oral certification from
1048 the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (6) for situations
1049 requiring a cued speech transliterator only, certification from the
1050 National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit and has passed the
1051 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written generalist test, (7)
1052 a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters for
1053 the Deaf national interpreting certificate, or (8) the credential of
1054 Approved Deaf Interpreter by the Massachusetts Commission on the

1055 Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

1056 (f) No person who is not registered as a qualified interpreter pursuant
1057 to this section shall:

1058 (1) Engage in the practice of or offer to engage in the practice of
1059 interpreting for another person, an agency or an entity;

1060 (2) Use the title "interpreter", "transliterator" or a similar title in
1061 connection with services provided under his or her name;

1062 (3) Present or identify himself or herself as an interpreter qualified to
1063 engage in interpreting in this state;

1064 (4) Use the title "interpreter", "transliterator" or a similar title in
1065 advertisements or communications; or

1066 (5) Perform the function of or convey the impression that he or she is
1067 an interpreter or transliterator.

1068 (g) The requirements of this section shall apply to persons who (1)
1069 receive compensation for the provision of interpreting services, and (2)
1070 provide interpreting services as part of their job duties. The
1071 requirements of this section shall not apply to nonregistered individuals
1072 such as family members and friends who voluntarily provide
1073 interpreting services at the request of a deaf, deafblind or hard of
1074 hearing person.

1075 (h) The following individuals shall be exempt from the registration
1076 requirements of this section:

1077 (1) An individual interpreting at (A) a worship service conducted by
1078 a religious entity, or (B) services for educational purposes conducted by
1079 a religious entity or religiously affiliated school;

1080 (2) An individual engaged in interpreting during an emergency
1081 situation, when obtaining a registered interpreter or registered
1082 transliterator could cause a delay that may lead to injury or loss to the
1083 individual requiring the interpreting services, provided such

1084 emergency assistance does not waive any communication access
1085 requirements for any entity pursuant to the federal Americans with
1086 Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as both
1087 may be amended from time to time;

1088 (3) An individual engaged in interpreting as part of a supervised
1089 internship or practicum in an interpreting program at an accredited
1090 college or university or an interpreting mentorship program approved
1091 by the department if (A) such interpreting is not in a legal, medical or
1092 educational setting, or (B) the individual is accompanied by an
1093 interpreter registered pursuant to this section; or

1094 (4) An interpreter who is certified by a recognized national
1095 professional certifying body such as the National Registry of
1096 Interpreters for the Deaf or the National Association of the Deaf or a
1097 recognized state professional certifying body from outside the state and
1098 provides interpreting services in the state for a period of time not
1099 exceeding fourteen days during a calendar year.

1100 (i) Deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing persons may exercise their
1101 right to request or use a different registered interpreter than the
1102 interpreter provided to interpret for such persons in any interpreting
1103 setting in accordance with a nationally recognized interpreter code of
1104 professional conduct.

1105 (j) Any person who is not registered in accordance with this section
1106 who represents himself or herself as an interpreter registered with the
1107 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services, or who engages in wilful
1108 or fraudulent misrepresentation of his or her credentials in an attempt
1109 to register with the department, shall be guilty of a class C
1110 misdemeanor. Failure to renew such registration in a timely manner
1111 shall not in and of itself constitute a violation for the purposes of this
1112 subsection. For purposes of this subsection, "timely manner" means
1113 registration renewal not more than thirty days after such registration
1114 has expired.

1115 Sec. 37. Section 17a-839 of the general statutes is repealed and the

1116 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1117 Upon the request of any person or any public or private entity, the
1118 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services may provide interpreting
1119 services to assist such person or entity to the extent such persons who
1120 provide interpreting services are available. Any person or entity
1121 receiving interpreting services through the department shall reimburse
1122 the department for such services at a rate set by the Commissioner of
1123 [Aging and] Disability Services. The commissioner may adopt
1124 regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 to establish
1125 the manner of rate setting.

1126 Sec. 38. Section 17a-839a of the general statutes is repealed and the
1127 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1128 For purposes of this section, "state agency" has the same meaning as
1129 provided in section 9-612 and "interpreting" has the same meaning as
1130 provided in section 17a-838, as amended by this act. Any state agency
1131 that is unable to fulfill a request for interpreting services with its own
1132 interpreting staff shall first request such services from the Department
1133 of [Aging and] Disability Services and may seek such services elsewhere
1134 if (1) the department is unable to fulfill the request in two business days,
1135 or (2) the agency shows good cause that it needs such services
1136 immediately. The provisions of this section shall not (A) apply to the
1137 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services if the department needs
1138 interpreting services related to an internal matter and the use of
1139 department interpreters may raise confidentiality concerns, or (B) affect
1140 any preexisting contract for interpreting services. Interpreting services
1141 provided by a state agency shall be in accordance with the provisions of
1142 section 17a-838, as amended by this act.

1143 Sec. 39. Section 17a-850 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1144 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1145 The state shall be divided into five elderly planning and service areas,
1146 in accordance with federal law and regulations, each having an area
1147 agency on aging to carry out the mandates of the federal Older

1148 Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to time. The area agencies
1149 shall (1) represent older persons within their geographic areas, (2)
1150 develop an area plan for approval by the Department [of Aging and
1151 Disability Services] on Aging and upon such approval administer the
1152 plan, (3) coordinate and assist local public and nonprofit, private
1153 agencies in the development of programs, (4) receive and distribute
1154 federal and state funds for such purposes, in accordance with applicable
1155 law, (5) distribute nutritional risk assessment surveys to older persons,
1156 collect the surveys and report individual and average nutritional risk
1157 assessment scores for each elderly planning and service area to the
1158 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, and (6) carry
1159 out any additional duties and functions required by federal law and
1160 regulations.

1161 Sec. 40. Section 17a-851 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1162 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1163 (a) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1164 equitably allocate, in accordance with federal law, federal funds
1165 received under Title IIIB and IIIC of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as
1166 amended from time to time, to the five area agencies on aging
1167 established pursuant to section 17a-850, as amended by this act. The
1168 department, before seeking federal approval to spend any amount
1169 above that allotted for administrative expenses under said act, shall
1170 inform the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
1171 cognizance of matters relating to aging and human services that it is
1172 seeking such approval.

1173 (b) Sixty per cent of the state funds appropriated to the five area
1174 agencies on aging for elderly nutrition and social services shall be
1175 allocated in the same proportion as allocations made pursuant to
1176 subsection (a) of this section. Forty per cent of all state funds
1177 appropriated to the five area agencies on aging for elderly nutrition and
1178 social services used for purposes other than the required nonfederal
1179 matching funds shall be allocated at the discretion of the Commissioner
1180 [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, in consultation with the

1181 five area agencies on aging, based on their need for such funds. Any
1182 state funds appropriated to the five area agencies on aging for
1183 administrative expenses shall be allocated equally.

1184 (c) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, in
1185 consultation with the five area agencies on aging, shall review the
1186 method of allocation set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of this section
1187 and evaluate the method used to allocate funding for elderly nutrition
1188 services based on factors including, but not limited to, for each of the
1189 five elderly planning and service areas as described in section 17a-850,
1190 as amended by this act, (1) elderly population data from the most recent
1191 United States census, and (2) average and individual nutritional risk
1192 assessment scores on nutritional risk assessment surveys. The
1193 department shall solicit information and recommendations from elderly
1194 nutrition program providers for consideration in the department's
1195 evaluation. Not later than July 1, 2023, the department shall report, in
1196 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing
1197 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
1198 relating to aging, appropriations and the budgets of state agencies and
1199 human services on (A) the data collected pursuant to this subsection, (B)
1200 the rates of reimbursement for each meals on wheels provider in the
1201 department's elderly nutrition program compared to the cost to provide
1202 meals on wheels for each such provider, (C) the administrative expenses
1203 of each such meals on wheels provider, (D) the number of such meals
1204 on wheels providers that have reduced or eliminated deliveries based
1205 on inadequate state reimbursement, and (E) any recommended changes
1206 in the method of allocation of funds. Providers of meals in the
1207 department's elderly nutrition program shall annually provide the
1208 department with data on service levels and costs.

1209 (d) An area agency may request a person participating in the elderly
1210 nutrition program to pay a voluntary fee for meals furnished, except
1211 that no eligible person shall be denied a meal due to an inability to pay
1212 such fee.

1213 (e) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall

1214 disburse additional payments under the elderly nutrition program to
1215 any area agency on aging contracting with the department that has
1216 expended fifty per cent or more of the initial disbursement of funding
1217 under such contract. Within available appropriations, the department
1218 shall disburse additional payments not later than thirty days after the
1219 area agency on aging provides documentation prescribed by the
1220 department of such expenditures. The area agency on aging shall
1221 transfer additional payments not later than thirty days after receipt from
1222 the department to vendors that contract with the agency to participate
1223 in the elderly nutrition program. Not later than July 1, 2025, and
1224 annually thereafter, the Commissioner [of Aging and Disability
1225 Services] on Aging shall file a report, in accordance with the provisions
1226 of section 11-4a, with the joint standing committees of the General
1227 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging and human
1228 services on the feasibility of the department disbursing additional funds
1229 under an elderly nutrition program contract upon evidence that a
1230 contracting area agency on aging has expended twenty-five per cent or
1231 more of the initial disbursement of funding under the contract.

1232 (f) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1233 shall require each area agency on aging, in consultation with the chief
1234 elected officials of the municipalities and municipal agents for elderly
1235 persons appointed pursuant to section 7-127b, as amended by this act,
1236 within the area each agency serves, to develop a continuity of effort plan
1237 to minimize any disruption to benefits provided under the elderly
1238 nutrition program in such area when a provider leaves the program or
1239 there is a significant increase in service levels or demand for the
1240 program. Such plan shall include an area agency on aging applying for
1241 funding to support elderly nutrition program services through any
1242 available grant source. An area agency on aging shall, not later than
1243 January 1, 2025, submit such plan to the commissioner and notify, in
1244 writing, chief elected officials, municipal agents for the elderly and state
1245 and federal elected officials of the area such agency serves not later than
1246 ten business days after a significant increase in service levels or demand
1247 for the elderly nutrition program. The commissioner may withhold
1248 funding from an area agency on aging or take other remedial measures

1249 against such agency for violating any provision of this subsection.

1250 Sec. 41. Subsection (a) of section 17a-852 of the general statutes is
1251 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1252 *2026*):

1253 (a) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1254 be responsible for the administration of programs which provide
1255 nutritionally sound diets to needy older persons and for the expansion
1256 of such programs when possible. Such programs shall be continued in
1257 such a manner as to fully utilize congregate feeding and nutrition
1258 education of older citizens who qualify for such program.

1259 Sec. 42. Section 17a-852a of the general statutes is repealed and the
1260 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1261 (a) The Commissioner of Social Services, upon a request from the
1262 Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, or from an
1263 area agency on aging contracting with the Department [of Aging and
1264 Disability Services] on Aging to provide services under the elderly
1265 nutrition program, shall provide information on whether a person who
1266 is eligible to receive services under the elderly nutrition program is
1267 receiving benefits from the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

1268 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services, in consultation with the
1269 Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, shall
1270 develop a plan to maximize supplemental nutrition assistance program
1271 benefits to support the elderly nutrition program. The plan shall
1272 include, but need not be limited to, (1) outreach to persons who may be
1273 eligible for both the elderly nutrition program and the supplemental
1274 nutrition assistance program, and (2) federally permissible uses of
1275 supplemental nutrition assistance benefits to fund meals provided to
1276 persons age sixty and over, persons with disabilities and such persons'
1277 households.

1278 (c) Not later than October 1, 2024, the Commissioner of Social
1279 Services, in consultation with the Commissioner [of Aging and

1280 Disability Services] on Aging, shall file a report on the plan, in
1281 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, with the joint standing
1282 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
1283 relating to aging and human services.

1284 Sec. 43. Section 17a-853 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1285 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1286 The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1287 hold quarterly meetings with nutrition service stakeholders to (1)
1288 develop recommendations to address complexities in the administrative
1289 processes of nutrition services programs, (2) establish quality control
1290 benchmarks in such programs, and (3) help move toward greater
1291 quality, efficiency and transparency in the elderly nutrition program.
1292 Stakeholders shall include, but need not be limited to, (A) one
1293 representative of each of the following: (i) Area agencies on aging, (ii)
1294 access agencies, (iii) the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors,
1295 Equity and Opportunity, and (iv) nutrition providers, and (B) one or
1296 more representatives of (i) food security programs, (ii) contractors, (iii)
1297 nutrition host sites, and (iv) consumers.

1298 Sec. 44. Section 17a-854 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1299 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1300 The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1301 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
1302 carry out the purposes, programs and services authorized pursuant to
1303 the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to time. The
1304 department may operate under any new policy necessary to conform to
1305 a requirement of a federal or joint state and federal program while it is
1306 in the process of adopting the policy in regulation form, provided the
1307 department posts such policy on the eRegulations System not later than
1308 twenty days after adopting the policy. Such policy shall be valid until
1309 the time final regulations are effective.

1310 Sec. 45. Section 17a-855 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1311 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1312 The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging may
1313 make a grant to any city, town or borough or public or private agency,
1314 organization or institution for the following purposes: (1) For
1315 community planning and coordination of programs carrying out the
1316 purposes of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to
1317 time; (2) for demonstration programs or activities particularly valuable
1318 in carrying out such purposes; (3) for training of special personnel
1319 needed to carry out such programs and activities; (4) for establishment
1320 of new or expansion of existing programs to carry out such purposes,
1321 including establishment of new or expansion of existing centers of
1322 service for older persons, providing recreational, cultural and other
1323 leisure time activities, and informational, transportation, referral and
1324 preretirement and postretirement counseling services for older persons
1325 and assisting such persons in providing volunteer community or civic
1326 services, except that no costs of construction, other than for minor
1327 alterations and repairs, shall be included in such establishment or
1328 expansion; and (5) for programs to develop or demonstrate approaches,
1329 methods and techniques for achieving or improving coordination of
1330 community services for older or aging persons and such other programs
1331 and services as may be allowed under Title III of the Older Americans
1332 Act of 1965, as amended from time to time, or to evaluate these
1333 approaches, techniques and methods, as well as others which may assist
1334 older or aging persons to enjoy wholesome and meaningful living and
1335 to continue to contribute to the strength and welfare of the state and
1336 nation.

1337 Sec. 46. Section 17a-856 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1338 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1339 The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging may use
1340 moneys appropriated for the purposes of section 17a-855, as amended
1341 by this act, for the expenses of administering the grant program under
1342 said section, provided the total of such moneys so used shall not exceed
1343 five per cent of the moneys so appropriated.

1344 Sec. 47. Section 17a-857 of the general statutes is repealed and the

1345 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1346 (a) As used in this section:

1347 (1) "CHOICES" means Connecticut's programs for health insurance
1348 assistance, outreach, information and referral, counseling and eligibility
1349 screening; and

1350 (2) "CHOICES health insurance assistance program" means the
1351 federally recognized state health insurance assistance program funded
1352 pursuant to P.L. 101-508 and administered by the Department [of Aging
1353 and Disability Services] on Aging, in conjunction with the area agencies
1354 on aging and the Center for Medicare Advocacy, that provides free
1355 information and assistance related to health insurance issues and
1356 concerns of older persons and other Medicare beneficiaries in
1357 Connecticut.

1358 (b) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1359 administer the CHOICES health insurance assistance program, which
1360 shall be a comprehensive Medicare advocacy program that provides
1361 assistance to Connecticut residents who are Medicare beneficiaries.

1362 (c) The program shall provide: (1) Toll-free telephone access for
1363 consumers to obtain advice and information on Medicare benefits,
1364 including prescription drug benefits available through the Medicare
1365 Part D program, the Medicare appeals process, health insurance matters
1366 applicable to Medicare beneficiaries and long-term care options
1367 available in the state at least five days per week during normal business
1368 hours; (2) information, advice and representation, where appropriate,
1369 concerning the Medicare appeals process, by a qualified attorney or
1370 paralegal at least five days per week during normal business hours; (3)
1371 information through appropriate means and format, including written
1372 materials, to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, senior citizens and
1373 organizations regarding Medicare benefits, including prescription drug
1374 benefits available through Medicare Part D and other pharmaceutical
1375 drug company programs and long-term care options available in the
1376 state; (4) information concerning Medicare plans and services, private

1377 insurance policies and federal and state-funded programs that are
1378 available to beneficiaries to supplement Medicare coverage; (5)
1379 information permitting Medicare beneficiaries to compare and evaluate
1380 their options for delivery of Medicare and supplemental insurance
1381 services; (6) information concerning the procedure to appeal a denial of
1382 care and the procedure to request an expedited appeal of a denial of
1383 care; and (7) any other information the program or the Commissioner
1384 [of Rehabilitation Services] on Aging deems relevant to Medicare
1385 beneficiaries.

1386 (d) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1387 may include any additional functions necessary to conform to federal
1388 grant requirements.

1389 (e) All hospitals, as defined in section 19a-490, which treat persons
1390 covered by Medicare Part A shall: (1) Notify incoming patients covered
1391 by Medicare of the availability of the services established pursuant to
1392 subsection (c) of this section, (2) post or cause to be posted in a
1393 conspicuous place therein the toll-free number established pursuant to
1394 subsection (c) of this section, and (3) provide each Medicare patient with
1395 the toll-free number and information on how to access the CHOICES
1396 program.

1397 (f) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1398 may adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, as necessary to
1399 implement the provisions of this section.

1400 Sec. 48. Subsection (a) of section 17a-858 of the general statutes is
1401 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1402 *2026*):

1403 (a) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1404 shall develop and administer a program to provide a single, coordinated
1405 system of information and access for individuals seeking long-term
1406 support, including in-home, community-based and institutional
1407 services. The program shall be the state Aging and Disability Resource
1408 Center Program in accordance with the federal Older Americans Act

1409 Amendments of 2006, P.L. 109-365 and shall be administered as part of
1410 the Department [of Aging and Disability Services'] on Aging's
1411 CHOICES program in accordance with subdivision (1) of subsection (a)
1412 of section 17a-857, as amended by this act. Consumers served by the
1413 program shall include, but not be limited to, those sixty years of age or
1414 older and those eighteen years of age or older with disabilities and
1415 caregivers.

1416 Sec. 49. Section 17a-859 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1417 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1418 (a) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1419 establish, within available appropriations, a fall prevention program.
1420 Within such program, the department shall:

1421 (1) Promote and support research to: (A) Improve the identification,
1422 diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of older persons and others who
1423 have a high risk of falling; (B) improve data collection and analysis to
1424 identify risk factors for falls and factors that reduce the likelihood of
1425 falls; (C) design, implement and evaluate the most effective fall
1426 prevention interventions; (D) improve intervention strategies that have
1427 been proven effective in reducing falls by tailoring such strategies to
1428 specific populations of older persons; (E) maximize the dissemination of
1429 proven, effective fall prevention interventions; (F) assess the risk of falls
1430 occurring in various settings; (G) identify barriers to the adoption of
1431 proven interventions with respect to the prevention of falls among older
1432 persons; (H) develop, implement and evaluate the most effective
1433 approaches to reducing falls among high-risk older persons living in
1434 communities and long-term care and assisted living facilities; and (I)
1435 evaluate the effectiveness of community programs designed to prevent
1436 falls among older persons;

1437 (2) Establish, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health,
1438 a professional education program in fall prevention, evaluation and
1439 management for physicians, allied health professionals and other health
1440 care providers who provide services for older persons in this state. The
1441 Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging may contract

1442 for the establishment of such program through (A) a request for
1443 proposal process, (B) a competitive grant program, or (C) cooperative
1444 agreements with qualified organizations, institutions or consortia of
1445 qualified organizations and institutions;

1446 (3) Oversee and support demonstration and research projects to be
1447 carried out by organizations, institutions or consortia of organizations
1448 and institutions deemed qualified by the Commissioner [of Aging and
1449 Disability Services] on Aging. Such demonstration and research projects
1450 may be in the following areas:

1451 (A) Targeted fall risk screening and referral programs;

1452 (B) Programs designed for community-dwelling older persons that
1453 use fall intervention approaches, including physical activity, medication
1454 assessment and reduction of medication when possible, vision
1455 enhancement and home-modification strategies;

1456 (C) Programs that target new fall victims who are at a high risk for
1457 second falls and that are designed to maximize independence and
1458 quality of life for older persons, particularly those older persons with
1459 functional limitations; and

1460 (D) Private sector and public-private partnerships to develop
1461 technologies to prevent falls among older persons and prevent or reduce
1462 injuries when falls occur; and

1463 (4) Award grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements
1464 with, organizations, institutions or consortia of organizations and
1465 institutions deemed qualified by the Commissioner [of Aging and
1466 Disability Services] on Aging to design, implement and evaluate fall
1467 prevention programs using proven intervention strategies in residential
1468 and institutional settings.

1469 (b) In awarding any grants or entering into any contracts or
1470 agreements pursuant to this section, after October 1, 2017, the
1471 Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1472 determine appropriate data and program outcome measures, including

1473 fall prevention program outcome measures, as applicable, that the
1474 recipient organization, institution or consortia of organizations and
1475 institutions shall collect and report to the commissioner and the
1476 frequency of such reports.

1477 Sec. 50. Subsection (b) of section 17a-860 of the general statutes is
1478 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1479 *2026*):

1480 (b) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1481 shall operate a program, within available appropriations, to provide
1482 respite care services for caretakers of individuals with Alzheimer's
1483 disease, provided such individuals with Alzheimer's disease meet the
1484 requirements set forth in subsection (c) of this section. Such respite care
1485 services may include, but need not be limited to (1) homemaker services;
1486 (2) adult day care; (3) temporary care in a licensed medical facility; (4)
1487 home-health care; (5) companion services; or (6) personal care assistant
1488 services. Such respite care services may be administered directly by the
1489 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, or through
1490 contracts for services with providers of such services, or by means of
1491 direct subsidy to caretakers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease to
1492 purchase such services.

1493 Sec. 51. Section 17a-862 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1494 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1495 There shall be within the Department [of Aging and Disability
1496 Services] on Aging a dementia services coordinator. The dementia
1497 services coordinator shall (1) coordinate dementia services across state
1498 agencies, (2) assess and analyze dementia-related data collected by the
1499 state, (3) evaluate state-funded dementia services, (4) identify and
1500 support the development of dementia-specific training programs, and
1501 (5) perform any other relevant duties to support individuals with
1502 dementia in the state, as determined by the Commissioner [of Aging and
1503 Disability Services] on Aging.

1504 Sec. 52. Section 17a-870 of the general statutes is repealed and the

1505 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1506 (a) As used in this chapter:

1507 (1) "State agency" means the Department [of Aging and Disability
1508 Services] on Aging.

1509 (2) "Office" or "Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman" means the
1510 organizational unit which is headed by the State Long-Term Care
1511 Ombudsman established in this section.

1512 (3) "State Ombudsman" means the individual who heads the office
1513 established in this section.

1514 (4) "Program" means the long-term care ombudsman program
1515 established in this section.

1516 (5) "Representative of the office" includes a regional ombudsman, a
1517 residents' advocate or an employee of the Office of the Long-Term Care
1518 Ombudsman who is individually designated by the State Ombudsman.

1519 (6) "Resident" means an individual who resides in a long-term care
1520 facility.

1521 (7) "Long-term care facility" means any skilled nursing facility, as
1522 defined in Section 1819(a) of the Social Security Act, (42 USC 1395i-3(a))
1523 any nursing facility, as defined in Section 1919(a) of the Social Security
1524 Act, (42 USC 1396r(a)) a board and care facility as defined in Section
1525 102(19) of the federal Older Americans Act, (42 USC 3002(19)) and for
1526 purposes of ombudsman program coverage, an institution regulated by
1527 the state pursuant to Section 1616(e) of the Social Security Act, (42 USC
1528 1382e(e)) and any other adult care home similar to a facility or nursing
1529 facility or board and care home.

1530 (8) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner [of Aging and
1531 Disability Services] on Aging.

1532 (9) "Applicant" means an individual who has applied for admission
1533 to a long-term care facility.

1534 (10) "Resident representative" means (A) an individual chosen by the
1535 resident to act on behalf of the resident in order to support the resident
1536 in decision making, accessing medical, social or other personal
1537 information of the resident, managing financial matters, or receiving
1538 notifications; (B) a person authorized by state or federal law to act on
1539 behalf of the resident in order to support the resident in decision
1540 making, accessing medical, social or other personal information of the
1541 resident, managing financial matters, or receiving notifications; (C) a
1542 legal representative, as used in Section 712 of the Older Americans Act
1543 of 1965, as amended from time to time; or (D) the court-appointed
1544 guardian or conservator of a resident.

1545 (b) There is established an independent Office of the Long-Term Care
1546 Ombudsman within the Department [of Aging and Disability Services]
1547 on Aging. The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on
1548 Aging shall appoint a State Ombudsman, or, if a State Ombudsman has
1549 already been appointed, a successor State Ombudsman when the
1550 position becomes vacant, who shall be selected from among individuals
1551 with expertise and experience in the fields of long-term care and
1552 advocacy to head the office and the State Ombudsman shall appoint
1553 regional ombudsmen. In the event the State Ombudsman or a regional
1554 ombudsman is unable to fulfill the duties of the office, the commissioner
1555 shall appoint an acting State Ombudsman and the State Ombudsman
1556 shall appoint an acting regional ombudsman.

1557 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section,
1558 on and after July 1, 1990, the positions of State Ombudsman and regional
1559 ombudsmen shall be classified service positions. The State Ombudsman
1560 and regional ombudsmen holding said positions on said date shall
1561 continue to serve in their positions as if selected through classified
1562 service procedures. As vacancies occur in such positions thereafter, such
1563 vacancies shall be filled in accordance with classified service
1564 procedures.

1565 (d) The activities of the State Ombudsman or representatives of the
1566 office do not constitute lobbying under 45 CFR Part 93.

1567 Sec. 53. Section 17a-872 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1568 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1569 No person may perform any functions as a residents' advocate until
1570 the person has successfully completed a course of training required by
1571 the State Ombudsman. Any residents' advocate who fails to complete
1572 such a course within a reasonable time after appointment may be
1573 removed by the State Ombudsman or the regional ombudsman for the
1574 region in which such residents' advocate serves. The Commissioner [of
1575 Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, after consultation with the
1576 State Ombudsman, shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the
1577 provisions of chapter 54, to carry out the provisions of this section. Such
1578 regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the course of training
1579 required by this section.

1580 Sec. 54. Subsection (c) of section 17a-876 of the general statutes is
1581 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1582 *2026*):

1583 (c) The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging
1584 shall have authority to seek funding for the purposes contained in this
1585 section from public and private sources, including, but not limited to,
1586 any federal or state funded programs.

1587 Sec. 55. Section 17a-879 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1588 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1589 The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, after
1590 consultation with the State Ombudsman, shall adopt regulations in
1591 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to carry out the provisions
1592 of sections 17a-412, 17a-413, 17a-870 to 17a-880, inclusive, as amended
1593 by this act, 19a-531 and 19a-532.

1594 Sec. 56. Section 17a-880 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1595 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1596 The Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
1597 require the State Ombudsman to:

- 1598 (1) Prepare an annual report:
- 1599 (A) Describing the activities carried out by the office in the year for
1600 which the report is prepared;
- 1601 (B) Containing and analyzing the data collected under section 17a-
1602 881;
- 1603 (C) Evaluating the problems experienced by and the complaints
1604 made by or on behalf of residents;
- 1605 (D) Containing recommendations for (i) improving the quality of the
1606 care and life of the residents, and (ii) protecting the health, safety,
1607 welfare and rights of the residents;
- 1608 (E) (i) Analyzing the success of the program including success in
1609 providing services to residents of long-term care facilities; and (ii)
1610 identifying barriers that prevent the optimal operation of the program;
1611 and
- 1612 (F) Providing policy, regulatory and legislative recommendations to
1613 solve identified problems, to resolve the complaints, to improve the
1614 quality of the care and life of residents, to protect the health, safety,
1615 welfare and rights of residents and to remove the barriers that prevent
1616 the optimal operation of the program.
- 1617 (2) Analyze, comment on and monitor the development and
1618 implementation of federal, state and local laws, regulations and other
1619 government policies and actions that pertain to long-term care facilities
1620 and services, and to the health, safety, welfare and rights of residents in
1621 the state, and recommend any changes in such laws, regulations and
1622 policies as the office determines to be appropriate.
- 1623 (3) (A) Provide such information as the office determines to be
1624 necessary to public and private agencies, legislators and other persons,
1625 regarding (i) the problems and concerns of older individuals residing in
1626 long-term care facilities; and (ii) recommendations related to the
1627 problems and concerns; and (B) make available to the public and submit

1628 to the federal assistant secretary for aging, the Governor, the General
1629 Assembly, the Department of Public Health and other appropriate
1630 governmental entities, each report prepared under subdivision (1) of
1631 this section.

1632 Sec. 57. Subsection (c) of section 17a-885 of the general statutes is
1633 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1634 *2026*):

1635 (c) Not later than June 30, 2005, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman
1636 shall submit a report on the pilot program to the Commissioners [of
1637 Aging and Disability Services] on Aging and of Public Health, and to
1638 the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
1639 cognizance of matters relating to aging, human services, public health
1640 and appropriations. [, and to the select committee of the General
1641 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging.] The report
1642 shall be submitted in accordance with section 11-4a.

1643 Sec. 58. Subsection (b) of section 17b-4 of the general statutes is
1644 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1645 *2026*):

1646 (b) The Department of Social Services, in conjunction with the
1647 Department of Public Health and the Department [of Aging and
1648 Disability Services] on Aging, may adopt regulations in accordance with
1649 the provisions of chapter 54 to establish requirements with respect to
1650 the submission of reports concerning financial solvency and quality of
1651 care by nursing homes for the purpose of determining the financial
1652 viability of such homes, identifying homes that appear to be
1653 experiencing financial distress and examining the underlying reasons
1654 for such distress. Such reports shall be submitted to the Nursing Home
1655 Financial Advisory Committee established under section 17b-339.

1656 Sec. 59. Subsection (c) of section 17b-28 of the general statutes is
1657 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1658 *2026*):

1659 (c) On and after October 31, 2017, the council shall be composed of
1660 the following members:

1661 (1) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
1662 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
1663 relating to aging, human services, public health and appropriations and
1664 the budgets of state agencies, or their designees;

1665 (2) Five appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
1666 one of whom shall be a member of the General Assembly, one of whom
1667 shall be a community provider of adult Medicaid health services, one of
1668 whom shall be a recipient of Medicaid benefits for the aged, blind and
1669 disabled or an advocate for such a recipient, one of whom shall be a
1670 representative of the state's federally qualified health clinics and one of
1671 whom shall be a member of the Connecticut Hospital Association;

1672 (3) Five appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
1673 whom shall be a member of the General Assembly, one of whom shall
1674 be a representative of the home health care industry, one of whom shall
1675 be a primary care medical home provider, one of whom shall be an
1676 advocate for Department of Children and Families foster families and
1677 one of whom shall be a representative of the business community with
1678 experience in cost efficiency management;

1679 (4) Three appointed by the majority leader of the House of
1680 Representatives, one of whom shall be an advocate for persons with
1681 substance abuse disabilities, one of whom shall be a Medicaid dental
1682 provider and one of whom shall be a representative of the for-profit
1683 nursing home industry;

1684 (5) Three appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom
1685 shall be a representative of school-based health centers, one of whom
1686 shall be a recipient of benefits under the HUSKY Health program and
1687 one of whom shall be a physician who serves Medicaid clients;

1688 (6) Three appointed by the minority leader of the House of
1689 Representatives, one of whom shall be an advocate for persons with

1690 disabilities, one of whom shall be a dually eligible Medicaid-Medicare
1691 beneficiary or an advocate for such a beneficiary and one of whom shall
1692 be a representative of the not-for-profit nursing home industry;

1693 (7) Three appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of
1694 whom shall be a low-income adult recipient of Medicaid benefits or an
1695 advocate for such a recipient, one of whom shall be a representative of
1696 hospitals and one of whom shall be a representative of the business
1697 community with experience in cost efficiency management;

1698 (8) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,
1699 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee;

1700 (9) A member of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors,
1701 Equity and Opportunity, designated by the executive director of said
1702 commission;

1703 (10) A representative of the Long-Term Care Advisory Council;

1704 (11) The Commissioners of Social Services, Children and Families,
1705 Public Health, Developmental Services, [Aging and Disability Services
1706 and] Mental Health and Addiction Services and on Aging, or their
1707 designees, who shall be ex-officio nonvoting members;

1708 (12) The Comptroller, or the Comptroller's designee, who shall be an
1709 ex-officio nonvoting member;

1710 (13) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the
1711 secretary's designee, who shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member; and

1712 (14) One representative of an administrative services organization
1713 which contracts with the Department of Social Services in the
1714 administration of the Medicaid program, who shall be a nonvoting
1715 member.

1716 Sec. 60. Subsection (b) of section 17b-90 of the general statutes is
1717 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1718 *2026*):

1719 (b) No person shall, except for purposes directly connected with the
1720 administration of programs of the Department of Social Services and in
1721 accordance with the regulations of the commissioner, solicit, disclose,
1722 receive or make use of, or authorize, knowingly permit, participate in or
1723 acquiesce in the use of, any list of the names of, or any information
1724 concerning, persons applying for or receiving assistance from the
1725 Department of Social Services or persons participating in a program
1726 administered by said department, directly or indirectly derived from
1727 the records, papers, files or communications of the state or its
1728 subdivisions or agencies, or acquired in the course of the performance
1729 of official duties. The Commissioner of Social Services shall disclose (1)
1730 to any authorized representative of the Labor Commissioner such
1731 information directly related to unemployment compensation,
1732 administered pursuant to chapter 567 or information necessary for
1733 implementation of sections 17b-112l, 17b-688b, 17b-688c and 17b-688h
1734 and section 122 of public act 97-2 of the June 18 special session, (2) to
1735 any authorized representative of the Commissioner of Mental Health
1736 and Addiction Services any information necessary for the
1737 implementation and operation of the basic needs supplement program,
1738 (3) to any authorized representative of the Commissioner of
1739 Administrative Services or the Commissioner of Emergency Services
1740 and Public Protection such information as the Commissioner of Social
1741 Services determines is directly related to and necessary for the
1742 Department of Administrative Services or the Department of
1743 Emergency Services and Public Protection for purposes of performing
1744 their functions of collecting social services recoveries and overpayments
1745 or amounts due as support in social services cases, investigating social
1746 services fraud or locating absent parents of public assistance recipients,
1747 (4) to any authorized representative of the Commissioner of Children
1748 and Families necessary information concerning a child or the immediate
1749 family of a child receiving services from the Department of Social
1750 Services, including safety net services, if (A) the Commissioner of
1751 Children and Families or the Commissioner of Social Services has
1752 determined that imminent danger to such child's health, safety or
1753 welfare exists to target the services of the family services programs

1754 administered by the Department of Children and Families, or (B) the
1755 Commissioner of Children and Families requires access to the federal
1756 Parent Locator Service established pursuant to 42 USC 653 in order to
1757 identify a parent or putative parent of a child, (5) to a town official or
1758 other contractor or authorized representative of the Labor
1759 Commissioner such information concerning an applicant for or a
1760 recipient of assistance under state-administered general assistance
1761 deemed necessary by the Commissioner of Social Services and the Labor
1762 Commissioner to carry out their respective responsibilities to serve such
1763 persons under the programs administered by the Labor Department
1764 that are designed to serve applicants for or recipients of state-
1765 administered general assistance, (6) to any authorized representative of
1766 the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services for the
1767 purposes of the behavioral health managed care program established by
1768 section 17a-453, (7) to any authorized representative of the
1769 Commissioner of Early Childhood to carry out his or her respective
1770 responsibilities under the two-generational academic achievement and
1771 workforce readiness initiative established pursuant to section 17b-112l
1772 and programs that regulate child care services or youth camps, (8) to a
1773 health insurance provider, in IV-D support cases, as defined in
1774 subdivision (13) of subsection (b) of section 46b-231, information
1775 concerning a child and the custodial parent of such child that is
1776 necessary to enroll such child in a health insurance plan available
1777 through such provider when the noncustodial parent of such child is
1778 under court order to provide health insurance coverage but is unable to
1779 provide such information, provided the Commissioner of Social
1780 Services determines, after providing prior notice of the disclosure to
1781 such custodial parent and an opportunity for such parent to object, that
1782 such disclosure is in the best interests of the child, (9) to any authorized
1783 representative of the Department of Correction, in IV-D support cases,
1784 as defined in subdivision (13) of subsection (b) of section 46b-231,
1785 information concerning noncustodial parents that is necessary to
1786 identify inmates or parolees with IV-D support cases who may benefit
1787 from Department of Correction educational, training, skill building,
1788 work or rehabilitation programming that will significantly increase an

1789 inmate's or parolee's ability to fulfill such inmate's support obligation,
1790 (10) to any authorized representative of the Judicial Branch, in IV-D
1791 support cases, as defined in subdivision (13) of subsection (b) of section
1792 46b-231, information concerning noncustodial parents that is necessary
1793 to: (A) Identify noncustodial parents with IV-D support cases who may
1794 benefit from educational, training, skill building, work or rehabilitation
1795 programming that will significantly increase such parent's ability to
1796 fulfill such parent's support obligation, (B) assist in the administration
1797 of the Title IV-D child support program, or (C) assist in the identification
1798 of cases involving family violence, (11) to any authorized representative
1799 of the State Treasurer, in IV-D support cases, as defined in subdivision
1800 (13) of subsection (b) of section 46b-231, information that is necessary to
1801 identify child support obligors who owe overdue child support prior to
1802 the Treasurer's payment of such obligors' claim for any property
1803 unclaimed or presumed abandoned under part III of chapter 32, (12) to
1804 any authorized representative of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and
1805 Management any information necessary for the implementation and
1806 operation of the renters rebate program established by section 12-170d,
1807 or (13) to any authorized representative of the Department [of Aging
1808 and Disability Services] on Aging, or to an area agency on aging
1809 contracting with said department to provide services under the elderly
1810 nutrition program, information on persons enrolled in the supplemental
1811 nutrition assistance program who have requested or been
1812 recommended to receive elderly nutrition program services. No such
1813 representative shall disclose any information obtained pursuant to this
1814 section, except as specified in this section. Any applicant for assistance
1815 provided through the Department of Social Services shall be notified
1816 that, if and when such applicant receives benefits, the department will
1817 be providing law enforcement officials with the address of such
1818 applicant upon the request of any such official pursuant to section 17b-
1819 16a.

1820 Sec. 61. Subsection (c) of section 17b-337 of the general statutes is
1821 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1822 *2026*):

1823 (c) The Long-Term Care Planning Committee shall consist of: (1) The
1824 chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committees of
1825 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
1826 services, public health, elderly services and long-term care; (2) the
1827 Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's designee; (3)
1828 one member of the Office of Policy and Management appointed by the
1829 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management; (4) one member from
1830 the Department of Public Health appointed by the Commissioner of
1831 Public Health; (5) one member from the Department of Housing
1832 appointed by the Commissioner of Housing; (6) one member from the
1833 Department of Developmental Services appointed by the Commissioner
1834 of Developmental Services; (7) one member from the Department of
1835 Mental Health and Addiction Services appointed by the Commissioner
1836 of Mental Health and Addiction Services; (8) one member from the
1837 Department of Transportation appointed by the Commissioner of
1838 Transportation; (9) one member from the Department of Children and
1839 Families appointed by the Commissioner of Children and Families; (10)
1840 one member from the Health Systems Planning Unit of the Office of
1841 Health Strategy appointed by the Commissioner of Health Strategy; and
1842 (11) one member from the Department [of Aging and Disability
1843 Services] on Aging appointed by the Commissioner [of Aging and
1844 Disability Services] on Aging. The committee shall convene no later than
1845 ninety days after June 4, 1998. Any vacancy shall be filled by the
1846 appointing authority. The chairperson shall be elected from among the
1847 members of the committee. The committee shall seek the advice and
1848 participation of any person, organization or state or federal agency it
1849 deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

1850 Sec. 62. Section 17b-352 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1851 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1852 (a) For the purposes of this section and section 17b-353, "facility"
1853 means a residential facility for persons with intellectual disability
1854 licensed pursuant to section 17a-277 and certified to participate in the
1855 Title XIX Medicaid program as an intermediate care facility for
1856 individuals with intellectual disabilities, a nursing home, rest home or

1857 residential care home, as defined in section 19a-490. "Facility" does not
1858 include a nursing home that does not participate in the Medicaid
1859 program and is associated with a continuing care facility as described in
1860 section 17b-520.

1861 (b) Any facility which intends to (1) transfer all or part of its
1862 ownership or control prior to being initially licensed; (2) introduce any
1863 additional function or service into its program of care or expand an
1864 existing function or service; (3) terminate a service or decrease
1865 substantially its total licensed bed capacity; or (4) relocate all or a portion
1866 of such facility's licensed beds, to a new facility or replacement facility,
1867 shall submit a complete request for permission to implement such
1868 transfer, addition, expansion, increase, termination, decrease or
1869 relocation of facility beds to the Department of Social Services with such
1870 information as the department requires, provided no permission or
1871 request for permission is required (A) to close a facility when a facility
1872 in receivership is closed by order of the Superior Court pursuant to
1873 section 19a-545, or (B) to change a facility's licensure as a rest home with
1874 nursing supervision to licensure as a chronic and convalescent nursing
1875 home. The Commissioner of Social Services shall consider the criteria in
1876 subdivisions (3) and (4) of subsection (a) of section 17b-354 when
1877 evaluating a certificate of need request to relocate licensed nursing
1878 facility beds from an existing facility to another licensed nursing facility
1879 or to a new facility or replacement facility. The Office of the Long-Term
1880 Care Ombudsman, or, in the case of a residential facility for persons
1881 with intellectual disability licensed pursuant to section 17a-277, as
1882 described in subsection (a) of this section, the Office of the
1883 Developmental Services Ombudsperson shall be notified by the facility
1884 of any proposed actions pursuant to this subsection at the same time the
1885 request for permission is submitted to the department and when a
1886 facility in receivership is closed by order of the Superior Court pursuant
1887 to section 19a-545.

1888 (c) A facility may submit a petition for closure to the Department of
1889 Social Services. The Department of Social Services may authorize the
1890 closure of a facility if the facility's management demonstrates to the

1891 satisfaction of the Commissioner of Social Services in the petition for
1892 closure that the facility (1) is not viable based on actual and projected
1893 operating losses; (2) has an occupancy rate of less than seventy per cent
1894 of the facility's licensed bed capacity; (3) closure is consistent with the
1895 strategic rebalancing plan developed in accordance with section 17b-
1896 369, including bed need by geographical region; (4) is in compliance
1897 with the requirements of Sections 1128I(h) and 1819(h)(4) of the Social
1898 Security Act and 42 CFR 483.75; and (5) is not providing special services
1899 that would go unmet if the facility closes. The department shall review
1900 a petition for closure to the extent it deems necessary and the facility
1901 shall submit information the department requests or deems necessary
1902 to substantiate that the facility closure is consistent with the provisions
1903 of this subsection. The facility shall submit information the department
1904 requests or deems necessary to allow the department to provide
1905 oversight during this process. The Office of the Long-Term Care
1906 Ombudsman, or, in the case of a residential facility for persons with
1907 intellectual disability licensed pursuant to section 17a-277, as described
1908 in subsection (a) of this section, the Office of the Developmental Services
1909 Ombudsperson shall be notified by the facility at the same time as a
1910 petition for closure is submitted to the department. Any facility acting
1911 pursuant to this subsection shall provide written notice, on the same
1912 date that the facility submits its petition for closure, to all patients,
1913 guardians or conservators, if any, or legally liable relatives or other
1914 responsible parties, if known, and shall post such notice in a
1915 conspicuous location at the facility. The facility's written notice shall be
1916 accompanied by an informational letter issued jointly from the Office of
1917 the Long-Term Care Ombudsman and the Department [of Aging and
1918 Disability Services] on Aging, or, in the case of a residential facility for
1919 persons with intellectual disability licensed pursuant to section 17a-277,
1920 as described in subsection (a) of this section, the Office of the
1921 Developmental Services Ombudsperson and the Department [of Aging
1922 and Disability Services] on Aging on patients' rights and services
1923 available as they relate to the petition for closure. The informational
1924 letter shall also state the date and time that the Office of the Long-Term
1925 Care Ombudsman and the Department of Public Health, or, in the case

1926 of a residential facility for persons with intellectual disability licensed
1927 pursuant to section 17a-277, as described in subsection (a) of this section,
1928 the Office of the Developmental Services Ombudsperson and the
1929 Department of Public Health will hold an informational session at the
1930 facility for patients, guardians or conservators, if any, and legally liable
1931 relatives or other responsible parties, if known, about their rights and
1932 the process concerning a petition for closure. The notice shall state: (A)
1933 The date the facility submitted the petition for closure, (B) that only the
1934 Department of Social Services has the authority to either grant or deny
1935 the petition for closure, (C) that the Department of Social Services has
1936 up to thirty days to grant or deny the petition for closure, (D) a brief
1937 description of the reason or reasons for submitting the petition for
1938 closure, (E) that no patient shall be involuntarily transferred or
1939 discharged within or from a facility pursuant to state and federal law
1940 because of the filing of a petition for closure, (F) that all patients have a
1941 right to appeal any proposed transfer or discharge, and (G) the name,
1942 mailing address and telephone number of the Office of the Long-Term
1943 Care Ombudsman and local legal aid office, or, in the case of a
1944 residential facility for persons with intellectual disability licensed
1945 pursuant to section 17a-277, as described in subsection (a) of this section,
1946 the Office of the Developmental Services Ombudsperson and local legal
1947 aid office. The commissioner shall grant or deny a petition for closure
1948 within thirty days of receiving such request.

1949 (d) An applicant, prior to submitting a certificate of need application,
1950 shall request, in writing, application forms and instructions from the
1951 department. The request shall include: (1) The name of the applicant or
1952 applicants; (2) a statement indicating whether the application is for (A)
1953 a new, additional, expanded or replacement facility, service or function
1954 or relocation of facility beds, (B) a termination or reduction in a
1955 presently authorized service or bed capacity, or (C) any new, additional
1956 or terminated beds and their type; (3) the estimated capital cost; (4) the
1957 town where the project is or will be located; and (5) a brief description
1958 of the proposed project. Such request shall be deemed a letter of intent.
1959 No certificate of need application shall be considered submitted to the
1960 department unless a current letter of intent, specific to the proposal and

1961 in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, has been on file
1962 with the department for not less than ten business days. For purposes of
1963 this subsection, "a current letter of intent" means a letter of intent on file
1964 with the department for not more than one hundred eighty days. A
1965 certificate of need application shall be deemed withdrawn by the
1966 department, if a department completeness letter is not responded to
1967 within one hundred eighty days. The Office of the Long-Term Care
1968 Ombudsman, or, in the case of a residential facility for persons with
1969 intellectual disability licensed pursuant to section 17a-277, as described
1970 in subsection (a) of this section, the Office of the Developmental Services
1971 Ombudsperson shall be notified by the facility at the same time as the
1972 letter of intent is submitted to the department.

1973 (e) Any facility acting pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of
1974 this section shall provide written notice, at the same time it submits its
1975 letter of intent, to all patients, guardians or conservators, if any, or
1976 legally liable relatives or other responsible parties, if known, and shall
1977 post such notice in a conspicuous location at the facility. The facility's
1978 written notice shall be accompanied by an informational letter issued
1979 jointly from the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman and the
1980 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, or, in the case
1981 of a residential facility for persons with intellectual disability licensed
1982 pursuant to section 17a-277, as described in subsection (a) of this section,
1983 the Office of the Developmental Services Ombudsperson and the
1984 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging on patients'
1985 rights and services available as they relate to the letter of intent. The
1986 notice shall state the following: (1) The projected date the facility will be
1987 submitting its certificate of need application, (2) that only the
1988 Department of Social Services has the authority to either grant, modify
1989 or deny the application, (3) that the Department of Social Services has
1990 up to ninety days to grant, modify or deny the certificate of need
1991 application, (4) a brief description of the reason or reasons for
1992 submitting a request for permission, (5) that no patient shall be
1993 involuntarily transferred or discharged within or from a facility
1994 pursuant to state and federal law because of the filing of the certificate
1995 of need application, (6) that all patients have a right to appeal any

1996 proposed transfer or discharge, and (7) the name, mailing address and
1997 telephone number of the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman
1998 and local legal aid office, or, in the case of a residential facility for
1999 persons with intellectual disability licensed pursuant to section 17a-277,
2000 as described in subsection (a) of this section, the Office of the
2001 Developmental Services Ombudsperson and local legal aid office.

2002 (f) The Department of Social Services shall review a request made
2003 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section to the extent it deems
2004 necessary, including, but not limited to, in the case of a proposed
2005 transfer of ownership or control prior to initial licensure, the financial
2006 responsibility and business interests of the transferee and the ability of
2007 the facility to continue to provide needed services, or in the case of the
2008 addition or expansion of a function or service, ascertaining the
2009 availability of the function or service at other facilities within the area to
2010 be served, the need for the service or function within the area and any
2011 other factors the department deems relevant to a determination of
2012 whether the facility is justified in adding or expanding the function or
2013 service. During the review, the department may hold an informal
2014 conference with the facility to discuss the certificate of need application.
2015 The Commissioner of Social Services shall grant, modify or deny the
2016 request within ninety days of receipt thereof, except as otherwise
2017 provided in this section. The commissioner may place conditions, as the
2018 commissioner deems necessary to address specified concerns, on any
2019 decision approving or modifying a request for a certificate of need filed
2020 pursuant to this section. Conditions may include, but are not limited to,
2021 project and Medicaid reimbursement details and applicant
2022 requirements for summary and audit purposes. If the commissioner
2023 modifies the request, the commissioner shall notify the facility of such
2024 modification prior to issuing the decision and provide the applicant
2025 with an opportunity for an informal conference to discuss the
2026 modifications. Upon the request of the applicant, the review period may
2027 be extended for an additional fifteen days if the department has
2028 requested additional information subsequent to the commencement of
2029 the commissioner's review period. The director of the office of certificate
2030 of need and rate setting may extend the review period for a maximum

2031 of thirty days if the applicant has not filed in a timely manner
2032 information deemed necessary by the department. The applicant may
2033 request and shall receive a hearing in accordance with section 4-177 if
2034 aggrieved by a decision of the commissioner.

2035 (g) The Commissioner of Social Services shall not approve any
2036 requests for beds in residential facilities for persons with intellectual
2037 disability which are licensed pursuant to section 17a-227 and are
2038 certified to participate in the Title XIX Medicaid Program as
2039 intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities,
2040 except those beds necessary to implement the residential placement
2041 goals of the Department of Developmental Services which are within
2042 available appropriations.

2043 (h) The Commissioner of Social Services shall adopt regulations, in
2044 accordance with chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this section.

2045 Sec. 63. Section 17b-606 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2046 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2047 The Department of Social Services shall maintain on the department's
2048 Internet web site information on services provided to persons with
2049 disabilities. The department's Internet web site shall include a link to the
2050 Internet web page maintained by the Department of [Aging and]
2051 Disability Services pursuant to section 17a-838, as amended by this act,
2052 containing information about services for deaf, deafblind and hard of
2053 hearing individuals.

2054 Sec. 64. Section 21a-3a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2055 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2056 The Department of Consumer Protection, in collaboration with the
2057 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging, shall conduct
2058 a public awareness campaign, within available funding, to educate
2059 elderly consumers and caregivers on ways to resist aggressive
2060 marketing tactics and scams.

2061 Sec. 65. Section 23-15c of the general statutes is repealed and the

2062 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2063 (a) Not later than December 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, any
2064 person who has a contractual agreement with the Department of [Aging
2065 and] Disability Services for the operation in any state park of any food
2066 service facility, vending machine or stand for the vending of goods shall
2067 report to the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services the amount
2068 of revenue that such person generated during the calendar year as a
2069 result of such contract. Not later than January 1, 2016, and each year
2070 thereafter, the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall
2071 compile any reports received pursuant to this subsection and transmit
2072 such reports to the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
2073 Protection.

2074 (b) On or before January 30, 2016, and each year thereafter, the
2075 Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall compile
2076 the following information: (1) The number of food service facilities,
2077 vending machines and stands for the vending of goods that are located
2078 in the state parks and the location of the respective parks that have such
2079 facilities, machines or stands, (2) the amount of revenues generated from
2080 such food service facilities, vending machines and stands for the
2081 vending of goods, as reported to the commissioner by the Department
2082 of [Aging and] Disability Services pursuant to subsection (a) of this
2083 section, (3) the contractual agreement or provision of law that provides
2084 for the payment of any portion of such revenues to the state or that
2085 prohibits or limits the payment of such revenues to the state, (4) the
2086 amount of such revenues paid to the state in the subject calendar year,
2087 and (5) the manner in which such revenues were used by the state, if
2088 identifiable by the commissioner.

2089 Sec. 66. Section 26-29 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2090 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2091 No fee shall be charged for any sport fishing license issued under this
2092 chapter to any person who is blind, and such license shall be a lifetime
2093 license not subject to the expiration provisions of section 26-35. Proof of
2094 such blindness shall be furnished, in the case of a veteran, by the United

2095 States Department of Veterans Affairs and, in the case of any other
2096 person, by the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services. For the
2097 purpose of this section, a person shall be blind only if his or her central
2098 visual acuity does not exceed 20/200 in the better eye with correcting
2099 lenses, or if his or her visual acuity is greater than 20/200 but is
2100 accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest
2101 diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than twenty
2102 degrees.

2103 Sec. 67. Subsection (a) of section 31-3i of the general statutes is
2104 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2105 *2026*):

2106 (a) Pursuant to Section 101 of the federal Workforce Innovation and
2107 Opportunity Act of 2014, P.L. 113-128, the members of the Governor's
2108 Workforce Council shall be:

2109 (1) The Governor;

2110 (2) A member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the
2111 speaker of the House of Representatives, and a member of the Senate,
2112 appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

2113 (3) Twenty-four members, appointed by the Governor, who (A) are
2114 owners of a business, chief executives or operating officers of a business,
2115 or other business executives or employers with optimum policy-making
2116 or hiring authority; (B) represent businesses or organizations
2117 representing businesses that provide employment opportunities that, at
2118 a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and
2119 development in in-demand industry sectors or occupation in the state;
2120 or (C) have been nominated by state business organizations or business
2121 trade associations. At a minimum, at least one such member shall
2122 represent small businesses, as defined by the United States Small
2123 Business Administration;

2124 (4) The Labor Commissioner, Commissioner of [Aging and]
2125 Disability Services, Commissioner on Aging, Commissioner of

2126 Education, Commissioner of Economic and Community Development
2127 and the Chief Workforce Officer, or their respective designees;

2128 (5) Four representatives of labor organizations, who have been
2129 nominated by state labor federations and appointed by the Governor;

2130 (6) An individual, appointed by the Governor, who is a member of a
2131 labor organization or a training director from a joint labor-management
2132 apprenticeship program, or, if no such joint program exists in the state,
2133 such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the state;

2134 (7) An individual, appointed by the Governor, who is an expert in
2135 residential construction;

2136 (8) Five members, appointed by the Governor, who represent
2137 community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience
2138 and expertise in addressing employment, training, or education,
2139 including one representative of a community action agency, as defined
2140 in section 17b-885, and one representative of a philanthropic
2141 organization;

2142 (9) A representative from the Connecticut State Colleges and
2143 Universities, a representative from The University of Connecticut and a
2144 representative from a nonprofit institution of higher education in the
2145 state, each appointed by the Governor;

2146 (10) A representative from a regional vocational-technical school and
2147 a representative from a regional agricultural science and technology
2148 school, each appointed by the Governor;

2149 (11) Two superintendents of a local or regional board of education,
2150 appointed by the Governor;

2151 (12) A certified teacher employed by a local or regional board of
2152 education, appointed by the Governor;

2153 (13) Two chief elected officials of municipalities, appointed by the
2154 Governor; and

2155 (14) Two members of the public, who are enrolled in or who have
2156 recently completed a nondegree workforce training program, appointed
2157 by the Governor.

2158 Sec. 68. Subsection (d) of section 31-280 of the general statutes is
2159 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2160 *2026*):

2161 (d) The chairperson and the Comptroller, as soon as practicable after
2162 August first in each year, shall ascertain the total amount of expenses
2163 incurred by the commission, including, in addition to the direct cost of
2164 personnel services, the cost of maintenance and operation, rentals for
2165 space occupied in state leased offices and all other direct and indirect
2166 costs, incurred by the commission and the expenses incurred by the
2167 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services in providing
2168 rehabilitation services for employees suffering compensable injuries in
2169 accordance with the provisions of section 31-283a, as amended by this
2170 act, during the preceding fiscal year in connection with the
2171 administration of the Workers' Compensation Act and the total
2172 noncontributory payments required to be made to the Treasurer
2173 towards administrative law judges' retirement salaries as provided in
2174 sections 51-49, 51-50, 51-50a and 51-50b. An itemized statement of the
2175 expenses as so ascertained shall be available for public inspection in the
2176 office of the chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Commission for
2177 thirty days after notice to all insurance carriers, and to all employers
2178 permitted to pay compensation directly affected thereby.

2179 Sec. 69. Section 31-283a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2180 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2181 (a) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services shall provide
2182 rehabilitation programs for employees with compensable injuries
2183 within the provisions of this chapter, which injuries prevented such
2184 employees from performing their customary or most recent work. The
2185 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall establish
2186 rehabilitation programs which shall best suit the needs of such
2187 employees and shall make the programs available in convenient

2188 locations throughout the state. After consultation with the Labor
2189 Commissioner, the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services
2190 may establish fees for the programs, so as to provide the most effective
2191 rehabilitation programs at a minimum rate. In order to carry out the
2192 provisions of this section, the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability
2193 Services shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of
2194 chapter 54, and, subject to the provisions of chapter 67, provide for the
2195 employment of necessary assistants.

2196 (b) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services shall be
2197 authorized to (1) enter into agreements with other state or federal
2198 agencies to carry out the purposes of this section and expend money for
2199 that purpose, and (2) on behalf of the state of Connecticut, develop
2200 matching programs or activities to secure federal grants or funds for the
2201 purposes of this section and may pledge or use funds supplied from the
2202 administrative costs fund, as provided in section 31-345, as amended by
2203 this act, to finance the state's share of the programs or activities.

2204 Sec. 70. Subsection (a) of section 31-296 of the general statutes is
2205 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2206 *2026*):

2207 (a) If an employer and an injured employee, or in case of fatal injury
2208 the employee's legal representative or dependent, at a date not earlier
2209 than the expiration of the waiting period, reach an agreement in regard
2210 to compensation, such agreement shall be submitted in writing to the
2211 administrative law judge by the employer with a statement of the time,
2212 place and nature of the injury upon which it is based; and, if such
2213 administrative law judge finds such agreement to conform to the
2214 provisions of this chapter in every regard, the administrative law judge
2215 shall so approve it. A copy of the agreement, with a statement of the
2216 administrative law judge's approval, shall be delivered to each of the
2217 parties and thereafter it shall be as binding upon both parties as an
2218 award by the administrative law judge. The administrative law judge's
2219 statement of approval shall also inform the employee or the employee's
2220 dependent, as the case may be, of any rights the individual may have to

2221 an annual cost-of-living adjustment or to participate in a rehabilitation
2222 program administered by the Department of [Aging and] Disability
2223 Services under the provisions of this chapter. The administrative law
2224 judge shall retain the original agreement, with the administrative law
2225 judge's approval thereof, in the administrative law judge's office and, if
2226 an application is made to the superior court for an execution, the
2227 administrative law judge shall, upon the request of said court, file in the
2228 court a certified copy of the agreement and statement of approval.

2229 Sec. 71. Section 31-300 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2230 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2231 As soon as may be after the conclusion of any hearing, but no later
2232 than one hundred twenty days after such conclusion, the administrative
2233 law judge shall send to each party a written copy of the administrative
2234 law judge's findings and award. The administrative law judge shall, as
2235 part of the written award, inform the employee or the employee's
2236 dependent, as the case may be, of any rights the individual may have to
2237 an annual cost-of-living adjustment or to participate in a rehabilitation
2238 program administered by the Department of [Aging and] Disability
2239 Services under the provisions of this chapter. The administrative law
2240 judge shall retain the original findings and award in said administrative
2241 law judge's office. If no appeal from the decision is taken by either party
2242 within twenty days thereafter, such award shall be final and may be
2243 enforced in the same manner as a judgment of the Superior Court. The
2244 court may issue execution upon any uncontested or final award of an
2245 administrative law judge in the same manner as in cases of judgments
2246 rendered in the Superior Court; and, upon the filing of an application to
2247 the court for an execution, the administrative law judge in whose office
2248 the award is on file shall, upon the request of the clerk of said court,
2249 send to the clerk a certified copy of such findings and award. In cases
2250 where, through the fault or neglect of the employer or insurer,
2251 adjustments of compensation have been unduly delayed, or where
2252 through such fault or neglect, payments have been unduly delayed, the
2253 administrative law judge may include in the award interest at the rate
2254 prescribed in section 37-3a and a reasonable attorney's fee in the case of

2255 undue delay in adjustments of compensation and may include in the
2256 award in the case of undue delay in payments of compensation, interest
2257 at twelve per cent per annum and a reasonable attorney's fee. Payments
2258 not commenced within thirty-five days after the filing of a written notice
2259 of claim shall be presumed to be unduly delayed unless a notice to
2260 contest the claim is filed in accordance with section 31-297. In cases
2261 where there has been delay in either adjustment or payment, which
2262 delay has not been due to the fault or neglect of the employer or insurer,
2263 whether such delay was caused by appeals or otherwise, the
2264 administrative law judge may allow interest at such rate, not to exceed
2265 the rate prescribed in section 37-3a, as may be fair and reasonable, taking
2266 into account whatever advantage the employer or insurer, as the case
2267 may be, may have had from the use of the money, the burden of
2268 showing that the rate in such case should be less than the rate prescribed
2269 in section 37-3a to be upon the employer or insurer. In cases where the
2270 claimant prevails and the administrative law judge finds that the
2271 employer or insurer has unreasonably contested liability, the
2272 administrative law judge may allow to the claimant a reasonable
2273 attorney's fee. No employer or insurer shall discontinue or reduce
2274 payment on account of total or partial incapacity under any such award,
2275 if it is claimed by or on behalf of the injured person that such person's
2276 incapacity still continues, unless such employer or insurer notifies the
2277 administrative law judge and the employee of such proposed
2278 discontinuance or reduction in the manner prescribed in section 31-296,
2279 as amended by this act, and the administrative law judge specifically
2280 approves such discontinuance or reduction in writing. The
2281 administrative law judge shall render the decision within fourteen days
2282 of receipt of such notice and shall forward to all parties to the claim a
2283 copy of the decision not later than seven days after the decision has been
2284 rendered. If the decision of the administrative law judge finds for the
2285 employer or insurer, the injured person shall return any wrongful
2286 payments received from the day designated by the administrative law
2287 judge as the effective date for the discontinuance or reduction of
2288 benefits. Any employee whose benefits for total incapacity are
2289 discontinued under the provisions of this section and who is entitled to

2290 receive benefits for partial incapacity as a result of an award, shall
2291 receive those benefits commencing the day following the designated
2292 effective date for the discontinuance of benefits for total incapacity. In
2293 any case where the administrative law judge finds that the employer or
2294 insurer has discontinued or reduced any such payment without having
2295 given such notice and without the administrative law judge having
2296 approved such discontinuance or reduction in writing, the
2297 administrative law judge shall allow the claimant a reasonable
2298 attorney's fee together with interest at the rate prescribed in section 37-
2299 3a on the discontinued or reduced payments.

2300 Sec. 72. Subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 31-345 of the
2301 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
2302 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2303 (2) The chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Commission shall
2304 annually, on or after July first of each fiscal year, determine an amount
2305 sufficient in the chairperson's judgment to meet the expenses incurred
2306 by the Workers' Compensation Commission and the Department of
2307 [Aging and] Disability Services in providing rehabilitation services for
2308 employees suffering compensable injuries in accordance with section
2309 31-283a, as amended by this act. Such expenses shall include (A) the
2310 costs of the Division of Workers' Rehabilitation and the programs
2311 established by its director, for fiscal years prior to the fiscal year
2312 beginning July 1, 2011, (B) the costs of the Division of Worker Education
2313 and the programs established by its director, and (C) funding for the
2314 occupational health clinic program created pursuant to sections 31-396
2315 to 31-402, inclusive. The Treasurer shall thereupon assess upon and
2316 collect from each employer, other than the state and any municipality
2317 participating for purposes of its liability under this chapter as a member
2318 in an interlocal risk management agency pursuant to chapter 113a, the
2319 proportion of such expenses, based on the immediately preceding fiscal
2320 year, that the total compensation and payment for hospital, medical and
2321 nursing care made by such self-insured employer or private insurance
2322 carrier acting on behalf of any such employer bore to the total
2323 compensation and payments for the immediately preceding fiscal year

2324 for hospital, medical and nursing care made by such insurance carriers
2325 and self-insurers. For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2000, and June 30,
2326 2001, such assessments shall not exceed five per cent of such total
2327 compensation and payments made by such insurance carriers and self-
2328 insurers. For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003,
2329 such assessments shall not exceed four and one-half per cent of such
2330 total compensation and payments made by such insurance carriers and
2331 self-insurers. For any fiscal year ending on or after June 30, 2004, such
2332 assessment shall not exceed four per cent of such total compensation
2333 and payments made by such insurance carriers and self-insurers. Such
2334 assessments and expenses shall not exceed the budget estimates
2335 submitted in accordance with subsection (c) of section 31-280. For each
2336 fiscal year, such assessment shall be reduced pro rata by the amount of
2337 any surplus from the assessments of prior fiscal years. Said surplus shall
2338 be determined in accordance with subdivision (3) of this subsection.
2339 Such assessments shall be made in one annual assessment upon receipt
2340 of the chairperson's expense determination by the Treasurer. All
2341 assessments shall be paid not later than sixty days following the date of
2342 the assessment by the Treasurer. Any employer who fails to pay such
2343 assessment to the Treasurer within the time prescribed by this
2344 subdivision shall pay interest to the Treasurer on the assessment at the
2345 rate of eight per cent per annum from the date the assessment is due
2346 until the date of payment. All assessments received by the Treasurer
2347 pursuant to this subdivision to meet the expenses of the Workers'
2348 Compensation Commission shall be deposited in the Workers'
2349 Compensation Administration Fund established under section 31-344a.
2350 All assessments received by the Treasurer pursuant to this subdivision
2351 to meet the expenses incurred by the Department of [Aging and]
2352 Disability Services in providing rehabilitation services for employees
2353 suffering compensable injuries in accordance with section 31-283a, as
2354 amended by this act, shall be deposited in the Workers' Compensation
2355 Administration Fund. The Treasurer is hereby authorized to make
2356 credits or rebates for overpayments made under this subsection by any
2357 employer for any fiscal year.

2358 Sec. 73. Subsection (a) of section 31-349b of the general statutes is

2359 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2360 *2026*):

2361 (a) Any employee who has suffered a compensable injury under the
2362 provisions of this chapter, and who is receiving benefits for such injury
2363 from the Second Injury Fund pursuant to the provisions of section 31-
2364 349, may file a written request with the administrative law judge in the
2365 district where the original claim was filed for a hearing to determine
2366 whether the employee's injury constitutes a permanent vocational
2367 disability. The hearing shall be held within sixty days of the date the
2368 request was filed. Upon the request of the administrative law judge and
2369 prior to the conclusion of such hearing, the Commissioner of [Aging and]
2370 and] Disability Services shall, after receiving such information on the
2371 case which the administrative law judge deems necessary, submit
2372 written recommendations concerning the case to the administrative law
2373 judge for his consideration. The administrative law judge shall issue his
2374 decision, in writing, within ten days after the conclusion of the hearing.
2375 If the administrative law judge determines that the employee's injury is
2376 a permanent vocational disability, the employee shall be issued a
2377 certificate of disability by the administrative law judge. Such certificate
2378 shall be effective for a stated period of time of from one to five years, as
2379 determined by the administrative law judge. The decision of the
2380 administrative law judge may be appealed in accordance with the
2381 provisions of section 31-301.

2382 Sec. 74. Subdivision (4) of subsection (c) of section 32-7t of the general
2383 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
2384 (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2385 (4) The commissioner may approve an application in whole or in part
2386 by a qualified business that creates new discretionary FTEs or may
2387 approve such an application with amendments if a majority of such new
2388 discretionary FTEs are individuals who (A) because of a disability, are
2389 receiving or have received services from the Department of [Aging and]
2390 Disability Services; (B) are receiving employment services from the
2391 Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or participating in

2392 employment opportunities and day services, as defined in section 17a-
2393 226, operated or funded by the Department of Developmental Services;
2394 (C) have been unemployed for at least six of the preceding twelve
2395 months; (D) have been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony; (E) are
2396 veterans, as defined in section 27-103; (F) have not earned any
2397 postsecondary credential and are not currently enrolled in a
2398 postsecondary institution or program; or (G) are currently enrolled in a
2399 workforce training program fully or substantially paid for by the
2400 employer that results in such individual earning a postsecondary
2401 credential.

2402 Sec. 75. Subsection (a) of section 38a-47 of the general statutes is
2403 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2404 *2026*):

2405 (a) All domestic insurance companies and other domestic entities
2406 subject to taxation under chapter 207 shall, in accordance with section
2407 38a-48, as amended by this act, annually pay to the Insurance
2408 Commissioner, for deposit in the Insurance Fund established under
2409 section 38a-52a, an amount equal to:

2410 (1) The actual expenditures made by the Insurance Department
2411 during each fiscal year, and the actual expenditures made by the Office
2412 of the Healthcare Advocate, including the cost of fringe benefits for
2413 department and office personnel as estimated by the Comptroller;

2414 (2) The amount appropriated to the Office of Health Strategy from
2415 the Insurance Fund for the fiscal year, including the cost of fringe
2416 benefits for office personnel as estimated by the Comptroller, which
2417 shall be reduced by the amount of federal reimbursement received for
2418 allowable Medicaid administrative expenses;

2419 (3) The expenditures made on behalf of the department and said
2420 offices from the Capital Equipment Purchase Fund pursuant to section
2421 4a-9 for such year, but excluding such estimated expenditures made on
2422 behalf of the Health Systems Planning Unit of the Office of Health
2423 Strategy; and

2424 (4) The amount appropriated to the Department [of Aging and
2425 Disability Services] on Aging for the fall prevention program
2426 established in section 17a-859, as amended by this act, from the
2427 Insurance Fund for the fiscal year.

2428 Sec. 76. Section 38a-48 of the general statutes, as amended by section
2429 31 of public act 24-1 of the June special session, is repealed and the
2430 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2431 (a) On or before June thirtieth, annually, the Commissioner of
2432 Revenue Services shall render to the Insurance Commissioner a
2433 statement certifying the total amount of taxes reported to the
2434 Commissioner of Revenue Services on returns filed with said
2435 commissioner by each domestic insurance company or other domestic
2436 entity under chapter 207 on business done in this state during the
2437 calendar year immediately preceding the prior calendar year. For
2438 purposes of preparing the annual statement under this subsection, the
2439 total amount of taxes required to be set forth in such statement shall be
2440 the amount of tax reported by each domestic insurance company or
2441 other domestic entity under chapter 207 to the Commissioner of
2442 Revenue Services prior to the application of any credits allowable or
2443 available under law to each such domestic insurance company or other
2444 domestic entity under chapter 207.

2445 (b) On or before July thirty-first, annually, the Insurance
2446 Commissioner shall render to each domestic insurance company or
2447 other domestic entity liable for payment under section 38a-47, as
2448 amended by this act:

2449 (1) A statement that includes (A) the amount appropriated to the
2450 Insurance Department, the Office of the Healthcare Advocate and the
2451 Office of Health Strategy from the Insurance Fund established under
2452 section 38a-52a for the fiscal year beginning July first of the same year,
2453 (B) the cost of fringe benefits for department and office personnel for
2454 such year, as estimated by the Comptroller, (C) the estimated
2455 expenditures on behalf of the department and the offices from the
2456 Capital Equipment Purchase Fund pursuant to section 4a-9 for such

2457 year, not including such estimated expenditures made on behalf of the
2458 Health Systems Planning Unit of the Office of Health Strategy, and (D)
2459 the amount appropriated to the Department [of Aging and Disability
2460 Services] on Aging for the fall prevention program established in section
2461 17a-859, as amended by this act, from the Insurance Fund for the fiscal
2462 year;

2463 (2) A statement of the total amount of taxes reported in the annual
2464 statement rendered to the Insurance Commissioner pursuant to
2465 subsection (a) of this section; and

2466 (3) The proposed assessment against that company or entity,
2467 calculated in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this
2468 section, provided for the purposes of this calculation the amount
2469 appropriated to the Insurance Department, the Office of the Healthcare
2470 Advocate and the Office of Health Strategy from the Insurance Fund
2471 plus the cost of fringe benefits for department and office personnel and
2472 the estimated expenditures on behalf of the department and said offices
2473 from the Capital Equipment Purchase Fund pursuant to section 4a-9,
2474 not including such expenditures made on behalf of the Health Systems
2475 Planning Unit of the Office of Health Strategy shall be deemed to be the
2476 actual expenditures of the department and said offices, and the amount
2477 appropriated to the Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on
2478 Aging from the Insurance Fund for the fiscal year for the fall prevention
2479 program established in section 17a-859, as amended by this act, shall be
2480 deemed to be the actual expenditures for the program.

2481 (c) (1) The proposed assessments for each domestic insurance
2482 company or other domestic entity shall be calculated by (A) allocating
2483 twenty per cent of the amount to be paid under section 38a-47, as
2484 amended by this act, among the domestic entities organized under
2485 sections 38a-199 to 38a-209, inclusive, and 38a-214 to 38a-225, inclusive,
2486 in proportion to their respective shares of the total amount of taxes
2487 reported in the annual statement rendered to the Insurance
2488 Commissioner pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, and (B)
2489 allocating eighty per cent of the amount to be paid under section 38a-47,

2490 as amended by this act, among all domestic insurance companies and
2491 domestic entities other than those organized under sections 38a-199 to
2492 38a-209, inclusive, and 38a-214 to 38a-225, inclusive, in proportion to
2493 their respective shares of the total amount of taxes reported in the
2494 annual statement rendered to the Insurance Commissioner pursuant to
2495 subsection (a) of this section, provided if there are no domestic entities
2496 organized under sections 38a-199 to 38a-209, inclusive, and 38a-214 to
2497 38a-225, inclusive, at the time of assessment, one hundred per cent of
2498 the amount to be paid under section 38a-47, as amended by this act, shall
2499 be allocated among such domestic insurance companies and domestic
2500 entities.

2501 (2) When the amount any such company or entity is assessed
2502 pursuant to this section exceeds twenty-five per cent of the actual
2503 expenditures of the Insurance Department, the Office of the Healthcare
2504 Advocate and the Office of Health Strategy from the Insurance Fund,
2505 such excess amount shall not be paid by such company or entity but
2506 rather shall be assessed against and paid by all other such companies
2507 and entities in proportion to their respective shares of the total amount
2508 of taxes reported in the annual statement rendered to the Insurance
2509 Commissioner pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, except that for
2510 purposes of any assessment made to fund payments to the Department
2511 of Public Health to purchase vaccines, such company or entity shall be
2512 responsible for its share of the costs, notwithstanding whether its
2513 assessment exceeds twenty-five per cent of the actual expenditures of
2514 the Insurance Department, the Office of the Healthcare Advocate and
2515 the Office of Health Strategy from the Insurance Fund. The provisions
2516 of this subdivision shall not be applicable to any corporation that has
2517 converted to a domestic mutual insurance company pursuant to section
2518 38a-155 upon the effective date of any public act that amends said
2519 section to modify or remove any restriction on the business such a
2520 company may engage in, for purposes of any assessment due from such
2521 company on and after such effective date.

2522 (d) Each annual payment determined under section 38a-47, as
2523 amended by this act, and each annual assessment determined under this

2524 section shall be calculated based on the total amount of taxes reported
2525 in the annual statement rendered to the Insurance Commissioner
2526 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

2527 (e) On or before September first, annually, for each fiscal year, the
2528 Insurance Commissioner, after receiving any objections to the proposed
2529 assessments and making such adjustments as in the commissioner's
2530 opinion may be indicated, shall assess each such domestic insurance
2531 company or other domestic entity an amount equal to its proposed
2532 assessment as so adjusted. Each domestic insurance company or other
2533 domestic entity shall pay to the Insurance Commissioner (1) on or before
2534 June thirtieth, annually, an estimated payment against its assessment for
2535 the following year equal to twenty-five per cent of its assessment for the
2536 fiscal year ending such June thirtieth, (2) on or before September
2537 thirtieth, annually, twenty-five per cent of its assessment adjusted to
2538 reflect any credit or amount due from the preceding fiscal year as
2539 determined by the commissioner under subsection (f) of this section,
2540 and (3) on or before the following December thirty-first and March
2541 thirty-first, annually, each domestic insurance company or other
2542 domestic entity shall pay to the Insurance Commissioner the remaining
2543 fifty per cent of its proposed assessment to the department in two equal
2544 installments.

2545 (f) If the actual expenditures for the fall prevention program
2546 established in section 17a-859, as amended by this act, are less than the
2547 amount allocated, the Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services]
2548 on Aging shall notify the Insurance Commissioner. Immediately
2549 following the close of the fiscal year, the Insurance Commissioner shall
2550 recalculate the proposed assessment for each domestic insurance
2551 company or other domestic entity in accordance with subsection (c) of
2552 this section using the actual expenditures made during the fiscal year by
2553 the Insurance Department, the Office of the Healthcare Advocate and
2554 the Office of Health Strategy from the Insurance Fund, the actual
2555 expenditures made on behalf of the department and said offices from
2556 the Capital Equipment Purchase Fund pursuant to section 4a-9, not
2557 including such expenditures made on behalf of the Health Systems

2558 Planning Unit of the Office of Health Strategy, and the actual
2559 expenditures for the fall prevention program. On or before July thirty-
2560 first, annually, the Insurance Commissioner shall render to each such
2561 domestic insurance company and other domestic entity a statement
2562 showing the difference between their respective recalculated
2563 assessments and the amount they have previously paid. On or before
2564 August thirty-first, the Insurance Commissioner, after receiving any
2565 objections to such statements, shall make such adjustments that in the
2566 commissioner's opinion may be indicated, and shall render an adjusted
2567 assessment, if any, to the affected companies. Any such domestic
2568 insurance company or other domestic entity may pay to the Insurance
2569 Commissioner the entire assessment required under this subsection in
2570 one payment when the first installment of such assessment is due.

2571 (g) If any assessment is not paid when due, a penalty of twenty-five
2572 dollars shall be added thereto, and interest at the rate of six per cent per
2573 annum shall be paid thereafter on such assessment and penalty.

2574 (h) The Insurance Commissioner shall deposit all payments made
2575 under this section with the State Treasurer. On and after June 6, 1991,
2576 the moneys so deposited shall be credited to the Insurance Fund
2577 established under section 38a-52a and shall be accounted for as expenses
2578 recovered from insurance companies.

2579 Sec. 77. Section 38a-475 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2580 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2581 The Insurance Department shall only precertify long-term care
2582 insurance policies that (1) alert the purchaser to the availability of
2583 consumer information and public education provided by the
2584 Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging pursuant to
2585 section 17a-861; (2) offer the option of home and community-based
2586 services in addition to nursing home care; (3) in all home care plans,
2587 include case management services delivered by an access agency
2588 approved by the Office of Policy and Management and the Department
2589 of Social Services as meeting the requirements for such agency as
2590 defined in regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (m) of section

2591 17b-342, which services shall include, but need not be limited to, the
2592 development of a comprehensive individualized assessment and care
2593 plan and, as needed, the coordination of appropriate services and the
2594 monitoring of the delivery of such services; (4) provide inflation
2595 protection; (5) provide for the keeping of records and an explanation of
2596 benefit reports on insurance payments which count toward Medicaid
2597 resource exclusion; and (6) provide the management information and
2598 reports necessary to document the extent of Medicaid resource
2599 protection offered and to evaluate the Connecticut Partnership for
2600 Long-Term Care. No policy shall be precertified if it requires prior
2601 hospitalization or a prior stay in a nursing home as a condition of
2602 providing benefits. The commissioner may adopt regulations, in
2603 accordance with chapter 54, to carry out the precertification provisions
2604 of this section.

2605 Sec. 78. Section 42-339 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2606 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2607 (a) There is established a complex rehabilitation technology and
2608 wheelchair repair advisory council to monitor repairs of wheelchairs,
2609 including complex rehabilitation technology wheelchairs, as defined in
2610 section 42-337, and to make recommendations concerning improving
2611 repair times.

2612 (b) The advisory council shall consist of the following members:

2613 (1) Two appointed by the House and Senate chairpersons of the joint
2614 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
2615 matters relating to human services, one of whom is a consumer who
2616 uses a complex rehabilitation technology wheelchair purchased, leased
2617 or repaired under the Medicaid program, and one of whom is a
2618 representative of the state advocacy system for persons with disabilities,
2619 established pursuant to section 46a-10b;

2620 (2) Two appointed by the House and Senate ranking members of the
2621 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
2622 matters relating to human services, one of whom is a consumer who

2623 uses a complex rehabilitation technology wheelchair purchased, leased
2624 or repaired under a private health insurance policy, and one of whom is
2625 an authorized wheelchair dealer, as defined in section 42-337;

2626 (3) Two appointed by the House and Senate chairpersons of the joint
2627 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
2628 matters relating to general law, each of whom is a representative of an
2629 organization that represents persons with physical disabilities;

2630 (4) Two appointed by the House and Senate ranking members of the
2631 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
2632 matters relating to general law, each of whom is a consumer who
2633 privately pays for complex rehabilitation technology wheelchairs;

2634 (5) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, or the
2635 commissioner's designee;

2636 (6) The Insurance Commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;

2637 (7) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
2638 designee;

2639 (8) The Healthcare Advocate, or the Healthcare Advocate's designee;
2640 and

2641 (9) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection, or the commissioner's
2642 designee.

2643 (c) Any member of the advisory council appointed under subdivision
2644 (1), (2), (3) or (4) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the
2645 General Assembly.

2646 (d) All initial appointments to the advisory council shall be made not
2647 later than August 1, 2024. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing
2648 authority. The advisory council shall meet at least monthly.

2649 (e) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, or the
2650 commissioner's designee, and a member of the advisory council chosen
2651 by a majority of members of the advisory council, shall serve as

2652 chairpersons. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the
2653 advisory council not later than September 1, 2024.

2654 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
2655 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
2656 services shall serve as administrative staff of the advisory council.

2657 (g) Not later than January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the
2658 advisory council shall submit a report on its findings and
2659 recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General
2660 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging, general law,
2661 human services and insurance, in accordance with the provisions of
2662 section 11-4a.

2663 Sec. 79. Subsection (c) of section 3-123aa of the general statutes is
2664 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2665 *2026*):

2666 (c) There is established an advisory committee to the Connecticut
2667 Homecare Option Program for the Elderly, which shall consist of the
2668 State Treasurer, the State Comptroller, the Commissioner of Social
2669 Services, the Commissioner [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging,
2670 the director of the long-term care partnership policy program within the
2671 Office of Policy and Management, and the cochairpersons and ranking
2672 members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
2673 having cognizance of matters relating to aging, human services and
2674 finance, revenue and bonding, or their designees. The Governor shall
2675 appoint one provider of home care services for the elderly and a
2676 physician specializing in geriatric care. The advisory committee shall
2677 meet at least annually. The State Comptroller shall convene the
2678 meetings of the committee.

2679 Sec. 80. Section 4-5 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2680 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2681 As used in sections 4-6, 4-7 and 4-8, the term "department head"
2682 means the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management,

2683 Commissioner of Administrative Services, Commissioner of Revenue
2684 Services, Banking Commissioner, Commissioner of Children and
2685 Families, Commissioner of Consumer Protection, Commissioner of
2686 Correction, Commissioner of Economic and Community Development,
2687 State Board of Education, Commissioner of Emergency Services and
2688 Public Protection, Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
2689 Protection, Commissioner of Agriculture, Commissioner of Public
2690 Health, Insurance Commissioner, Labor Commissioner, Commissioner
2691 of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Commissioner of Social
2692 Services, Commissioner of Developmental Services, Commissioner of
2693 Motor Vehicles, Commissioner of Transportation, Commissioner of
2694 Veterans Affairs, Commissioner of Housing, Commissioner on Aging,
2695 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, Commissioner of
2696 Early Childhood, Commissioner of Health Strategy, executive director
2697 of the Office of Military Affairs, executive director of the Technical
2698 Education and Career System, Chief Workforce Officer and
2699 Commissioner of Higher Education. As used in sections 4-6 and 4-7,
2700 "department head" also means the Commissioner of Education.

2701 Sec. 81. Section 4-38c of the general statutes is repealed and the
2702 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2703 There shall be within the executive branch of state government the
2704 following departments: Office of Policy and Management, Department
2705 of Administrative Services, Department on Aging, Department of
2706 [Aging and] Disability Services, Department of Revenue Services,
2707 Department of Banking, Department of Agriculture, Department of
2708 Children and Families, Department of Consumer Protection,
2709 Department of Correction, Department of Economic and Community
2710 Development, State Board of Education, Department of Emergency
2711 Services and Public Protection, Department of Energy and
2712 Environmental Protection, Department of Housing, Department of
2713 Public Health, Board of Regents for Higher Education, Insurance
2714 Department, Labor Department, Department of Mental Health and
2715 Addiction Services, Department of Developmental Services,
2716 Department of Social Services, Department of Transportation,

2717 Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Veterans Affairs and the
2718 Technical Education and Career System.

2719 Sec. 82. Subsection (a) of section 4-61aa of the general statutes is
2720 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2721 *2026*):

2722 (a) For purposes of this section, "state Americans with Disabilities Act
2723 coordinator" means the person appointed by the Governor to coordinate
2724 state compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of
2725 1990. There is established a committee to advise the state Americans
2726 with Disabilities Act coordinator. The state Americans with Disabilities
2727 Act coordinator shall appoint the members of the committee, which
2728 shall be chaired by said coordinator, or his designee, and include at least
2729 one representative of each of the following:

2730 (1) The Board of Education and Services to the Blind;

2731 (2) The Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard
2732 of Hearing;

2733 (3) The Department of [Aging and] Disability Services;

2734 (4) The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services;

2735 (5) The Department of Developmental Services;

2736 (6) The Labor Department;

2737 (7) The Department of Administrative Services; and

2738 (8) The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

2739 Sec. 83. Section 4-67cc of the general statutes is repealed and the
2740 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2741 The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, in
2742 consultation with the Department on Aging and the Departments of
2743 Administrative Services, Developmental Services, Social Services,

2744 [Aging and] Disability Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services,
2745 Education, Correction and Children and Families and the Office of Early
2746 Childhood, shall create a plan to develop a secure online portal to
2747 facilitate sharing of basic critical information across agencies in order to
2748 ensure efficient and safe delivery of services. The portal shall include a
2749 means for each agency to note when it has performed a site visit or has
2750 scheduled a site visit and shall give the individual performing the site
2751 visit the opportunity to record notes that can be shared across agencies.
2752 Such plan shall: (1) Review the feasibility of using current online portals
2753 already utilized by state agencies as well as a new online portal; (2)
2754 detail data sharing and privacy requirements for sharing such
2755 information across state agencies in accordance with federal and state
2756 law concerning data sharing and privacy; and (3) be submitted, in
2757 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing
2758 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
2759 relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies and human
2760 services not later than July 1, 2024. For purposes of this section, "site
2761 visit" means any meeting with a client or an inspection that occurs
2762 outside the physical offices of the state agency providing the service or
2763 conducting the inspection.

2764 Sec. 84. Subsection (g) of section 4-89 of the general statutes is
2765 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
2766 *2026*):

2767 (g) The provisions of this section shall not apply to appropriations to
2768 the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services in an amount not
2769 greater than the amount of reimbursements of prior year expenditures
2770 for the services of interpreters received by the department during the
2771 fiscal year pursuant to section 17a-839, as amended by this act, and such
2772 appropriations shall not lapse until the end of the fiscal year succeeding
2773 the fiscal year of the appropriation.

2774 Sec. 85. Section 4-124xx of the general statutes is repealed and the
2775 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2776 (a) The Chief Workforce Officer, appointed pursuant to section 4-

2777 124w, in consultation with the Labor Commissioner, the Commissioner
2778 on Aging, the Commissioners of Social Services, Developmental
2779 Disabilities, Public Health, Higher Education and [Aging and] Disability
2780 Services, the Governor's Workforce Council, the Council on
2781 Developmental Disabilities, the Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory
2782 Council and regional workforce development boards, shall, within
2783 available appropriations, establish a Human Services Career Pipeline
2784 program to ensure a sufficient number of trained providers are available
2785 to serve the needs of persons in the state [with] who are elderly and
2786 persons who have (1) an intellectual disability, (2) other developmental
2787 disabilities, (3) physical disabilities, (4) cognitive impairment, or (5)
2788 mental illness. [and elderly persons.] Such pipeline shall include
2789 training and certification for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid,
2790 medication administration, job placement and incentives for retention
2791 in the human services labor sector upon successful completion of the
2792 program.

2793 (b) The Chief Workforce Officer shall consult with the Labor
2794 Commissioner, [and] the Commissioner on Aging, the Commissioners
2795 of [Aging and] Disability Services, Developmental Services, Mental
2796 Health and Addiction Services and Social Services, the Council on
2797 Developmental Disabilities and the Autism Spectrum Disorder
2798 Advisory Council to determine: (1) The greatest needs for human
2799 services providers, and (2) barriers to hiring and retaining qualified
2800 providers. The Chief Workforce Officer shall assist local and regional
2801 boards of education in enhancing existing partnerships or establishing
2802 new partnerships with providers of human services and higher
2803 education institutions to provide a pathway to a diploma, credential,
2804 certificate or license and a job providing human services.

2805 (c) The Chief Workforce Officer, in consultation with the Labor
2806 Commissioner, shall develop a plan for the Human Services Career
2807 Pipeline program that includes, but shall not be limited to: (1) A strategy
2808 to increase the number of state residents pursuing careers in human
2809 services, (2) recommended salary and working conditions necessary to
2810 retain an adequate number of human services providers to serve state

2811 residents, and (3) estimated funding needed to support the Human
2812 Services Career Pipeline program. Not later than July 1, 2024, the Chief
2813 Workforce Officer shall submit a report on the plan, in accordance with
2814 the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the
2815 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
2816 appropriations, aging, higher education and employment advancement,
2817 human services, labor and public health. The report shall include the
2818 Chief Workforce Officer's recommendations for establishing the career
2819 pipeline and estimates of funding needed to implement the pipeline.

2820 (d) The Chief Workforce Officer shall, within available
2821 appropriations, establish such career pipeline and, if such pipeline is
2822 established, submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of
2823 section 11-4a, not later than January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter,
2824 regarding the development and implementation of the pipeline to the
2825 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
2826 of matters relating to appropriations, aging, higher education and
2827 employment advancement, human services, labor and public health. For
2828 purposes of this section, "human services labor sector" means persons
2829 trained to provide services to elderly persons and persons with an
2830 intellectual disability; other developmental disabilities, including, but
2831 not limited to, autism spectrum disorder; physical disabilities; cognitive
2832 impairment or mental illness. [; and elderly persons.]

2833 Sec. 86. Section 4a-82 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2834 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2835 (a) For the purposes of this section:

2836 (1) "Person with a disability" means any individual with a disability,
2837 excluding blindness, as such term is applied by the Department of
2838 Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department of
2839 Developmental Services, the Department of [Aging and] Disability
2840 Services or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and who
2841 is certified by the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services as
2842 qualified to participate in a qualified partnership, as described in
2843 subsections (e) to (l), inclusive, of this section;

2844 (2) "Vocational rehabilitation service" means any goods and services
2845 necessary to render a person with a disability employable, in accordance
2846 with Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC 701 et seq., as
2847 amended from time to time;

2848 (3) "Community rehabilitation program" means any entity or
2849 individual that provides directly for or facilitates the provision of
2850 vocational rehabilitation services to, or provides services in connection
2851 with, the recruiting, hiring or managing of the employment of persons
2852 with disabilities based on an individualized plan and budget for each
2853 worker with a disability;

2854 (4) "Commercial contractor" means any for-profit proprietorship,
2855 partnership, joint venture, corporation, limited liability company, trust,
2856 association or other privately owned entity that employs persons to
2857 perform janitorial work or contractual services, and that enters into
2858 contracts to provide janitorial services or contractual services;

2859 (5) "Janitorial work" means work performed in connection with the
2860 care or maintenance of buildings, including, but not limited to, work
2861 customarily performed by cleaners, porters, janitors and handypersons;

2862 (6) "Janitorial contract" means a contract or subcontract to perform
2863 janitorial work for a department or agency of the state;

2864 (7) "Person with a disadvantage" means any individual who is
2865 determined by the Labor Department, or its designee, to be eligible for
2866 employment services in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and
2867 Opportunity Act or whose verified individual gross annual income
2868 during the previous calendar year was not greater than two hundred
2869 per cent of the federal poverty level for a family of four;

2870 (8) "Awarding authority" means the Commissioner of Administrative
2871 Services, Chief Court Administrator of the Judicial Branch and
2872 chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, as
2873 applicable; and

2874 (9) "Contractual services" includes, but is not limited to, any and all

2875 laundry and cleaning services, mail supply room staffing, data entry,
2876 telephone call center staffing and other services specified by the
2877 Commissioner of Administrative Services under subsection (b) of this
2878 section.

2879 (b) (1) The Commissioner of Administrative Services shall establish a
2880 program to create and expand janitorial work job opportunities for
2881 persons with a disability and persons with a disadvantage. The program
2882 shall create full-time jobs or full-time equivalents at standard wage rates
2883 for persons with disabilities and persons with disadvantages. The
2884 Judicial Branch and Board of Regents for Higher Education may
2885 participate in such program.

2886 (2) The Commissioner of Administrative Services may expand such
2887 program to include contractual services that the commissioner deems
2888 appropriate and shall post a list of such services on the department's
2889 Internet web site.

2890 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes,
2891 under such program, the awarding authority may award janitorial
2892 contracts or contracts for contractual services pursuant to the following
2893 procedures: (1) Upon receipt of a request for janitorial services or a
2894 contractual service that the Commissioner of Administrative Services
2895 has deemed appropriate for inclusion in the program by an agency or
2896 department of the state, the awarding authority shall notify each
2897 qualified partnership, as described in subsections (e) to (l), inclusive, of
2898 this section, of such request and invite each qualified partnership in
2899 good standing to submit a bid proposal for such janitorial contract or
2900 service contract to the awarding authority in a manner and form as
2901 prescribed by the awarding authority; (2) in the event that only one such
2902 qualified partnership submits a bid or proposal for such janitorial or
2903 service contract, the awarding authority shall award such contract to
2904 such qualified partnership, provided such bid or proposal does not
2905 exceed the fair market value for such contract, as determined by the
2906 awarding authority; (3) if more than one qualified partnership submits
2907 a bid or proposal, the awarding authority shall award the contract to the

2908 lowest responsible qualified bidder or most advantageous proposer, as
2909 described in section 4a-59; and (4) in the event that a qualified
2910 partnership does not submit a bid or proposal or is not awarded such
2911 contract, the awarding authority shall award such contract in
2912 accordance with the provisions of sections 4a-52a, 4a-59, 10a-151b and
2913 17a-796, or title 51, as applicable. No awarding authority shall award a
2914 contract under the provisions of this subsection at a site where
2915 employees are employed pursuant to an existing collective bargaining
2916 agreement or where a contract has been awarded pursuant to section
2917 17a-796 unless a contract has been previously awarded to a qualified
2918 partnership pursuant to this section at such site.

2919 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the
2920 responsibilities of the Commissioner of Administrative Services, Chief
2921 Court Administrator or chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and
2922 Universities as established in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, may
2923 not be delegated to an outside vendor.

2924 (e) The Connecticut Community Providers Association shall
2925 designate a commercial contractor and a community rehabilitation
2926 program as a "qualified partnership" whenever the following criteria
2927 have been established: (1) Such commercial contractor has entered into
2928 a binding agreement with such community rehabilitation program in
2929 which such contractor agrees to fill not less than one-third of the jobs
2930 from a successful bid for a janitorial or service contract under the
2931 program established in subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of this section
2932 with persons with disabilities and not less than one-third of such jobs
2933 with persons with a disadvantage; (2) such contractor employs not less
2934 than two hundred persons who perform janitorial work or contractual
2935 services in the state; and (3) such contractor certifies, in writing, that it
2936 will pay the standard wage to employees, including persons with
2937 disabilities, under such janitorial or service contract. Any partnership
2938 between a commercial contractor and a community rehabilitation
2939 program that has been denied designation as a qualified partnership
2940 may appeal such denial, in writing, to the Commissioner of
2941 Administrative Services and said commissioner may, after review of

2942 such appeal, designate such program as a qualified partnership.

2943 (f) The requirement established in subsection (e) of this section to fill
2944 not less than one-third of the jobs from a successful bid for a janitorial
2945 or service contract with persons with disabilities and one-third with
2946 persons with a disadvantage shall be met whenever such contractor
2947 employs the requisite number of persons with disabilities and persons
2948 with a disadvantage throughout the entirety of its operations in the state
2949 provided any persons with disabilities employed by such contractor
2950 prior to the commencement date of any such contract shall not be
2951 counted for the purpose of determining the number of persons with
2952 disabilities employed by such contractor.

2953 (g) The number of persons with disabilities and the number of
2954 persons with a disadvantage that such contractor is required to employ
2955 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (e) of this section shall be
2956 employed not later than six months after the commencement of
2957 janitorial work or the contractual service under the terms of any contract
2958 awarded pursuant to the provisions of subsections (b) to (d), inclusive,
2959 of this section, provided such contractor shall fill any vacancy for
2960 janitorial work or contractual service that arises during the first six
2961 months of any such contract with persons with disabilities and persons
2962 with disadvantages.

2963 (h) The Connecticut Community Providers Association shall develop
2964 an application process and submit a list of employees who have applied
2965 to participate in a partnership to the Department of [Aging and]
2966 Disability Services for certification. Such association shall maintain a list
2967 of certified employees who are persons with disabilities and community
2968 rehabilitation programs.

2969 (i) Any qualified partnership awarded a janitorial or service contract
2970 pursuant to the provisions of subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of this
2971 section shall provide to the Connecticut Community Providers
2972 Association, not later than six months after the commencement date of
2973 such contract and annually thereafter, a list of the persons with
2974 disabilities and persons with a disadvantage employed by such

2975 contractor that includes the date of hire and employment location for
2976 each such person. Such association shall certify annually to the
2977 Department of Administrative Services, the Judicial Branch or the Board
2978 of Regents for Higher Education, as applicable, in such manner and
2979 form as prescribed by the Commissioner of Administrative Services,
2980 Chief Court Administrator or the president of the Board of Regents for
2981 Higher Education, that the requisite number of persons with disabilities
2982 for such contract continue to be employed by such contractor in
2983 positions equivalent to those created under such contract and have been
2984 integrated into the general workforce of such contractor.

2985 (j) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the
2986 responsibilities of the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services, as
2987 established in subsections (e) to (l), inclusive, of this section, may not be
2988 delegated to an outside vendor.

2989 (k) The Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services may adopt
2990 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
2991 undertake the certification requirements established pursuant to
2992 subsections (e) to (l), inclusive, of this section.

2993 (l) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (e) of this section,
2994 the Commissioner of Administrative Services shall authorize certified
2995 small and minority businesses to participate in such program.

2996 (m) The joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
2997 cognizance of matters relating to government administration shall study
2998 the effectiveness of such program, including, but not limited to, the
2999 effectiveness of such program to create integrated work settings for
3000 persons with disabilities. Additionally, said committee shall study ways
3001 to provide incentives for municipalities and businesses to utilize such
3002 program if such program is determined by the committee to be effective.

3003 (n) Each exclusive contract awarded prior to October 1, 2013,
3004 pursuant to section 17a-796 shall remain in effect until such time as
3005 either party terminates the contract in such party's own best interest,
3006 with not less than sixty days written notice. Each such contract may be

3007 amended to include updated terms and conditions, but shall not allow
3008 for any price increases except statutory or mandated increases to the
3009 minimum wage and standard wage. If either party exercises his or her
3010 right to terminate any such contract, the next contract solicitation may
3011 be awarded pursuant to this section or sections 4a-59 and 17a-796.
3012 Additionally, any new janitorial contract awarded pursuant to section
3013 17a-796 shall be limited to not more than four full-time employees per
3014 contract.

3015 (o) Any person employed under a janitorial contract let: (1) On or
3016 before October 1, 2006, or thereafter if such contract constitutes a
3017 successor contract to such janitorial contract let on or before October 1,
3018 2006, and (2) pursuant to section 4a-57 or 10a-151b or by the judicial or
3019 legislative departments or pursuant to subsections (b) to (d), inclusive,
3020 of this section shall have the same rights conferred upon an employee
3021 by section 31-57g for the duration of the program described in
3022 subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of this section. The provisions of this
3023 subsection shall not apply to any new janitorial contract with not more
3024 than four full-time employees per contract, as described in subsection
3025 (n) of this section.

3026 (p) If a position is not available at a job site for a janitorial or service
3027 contract awarded pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and a person
3028 with a disability or a person with a disadvantage is placed at an alternate
3029 job site in the operations of the contractor pursuant to subsection (f) of
3030 this section, such person with a disability or person with a disadvantage
3031 shall be paid the wage applicable at such alternate site, provided when
3032 a position at the job site for a janitorial or service contract awarded
3033 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section becomes available, such person
3034 with a disability or person with a disadvantage shall be transferred to
3035 the job site for a janitorial or service contract awarded pursuant to
3036 subsection (c) of this section and shall be paid the applicable standard
3037 wage for such site.

3038 (q) If a person with a disability or a person with a disadvantage is
3039 transferred pursuant to subsection (p) of this section and such person

3040 subsequently leaves such position, the position shall be filled with
3041 another person with a disability or person with a disadvantage.

3042 Sec. 87. Subsection (a) of section 5-175a of the general statutes is
3043 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3044 *2026*):

3045 (a) Vending stand operators, operating stands under permits held by
3046 the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services pursuant to section
3047 17a-818, as amended by this act, shall be members of the state employees
3048 retirement system, part A, exclusive of the Social Security option and
3049 benefits in the state employees' retirement system dependent thereon.
3050 Each such person shall annually, on or before June thirtieth, pay five per
3051 cent of his adjusted gross income, arising out of the operation of such
3052 stand, as determined under the Internal Revenue Code, during the
3053 calendar year preceding to the Department of [Aging and] Disability
3054 Services which shall, as the state administering agency for such persons,
3055 certify such payment and pay it over to the State Retirement
3056 Commission, provided membership of such persons in said system shall
3057 be exclusive of disability retirement upon the grounds of defects of
3058 vision.

3059 Sec. 88. Section 5-198 of the general statutes is repealed and the
3060 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3061 The offices and positions filled by the following-described
3062 incumbents shall be exempt from the classified service:

3063 (1) All officers and employees of the Judicial Department;

3064 (2) All officers and employees of the Legislative Department;

3065 (3) All officers elected by popular vote;

3066 (4) All agency heads, members of boards and commissions and other
3067 officers appointed by the Governor;

3068 (5) All persons designated by name in any special act to hold any state

3069 office;

3070 (6) All officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men in the
3071 military or naval service of the state and under military or naval
3072 discipline and control;

3073 (7) (A) All correctional wardens, as provided in section 18-82, and (B)
3074 all superintendents of state institutions, the State Librarian, the
3075 president of The University of Connecticut and any other commissioner
3076 or administrative head of a state department or institution who is
3077 appointed by a board or commission responsible by statute for the
3078 administration of such department or institution;

3079 (8) The State Historian appointed by the State Library Board;

3080 (9) Deputies to the administrative head of each department or
3081 institution designated by statute to act for and perform all of the duties
3082 of such administrative head during such administrative head's absence
3083 or incapacity;

3084 (10) Executive assistants to each state elective officer and each
3085 department head, as defined in section 4-5, as amended by this act,
3086 provided (A) each position of executive assistant shall have been created
3087 in accordance with section 5-214, and (B) in no event shall the
3088 Commissioner of Administrative Services or the Secretary of the Office
3089 of Policy and Management approve more than four executive assistants
3090 for a department head and, for any department with two or more
3091 deputies, more than two executive assistants for each such deputy;

3092 (11) One personal secretary to the administrative head and to each
3093 undersecretary or deputy to such head of each department or
3094 institution;

3095 (12) All members of the professional and technical staffs of the
3096 constituent units of the state system of higher education, as defined in
3097 section 10a-1, of all other state institutions of learning, of the Board of
3098 Regents for Higher Education, and of the agricultural experiment
3099 station at New Haven, professional and managerial employees of the

3100 Department of Education and the Office of Early Childhood, teachers
3101 and administrators employed by the Technical Education and Career
3102 System and teachers certified by the State Board of Education and
3103 employed in teaching positions at state institutions;

3104 (13) Physicians, dentists, student nurses in institutions and other
3105 professional specialists who are employed on a part-time basis;

3106 (14) Persons employed to make or conduct a special inquiry,
3107 investigation, examination or installation;

3108 (15) Students in educational institutions who are employed on a part-
3109 time basis;

3110 (16) Forest fire wardens provided for by section 23-36;

3111 (17) Patients or inmates of state institutions who receive
3112 compensation for services rendered therein;

3113 (18) Employees of the Governor including employees working at the
3114 executive office, official executive residence at 990 Prospect Avenue,
3115 Hartford and the Washington D.C. office;

3116 (19) Persons filling positions expressly exempted by statute from the
3117 classified service;

3118 (20) Librarians employed by the State Board of Education or any
3119 constituent unit of the state system of higher education;

3120 (21) All officers and employees of the Division of Criminal Justice;

3121 (22) Professional employees in the education professions bargaining
3122 unit of the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services;

3123 (23) Lieutenant colonels in the Division of State Police within the
3124 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection;

3125 (24) The Deputy State Fire Marshal within the Department of
3126 Administrative Services;

3127 (25) The chief administrative officer of the Workers' Compensation
3128 Commission;

3129 (26) Employees in the education professions bargaining unit;

3130 (27) Disability policy specialists employed by the Council on
3131 Developmental Disabilities;

3132 (28) The director for digital media and motion picture activities in the
3133 Department of Economic and Community Development; and

3134 (29) Any Director of Communications 1, Director of Communications
3135 1 (Rc), Director of Communications 2, Director of Communications 2
3136 (Rc), Legislative Program Manager, Communications and Legislative
3137 Program Manager, Director of Legislation, Regulation and
3138 Communication, Legislative and Administrative Advisor 1, or
3139 Legislative and Administrative Advisor 2 as such positions are
3140 classified within the Executive Department.

3141 Sec. 89. Subsection (e) of section 5-259 of the general statutes is
3142 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3143 *2026*):

3144 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section,
3145 vending stand operators eligible for membership in the state employees
3146 retirement system pursuant to section 5-175a, as amended by this act,
3147 shall be eligible for coverage under the group hospitalization and
3148 medical and surgical insurance plans procured under this section,
3149 provided the cost for such operators' insurance coverage shall be paid
3150 by the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services from vending
3151 machine income pursuant to section 17a-818, as amended by this act.

3152 Sec. 90. Section 7-127b of the general statutes is repealed and the
3153 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3154 (a) The chief elected official or the chief executive officer if by
3155 ordinance of each municipality shall appoint a municipal agent for
3156 elderly persons. Such agent shall be a staff member of a senior center, a

3157 member of an agency that serves elderly persons in the municipality or
3158 a responsible resident of the municipality who has demonstrated an
3159 interest in assisting elderly persons or has been involved in programs in
3160 the field of aging.

3161 (b) The duties of the municipal agent shall include, but need not be
3162 limited to: (1) Disseminating information to elderly persons, assisting
3163 such persons in learning about the community resources available to
3164 them and publicizing such resources and benefits; (2) assisting elderly
3165 persons in applying for federal and state benefits, and accessing
3166 community resources, available to such persons; and (3) reporting to the
3167 chief elected official or chief executive officer of the municipality and
3168 the Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging any needs
3169 and problems of the elderly and any recommendations for action to
3170 improve services to the elderly. For the purposes of this subsection,
3171 "community resources" means resources that assist elderly persons in
3172 gaining access to housing opportunities, including, but not limited to,
3173 information regarding access to waitlists for housing designated for
3174 elderly persons, applications and consumer reports.

3175 (c) Each municipal agent shall serve for a term of two or four years,
3176 at the discretion of the appointing authority of each municipality, and
3177 may be reappointed. If more than one agent is necessary to carry out the
3178 purposes of this section, the appointing authority, in its discretion, may
3179 appoint one or more assistant agents. The town clerk in each
3180 municipality shall notify the Department [of Aging and Disability
3181 Services] on Aging immediately of the appointment of a new municipal
3182 agent. Each municipality may provide to its municipal agent resources
3183 sufficient for such agent to perform the duties of the office.

3184 (d) The Department [of Aging and Disability Services] on Aging shall
3185 adopt and disseminate to municipalities guidelines as to the role and
3186 duties of municipal agents and such informational and technical
3187 materials as may assist such agents in performance of their duties. The
3188 department, in cooperation with the area agencies on aging, may
3189 provide training for municipal agents within the available resources of

3190 the department and of the area agencies on aging.

3191 (e) On or before January 1, 2025, the Commissioner [of Aging and
3192 Disability Services] on Aging shall create a directory of municipal agents
3193 appointed pursuant to the provisions of this section, which shall
3194 include, but need not be limited to, the name, title, telephone number,
3195 electronic mail address and mailing address of each municipal agent.
3196 The commissioner shall post a link to the directory on the Department
3197 [of Aging and Disability Services'] on Aging's Internet web site.

3198 Sec. 91. Section 8-119f of the general statutes is repealed and the
3199 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3200 The Commissioner of Housing shall design, implement, operate and
3201 monitor a program of congregate housing. For the purpose of this
3202 program, the Commissioner of Housing shall consult with the
3203 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services for the provision of
3204 services for persons with physical disabilities in order to comply with
3205 the requirements of section 29-271.

3206 Sec. 92. Subsection (c) of section 9-20 of the general statutes is
3207 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3208 *2026*):

3209 (c) The application for admission as an elector shall include a
3210 statement that (1) specifies each eligibility requirement, (2) contains an
3211 attestation that the applicant meets each such requirement, and (3)
3212 requires the signature of the applicant under penalty of perjury. Each
3213 registrar of voters and town clerk shall maintain a copy of such
3214 statement in braille, large print and audio form. The Department of
3215 [Aging and] Disability Services shall, in consultation with the Secretary
3216 of the State, produce an accessible version of such statement in voice
3217 and sign language and provide the accessible version to the Secretary of
3218 the State who shall make it available to the registrars of voters of any
3219 municipality. If a person applies for admission as an elector in person to
3220 an admitting official, such admitting official shall, upon the request of
3221 the applicant, administer the elector's oath.

3222 Sec. 93. Section 10-74m of the general statutes is repealed and the
3223 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3224 (a) The Department of Education shall enter into memoranda of
3225 understanding with the Office of Early Childhood and the Departments
3226 of Developmental Services, [Aging and] Disability Services, Children
3227 and Families, Social Services and Correction regarding the provision of
3228 special education and related services to children, including, but not
3229 limited to, education, health care, transition resources, transition
3230 services and transition programs, as those terms are defined in section
3231 10-74o. Such memoranda of understanding shall account for current
3232 programs and services, utilize best practices and be updated or renewed
3233 at least every five years.

3234 (b) The Office of Early Childhood and the Departments of
3235 Developmental Services, [Aging and] Disability Services, Children and
3236 Families, Social Services and Correction shall, as necessary, enter into
3237 memoranda of understanding regarding the provision of special
3238 education and related services to children as such services relate to one
3239 another. Such memoranda of understanding shall account for current
3240 programs and services, utilize best practices and be updated or renewed
3241 at least every five years.

3242 (c) The Office of Early Childhood and the Departments of
3243 Developmental Services, [Aging and] Disability Services, Children and
3244 Families, the Labor Department, Mental Health and Addiction Services,
3245 Public Health, Social Services and Correction shall each appoint an
3246 employee to act as a liaison to the Department of Education's State-wide
3247 Transition Services Coordinator, established pursuant to section 10-74o.
3248 Each liaison shall provide information and advice to such coordinator
3249 concerning the transition resources, transition services and transition
3250 programs provided by the agency such liaison represents.

3251 Sec. 94. Subsection (a) of section 10-74n of the general statutes is
3252 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3253 *2026*):

3254 (a) The Department of Education's State-wide Transition Services
3255 Coordinator, established pursuant to section 10-74o, in collaboration
3256 with the liaisons appointed by other state agencies pursuant to section
3257 10-74m, as amended by this act, shall: (1) Develop and maintain an
3258 easily accessible and navigable online listing of the transition resources,
3259 transition services and transition programs, as those terms are defined
3260 in section 10-74o, provided by each such state agency, including, but not
3261 limited to, for each resource, service and program (A) a plain language
3262 description, (B) eligibility requirements, and (C) application deadlines
3263 and instructions, and (2) annually collect information related to
3264 transition resources, programs and services provided by other state
3265 agencies. The Departments of [Aging and] Disability Services,
3266 Developmental Services, Social Services, Children and Families, Mental
3267 Health and Addiction Services, Public Health and Correction, the Labor
3268 Department and the Office of Early Childhood shall each post a link to
3269 such online listing on an easily accessible location of said departments'
3270 Internet web sites.

3271 Sec. 95. Subsection (a) of section 10-74q of the general statutes is
3272 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3273 *2026*):

3274 (a) Not later than July 1, 2024, the Department of Education, in
3275 consultation with the Departments of Developmental Services and
3276 [Aging and] Disability Services and the regional educational service
3277 centers, shall develop a training program for transition coordinators,
3278 educators and paraeducators. Such training program shall comply with
3279 the minimum standards established by the State-wide Transition
3280 Services Coordinator pursuant to section 10-74o.

3281 Sec. 96. Section 10-74t of the general statutes is repealed and the
3282 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3283 Not later than July 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the Department
3284 of Education shall report to each state agency that provides services and
3285 programs for adults with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the
3286 Departments of Developmental Services, Social Services and [Aging

3287 and] Disability Services, and, in accordance with section 11-4a, the joint
3288 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
3289 matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies,
3290 education, human services and public health, the aggregate number of
3291 students from all school districts who had planning and placement team
3292 meetings during the prior school year in which information concerning
3293 such services and programs was provided pursuant to the provisions of
3294 subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of section
3295 10-76d, as amended by this act. Such aggregate number may be reduced,
3296 to the extent possible, to the number of students who may qualify for
3297 the services or programs provided by such agencies.

3298 Sec. 97. Subparagraph (A) of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of
3299 section 10-76d of the general statutes is repealed and the following is
3300 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3301 (9) (A) The planning and placement team shall, in accordance with
3302 the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20
3303 USC 1400, et seq., as amended from time to time, develop and include a
3304 statement of transition service needs in the individualized education
3305 program for each child requiring special education, beginning not later
3306 than the first individualized education program to be in effect when
3307 such child becomes fourteen years of age, or younger if the planning
3308 and placement team determines it is appropriate. Such individualized
3309 education program shall include (i) appropriate measurable
3310 postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition
3311 assessments related to training, education, employment and, where
3312 appropriate, independent living skills; and (ii) the transition services,
3313 including courses of study, needed to assist such child in reaching those
3314 goals. Such individualized education program shall be updated
3315 annually thereafter in accordance with the provisions of this
3316 subdivision. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed as requiring
3317 the Department of [Aging and] Disability Services to lower the age of
3318 transitional services for a child with disabilities from sixteen to fourteen
3319 years of age.

3320 Sec. 98. Subsection (a) of section 10-76i of the general statutes is
3321 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3322 *2026*):

3323 (a) There shall be an Advisory Council for Special Education which
3324 shall advise the General Assembly, State Board of Education and the
3325 Commissioner of Education, and which shall engage in such other
3326 activities as described in this section. On and after July 1, 2012, the
3327 advisory council shall consist of the following members: (1) Nine
3328 appointed by the Commissioner of Education, (A) six of whom shall be
3329 (i) the parents of children with disabilities, provided such children are
3330 under the age of twenty-seven, or (ii) individuals with disabilities, (B)
3331 one of whom shall be an official of the Department of Education, (C) one
3332 of whom shall be a state or local official responsible for carrying out
3333 activities under Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless
3334 Assistance Act, 42 USC 11431 et seq., as amended from time to time, and
3335 (D) one of whom shall be a representative of an institution of higher
3336 education in the state that prepares teacher and related services
3337 personnel; (2) one appointed by the Commissioner of Developmental
3338 Services who shall be an official of the department; (3) one appointed by
3339 the Commissioner of Children and Families who shall be an official of
3340 the department; (4) one appointed by the Commissioner of Correction
3341 who shall be an official of the department; (5) one appointed by the
3342 director of the Parent Leadership Training Institute within the
3343 Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity
3344 who shall be (A) the parent of a child with a disability, provided such
3345 child is under the age of twenty-seven, or (B) an individual with a
3346 disability; (6) a representative from the parent training and information
3347 center for Connecticut established pursuant to the Individuals With
3348 Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time
3349 to time; (7) the Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, or the
3350 commissioner's designee; (8) five who are members of the General
3351 Assembly who shall serve as nonvoting members of the advisory
3352 council, one appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
3353 one appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives,
3354 one appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives,

3355 one appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate and one
3356 appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; (9) one appointed by the
3357 president pro tempore of the Senate who shall be a member of the
3358 Connecticut Speech-Language-Hearing Association; (10) one appointed
3359 by the majority leader of the Senate who shall be a public school teacher;
3360 (11) one appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who shall be a
3361 representative of a vocational, community or business organization
3362 concerned with the provision of transitional services to children with
3363 disabilities; (12) one appointed by the speaker of the House of
3364 Representatives who shall be a member of the Connecticut Council of
3365 Special Education Administrators and who is a local education official;
3366 (13) one appointed by the majority leader of the House of
3367 Representatives who shall be a representative of charter schools; (14)
3368 one appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives
3369 who shall be a member of the Connecticut Association of Private Special
3370 Education Facilities; (15) one appointed by the Chief Court
3371 Administrator of the Judicial Department who shall be an official of
3372 such department responsible for the provision of services to adjudicated
3373 children and youth; (16) seven appointed by the Governor, all of whom
3374 shall be (A) the parents of children with disabilities, provided such
3375 children are under the age of twenty-seven, or (B) individuals with
3376 disabilities; (17) the executive director of the nonprofit entity designated
3377 by the Governor in accordance with section 46a-10b to serve as the
3378 Connecticut protection and advocacy system, or the executive director's
3379 designee; and (18) such other members as required by the Individuals
3380 with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from
3381 time to time, appointed by the Commissioner of Education.
3382 Appointments made pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be
3383 representative of the ethnic and racial diversity of, and the types of
3384 disabilities found in, the state population. The terms of the members of
3385 the council serving on June 8, 2010, shall expire on June 30, 2010.
3386 Appointments shall be made to the council by July 1, 2010. Members
3387 shall serve two-year terms, except that members appointed pursuant to
3388 subdivisions (1) to (3), inclusive, of this subsection whose terms
3389 commenced July 1, 2010, shall serve three-year terms and the successors

3390 to such members appointed pursuant to subdivisions (1) to (3),
3391 inclusive, of this subsection shall serve two-year terms.

3392 Sec. 99. Subsection (a) of section 10-76y of the general statutes is
3393 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3394 *2026*):

3395 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, school
3396 districts, regional educational service centers, the Department of [Aging
3397 and] Disability Services, and all other state and local governmental
3398 agencies concerned with education may loan, lease or transfer an
3399 assistive device for the use and benefit of a student with a disability to
3400 such student or the parent or guardian of such student or to any other
3401 public or private nonprofit agency providing services to or on behalf of
3402 individuals with disabilities including, but not limited to, an agency
3403 providing educational, health or rehabilitative services. Such device
3404 may be sold or transferred pursuant to this section regardless of whether
3405 the device was declared surplus. The sale or transfer shall be recorded
3406 in an agreement between the parties and based upon the depreciated
3407 value of the device. For the purposes of this section, "assistive device"
3408 means any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether
3409 acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified or customized, that is
3410 used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of
3411 individuals with disabilities.

3412 Sec. 100. Subsection (d) of section 11-1a of the general statutes is
3413 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3414 *2026*):

3415 (d) The State Library Board shall create and maintain a library service
3416 for the blind and other persons with disabilities, as provided for in 2
3417 USC Sections 135a, 135a-1 and 135b. The State Library Board shall
3418 consult with the advisory committee relating to the library for blind and
3419 physically disabled persons and the Commissioner of [Aging and]
3420 Disability Services, or the commissioner's designee, before taking any
3421 action that may diminish or substantively change the library services
3422 described in this subsection.

3423 Sec. 101. Subsection (a) of section 12-21700 of the general statutes is
3424 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3425 *2026*):

3426 (a) As used in this section:

3427 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Economic and
3428 Community Development;

3429 (2) "Employer" means a person engaged in business who has
3430 employees and who is subject to tax under this chapter or chapter 207
3431 or 229;

3432 (3) "Income year" means the income year or taxable year, as
3433 determined under this chapter or chapter 207 or 229, as the case may be;

3434 (4) "New qualifying employee" means a person who (A) is receiving
3435 vocational rehabilitation services from the Department of [Aging and]
3436 Disability Services, and (B) is hired by the employer to fill a new job after
3437 May 6, 2010, during the employer's income years commencing on or
3438 after January 1, 2010, and prior to January 1, 2012. A new qualifying
3439 employee does not include a person receiving vocational rehabilitation
3440 services pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision and who was
3441 employed in this state by a related person with respect to the employer
3442 during the prior twelve months;

3443 (5) "Related person" means (A) a corporation, limited liability
3444 company, partnership, association or trust controlled by the employer,
3445 (B) an individual, corporation, limited liability company, partnership,
3446 association or trust that is in control of the employer, (C) a corporation,
3447 limited liability company, partnership, association or trust controlled by
3448 an individual, corporation, limited liability company, partnership,
3449 association or trust that is in control of the employer, or (D) a member
3450 of the same controlled group as the employer; and

3451 (6) "Control", with respect to a corporation, means ownership,
3452 directly or indirectly, of stock possessing fifty per cent or more of the
3453 total combined voting power of all classes of the stock of such

3454 corporation entitled to vote. "Control", with respect to a trust, means
3455 ownership, directly or indirectly, of fifty per cent or more of the
3456 beneficial interest in the principal or income of such trust. The
3457 ownership of stock in a corporation, of a capital or profits interest in a
3458 partnership, limited liability company or association or of a beneficial
3459 interest in a trust shall be determined in accordance with the rules for
3460 constructive ownership of stock provided in Section 267(c) of the
3461 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
3462 internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to
3463 time, other than paragraph (3) of said Section 267(c).

3464 Sec. 102. Section 12-217pp of the general statutes is repealed and the
3465 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3466 (a) As used in this section:

3467 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Economic and
3468 Community Development;

3469 (2) "Control", with respect to a corporation, means ownership,
3470 directly or indirectly, of stock possessing fifty per cent or more of the
3471 total combined voting power of all classes of the stock of such
3472 corporation entitled to vote. "Control", with respect to a trust, means
3473 ownership, directly or indirectly, of fifty per cent or more of the
3474 beneficial interest in the principal or income of such trust. The
3475 ownership of stock in a corporation, of a capital or profits interest in a
3476 partnership, limited liability company or association or of a beneficial
3477 interest in a trust shall be determined in accordance with the rules for
3478 constructive ownership of stock provided in Section 267(c) of the
3479 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
3480 internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time
3481 amended, other than paragraph (3) of said Section 267(c);

3482 (3) "Full-time job" means a job in which an employee is required to
3483 work at least thirty-five hours per week for not less than forty-eight
3484 weeks in a calendar year. "Full-time job" does not include a temporary
3485 or seasonal job;

3486 (4) "Income year" means, with respect to entities subject to the
3487 insurance premiums tax under chapter 207, the corporation business tax
3488 under this chapter, the utility companies tax under chapter 212 or the
3489 income tax under chapter 229, the income year as determined under
3490 each of said chapters, as the case may be;

3491 (5) "New employee" means a person who resides in this state and is
3492 hired by a taxpayer on or after January 1, 2012, and prior to January 1,
3493 2014, to fill a new job. "New employee" does not include a person who
3494 was employed in this state by a related person with respect to a taxpayer
3495 during the prior twelve months;

3496 (6) "New job" means a job that did not exist in this state prior to a
3497 taxpayer's application to the commissioner for certification under this
3498 section for a job expansion tax credit, is filled by a new, qualifying or
3499 veteran employee, and (A) is a full-time job, or (B) in the case of a
3500 qualifying employee under subparagraph (B) of subdivision (7) of this
3501 subsection, is a job in which an employee is required to work at least
3502 twenty hours per week for not less than forty-eight weeks in a calendar
3503 year;

3504 (7) "Qualifying employee" means a new employee who, at the time of
3505 hiring by the taxpayer:

3506 (A) (i) Is receiving unemployment compensation, or (ii) has
3507 exhausted unemployment compensation benefits and has not had an
3508 intervening full-time job; or

3509 (B) Is (i) receiving vocational rehabilitation services from the
3510 Department of [Aging and] Disability Services, (ii) receiving
3511 employment services from the Department of Mental Health and
3512 Addiction Services, or (iii) participating in employment opportunities
3513 and day services, as defined in section 17a-226, operated or funded by
3514 the Department of Developmental Services;

3515 (8) "Related person" means (A) a corporation, limited liability
3516 company, partnership, association or trust controlled by the taxpayer,

3517 (B) an individual, corporation, limited liability company, partnership,
3518 association or trust that is in control of the taxpayer, (C) a corporation,
3519 limited liability company, partnership, association or trust controlled by
3520 an individual, corporation, limited liability company, partnership,
3521 association or trust that is in control of the taxpayer, or (D) a member of
3522 the same controlled group as the taxpayer;

3523 (9) "Taxpayer" means a person that (A) has been in business for at
3524 least twelve consecutive months prior to the date of the taxpayer's
3525 application to the commissioner for certification under this section for a
3526 job expansion tax credit, and (B) is subject to tax under this chapter or
3527 chapter 207, 212 or 229; and

3528 (10) "Veteran employee" means a new employee who, at the time of
3529 hiring by the taxpayer, is (A) a member of the armed forces, as defined
3530 in section 27-103, or (B) a veteran, as defined in section 27-103.

3531 (b) (1) There is established a job expansion tax credit program
3532 whereby a taxpayer may be allowed a credit against the tax imposed
3533 under this chapter or chapter 207, 212 or 229, other than the liability
3534 imposed by section 12-707, for each new, qualifying or veteran
3535 employee hired on or after January 1, 2012, and prior to January 1, 2014.
3536 For taxpayers that employ not more than fifty employees in full-time
3537 jobs in this state on the date of application to the commissioner for
3538 certification under this section, the creation of at least one new job in this
3539 state shall be required for said tax credit. For taxpayers that employ
3540 more than fifty, but not more than one hundred employees in full-time
3541 jobs in this state on the date of application to the commissioner for
3542 certification under this section, the creation of at least five new jobs in
3543 this state shall be required for said tax credit. For taxpayers that employ
3544 more than one hundred employees in full-time jobs in this state on the
3545 date of application to the commissioner for certification under this
3546 section, the creation of at least ten new jobs in this state shall be required
3547 for said tax credit.

3548 (2) For the purposes of determining the number of new jobs a
3549 taxpayer is required to create in order to claim a credit under this

3550 section, the number of employees working in full-time jobs the taxpayer
3551 employs in this state on the date of its application to the commissioner
3552 for certification under this section shall apply to such taxpayer for the
3553 duration of such certification.

3554 (c) The amount of the credit shall be:

3555 (1) Five hundred dollars per month for each new employee; or

3556 (2) Nine hundred dollars per month for each qualifying or veteran
3557 employee.

3558 (d) (1) The taxpayer shall claim the credit in the income year in which
3559 it is earned and, if eligible, in the two immediately succeeding income
3560 years. Any credit not claimed by the taxpayer in an income year shall
3561 expire and shall not be refundable.

3562 (2) If the taxpayer is an S corporation or an entity treated as a
3563 partnership for federal income tax purposes, the shareholders or
3564 partners of such taxpayer may claim the credit. If the taxpayer is a single
3565 member limited liability company that is disregarded as an entity
3566 separate from its owner, the limited liability company's owner may
3567 claim the credit.

3568 (3) No taxpayer shall claim a credit for any new, qualifying or veteran
3569 employee who is an owner, member or partner in the business or who
3570 is not employed by the taxpayer at the close of the taxpayer's income
3571 year.

3572 (4) No taxpayer claiming the credit under this section with respect to
3573 a new, qualifying or veteran employee shall claim any credit against any
3574 tax under any other provision of the general statutes with respect to the
3575 same new, qualifying or veteran employee.

3576 (e) (1) To be eligible to claim the credit, a taxpayer shall apply to the
3577 commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this section. The
3578 application shall be on a form provided by the commissioner and shall
3579 contain sufficient information as required by the commissioner,

3580 including, but not limited to, the activities that the taxpayer primarily
3581 engages in, the North American Industrial Classification System code of
3582 the taxpayer, the current number of employees employed by the
3583 taxpayer as of the application date, and if applicable, the name and
3584 position or job title of the new, qualifying or veteran employee. The
3585 commissioner shall consult with the Labor Commissioner, the
3586 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services, the Commissioner of
3587 Veterans Affairs, the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction
3588 Services or the Commissioner of Developmental Services, as applicable,
3589 for any verification the commissioner deems necessary of
3590 unemployment compensation or vocational rehabilitation services
3591 received by a qualifying employee, or of service in the armed forces of
3592 the United States by a veteran employee. The commissioner may impose
3593 a fee for such application as the commissioner deems appropriate.

3594 (2) (A) Upon receipt of an application, the commissioner shall render
3595 a decision, in writing, on each completed application not later than
3596 thirty days after the date of its receipt by the commissioner. If the
3597 commissioner approves such application, the commissioner shall issue
3598 a certification letter to the taxpayer indicating that the credit will be
3599 available to be claimed by the taxpayer if the taxpayer and the new,
3600 qualifying or veteran employee otherwise meet the requirements of this
3601 section.

3602 (B) On and after January 1, 2014, the commissioner shall render a
3603 decision upon such completed applications and, if approved, issue such
3604 certification letters, as provided in subparagraph (A) of this subdivision,
3605 that pertain to qualifying or veteran employees who meet the
3606 requirements of this section, and with respect to whom credits pursuant
3607 to this section have previously been granted. The commissioner may, in
3608 his or her discretion, render a decision upon applications that pertain to
3609 new employees, with respect to whom credits pursuant to this section
3610 have previously been granted, when such applications are consistent
3611 with the economic development priorities of the state.

3612 (f) (1) The total amount of credits granted under this section and

3613 sections 12-217ii, 12-217nn and 12-217oo, as amended by this act, shall
3614 not exceed twenty million dollars in any one fiscal year or forty million
3615 dollars over the duration of the job expansion tax credit program,
3616 including the two immediately succeeding income years after such
3617 credits are granted.

3618 (2) If a taxpayer was issued an eligibility certificate by the
3619 commissioner prior to January 1, 2012, to receive a jobs creation tax
3620 credit pursuant to section 12-217ii, the provisions of the tax credit
3621 program pursuant to said section 12-217ii shall apply to such taxpayer
3622 for the duration of the eligibility certificate.

3623 (3) If a taxpayer is issued a certification letter by the commissioner
3624 prior to January 1, 2013, to receive a qualified small business job creation
3625 tax credit pursuant to section 12-217nn, the provisions of the tax credit
3626 program pursuant to said section 12-217nn shall apply to such taxpayer
3627 for the duration of such certification.

3628 (4) If a taxpayer was issued a certification letter by the commissioner
3629 prior to January 1, 2012, to receive a vocational rehabilitation job
3630 creation tax credit pursuant to section 12-217oo, as amended by this act,
3631 the provisions of the tax credit program pursuant to said section 12-
3632 217oo shall apply to such taxpayer for the duration of such certification.

3633 (g) No credit allowed under this section shall exceed the amount of
3634 tax imposed on a taxpayer under this chapter or chapter 207, 212 or 229.
3635 The commissioner shall annually provide to the Commissioner of
3636 Revenue Services a list detailing all credits that have been approved and
3637 all taxpayers that have been issued a certification letter under this
3638 section.

3639 (h) No credit shall be allowed under this section for any new jobs
3640 created on or after January 1, 2014.

3641 Sec. 103. Section 14-11b of the general statutes is repealed and the
3642 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3643 (a) There shall be within the Department of [Aging and] Disability

3644 Services a unit for the purpose of evaluating and training persons with
3645 disabilities in the operation of motor vehicles. There shall be assigned to
3646 the driver training unit for persons with disabilities such staff as is
3647 necessary for the orderly administration of the driver training program
3648 for persons with disabilities. The personnel assigned to the driver
3649 training unit for persons with disabilities shall, while engaged in the
3650 evaluation or instruction of a person with disabilities, have the authority
3651 and immunities with respect to such activities as are granted under the
3652 general statutes to motor vehicle inspectors. The Commissioner of
3653 Motor Vehicles may permit a person whose license has been withdrawn
3654 as a result of a condition that makes such person eligible for evaluation
3655 and training under this section to operate a motor vehicle while
3656 accompanied by personnel assigned to the driver training unit for
3657 persons with disabilities. When a person with disabilities has
3658 successfully completed the driver training program for persons with
3659 disabilities, the Department [of Aging and] Disability Services shall
3660 certify such completion in writing to the Commissioner of Motor
3661 Vehicles and shall recommend any license restrictions or limitations to
3662 be placed on the license of such person. The Commissioner of Motor
3663 Vehicles may accept such certification in lieu of the driving skills portion
3664 of the examination prescribed under subsection (e) of section 14-36. If
3665 such person with disabilities has met all other requirements for
3666 obtaining a license, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall issue a
3667 license with such restrictions recommended by the Department of
3668 [Aging and] Disability Services.

3669 (b) Any resident of this state who has a serious physical or mental
3670 disability which does not render the resident incapable of operating a
3671 motor vehicle and who must utilize special equipment in order to
3672 operate a motor vehicle and who cannot obtain instruction in the
3673 operation of a motor vehicle through any alternate program, including,
3674 but not limited to, other state, federal or privately operated drivers'
3675 schools shall be eligible for instruction under the Department of [Aging
3676 and] Disability Services driver training program for persons with
3677 disabilities.

3678 Sec. 104. Subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 14-44 of the
3679 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3680 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3681 (2) The Department of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the
3682 Departments of [Aging and] Disability Services, Developmental
3683 Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services and Social Services,
3684 shall develop, and thereafter revise as needed, a video presentation
3685 providing instruction and best practices concerning ways to
3686 appropriately interact with disabled persons who may be receiving
3687 services from the departments. In developing such video presentation,
3688 the departments may use materials and one or more video presentations
3689 developed by a governmental entity, independent contractor or any
3690 other party. The departments shall post such video presentation and
3691 any other training resources concerning ways to appropriately interact
3692 with persons with an intellectual disability or other developmental
3693 disabilities in a conspicuous location on their respective Internet web
3694 sites. On and after January 1, 2024, prior to issuing or renewing an
3695 operator's license bearing a public passenger endorsement, the
3696 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall require the applicant for such
3697 license to watch such video presentation.

3698 Sec. 105. Subsection (b) of section 14-253a of the general statutes is
3699 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3700 *2026*):

3701 (b) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall accept applications
3702 and renewal applications for removable windshield placards from (1)
3703 any person who is blind, as defined in section 1-1f; (2) any person with
3704 disabilities; (3) any parent or guardian of any person who is blind or any
3705 person with disabilities, if such person is under eighteen years of age at
3706 the time of application; (4) any parent or guardian of any person who is
3707 blind or any person with disabilities, if such person is unable to request
3708 or complete an application; and (5) any organization which meets
3709 criteria established by the commissioner and which certifies to the
3710 commissioner's satisfaction that the vehicle for which a placard is

3711 requested is primarily used to transport persons who are blind or
3712 persons with disabilities. Except as provided in subsection (c) of this
3713 section, on and after October 1, 2011, the commissioner shall not accept
3714 applications for special license plates, but shall accept renewal
3715 applications for such plates that were issued prior to October 1, 2011.
3716 No person shall be issued a placard in accordance with this section
3717 unless such person is the holder of a valid motor vehicle operator's
3718 license, or identification card issued in accordance with the provisions
3719 of section 1-1h. The commissioner may adopt regulations, in accordance
3720 with the provisions of chapter 54, for the issuance of placards to persons
3721 who, by reason of hardship, do not hold or cannot obtain an operator's
3722 license or identification card. The commissioner shall maintain a record
3723 of each placard issued to any such person. Such applications and
3724 renewal applications shall be on a form prescribed by the commissioner.
3725 The application and renewal application shall include: (A) Certification
3726 by a licensed physician, a licensed physician assistant, an advanced
3727 practice registered nurse licensed in accordance with the provisions of
3728 chapter 378, or a member of the driver training unit for persons with
3729 disabilities established pursuant to section 14-11b, as amended by this
3730 act, that the applicant meets the definition of a person with a disability
3731 which limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23 CFR 1235.2,
3732 as amended from time to time; or (B) certification by a psychiatrist who
3733 is employed by, or under contract with, the United States Department
3734 of Veterans Affairs that the applicant (i) is a veteran, as defined in
3735 subsection (a) of section 27-103, who has post-traumatic stress disorder
3736 certified as service-connected by the United States Department of
3737 Veterans Affairs, and (ii) meets the definition of a person with a
3738 disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23
3739 CFR 1235.2, as amended from time to time. In the case of persons who
3740 are blind, the application or renewal application shall include
3741 certification of legal blindness made by the Department of [Aging and]
3742 Disability Services, an ophthalmologist or an optometrist. Any
3743 certification issued by a health care professional pursuant to this section
3744 shall be based upon such person's professional opinion after having
3745 completed a medically reasonable assessment of the applicant's medical

3746 history and current medical condition made in the course of a bona fide
3747 health care professional-patient relationship. Any person who makes a
3748 certification required by this subsection shall sign the application or
3749 renewal application under penalty of false statement pursuant to section
3750 53a-157b. The commissioner, in said commissioner's discretion, may
3751 accept the discharge papers of a disabled veteran, as defined in section
3752 14-254, in lieu of such certification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
3753 may require additional certification at the time of the original
3754 application or at any time thereafter. If a person who has been requested
3755 to submit additional certification fails to do so within thirty days of the
3756 request, or if such additional certification is deemed by the
3757 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to be unfavorable to the applicant, the
3758 commissioner may refuse to issue or, if already issued, suspend or
3759 revoke such special license plate or placard. The commissioner shall not
3760 issue more than one placard per applicant, except the commissioner
3761 shall issue one placard to each applicant who is a parent or guardian of
3762 any person who is blind or any person with disabilities, provided no
3763 more than two such placards shall be issued on behalf of such person.
3764 The fee for the issuance of a temporary removable windshield placard
3765 shall be five dollars. Any person whose application has been denied or
3766 whose special license plate or placard has been suspended or revoked
3767 shall be afforded an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the
3768 provisions of chapter 54.

3769 Sec. 106. Subsection (b) of section 14-253c of the general statutes is
3770 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3771 *2026*):

3772 (b) The advisory council shall consist of (1) the Commissioner of
3773 Motor Vehicles or the commissioner's designee, (2) the Commissioner of
3774 [Aging and] Disability Services or the commissioner's designee, (3) two
3775 members appointed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, who are
3776 licensed physicians, physician assistants or advanced practice registered
3777 nurses who certify applications for removable windshield placards
3778 while in the course of employment, (4) one member appointed by the
3779 Commissioner of [Aging and] Disability Services who represents an

3780 organization that advocates on behalf of persons with physical
3781 disabilities, (5) one appointed by the House chairperson of the joint
3782 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
3783 matters relating to transportation, (6) one appointed by the Senate
3784 chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
3785 having cognizance of matters relating to transportation, who uses
3786 accessible parking or advocates on behalf of such users, (7) one
3787 appointed by the House ranking member of the joint standing
3788 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
3789 relating to transportation, who uses accessible parking or advocates on
3790 behalf of such users, (8) one appointed by the Senate ranking member
3791 of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
3792 cognizance of matters relating to transportation, who is a sworn
3793 member of a municipal police department, and (9) and such other
3794 members as the advisory council may prescribe. All initial
3795 appointments to the advisory council shall be made not later than
3796 September 1, 2023. Each member appointed pursuant to subdivisions (3)
3797 to (9), inclusive, of this subsection shall serve for a term of two years and
3798 may serve until such member's successor is appointed. Any vacancy
3799 shall be filled by the appointing authority. The Commissioner of Motor
3800 Vehicles, or the commissioner's designee, shall serve as chairperson of
3801 the advisory council. The advisory council shall meet at such times as it
3802 deems necessary and may establish rules governing its internal
3803 procedures.

3804 Sec. 107. Subsection (d) of section 17a-3 of the general statutes is
3805 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3806 *2026*):

3807 (d) The Department of Children and Families shall maintain on the
3808 department's Internet web site information on services provided to
3809 persons with disabilities. The department's Internet web site shall
3810 include a link to the Internet web page maintained by the Department
3811 of [Aging and] Disability Services pursuant to section 46a-33a,
3812 containing information about services for deaf, deafblind and hard of
3813 hearing individuals.

3814 Sec. 108. Subsection (a) of section 17a-215j of the general statutes is
3815 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3816 *2026*):

3817 (a) There shall be an Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council
3818 which shall consist of the following members: (1) The Commissioner of
3819 Social Services, or the commissioner's designee; (2) the Commissioner of
3820 Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee; (3) the
3821 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; (4) the
3822 Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or the
3823 commissioner's designee; (5) the Commissioner of Public Health, or the
3824 commissioner's designee; (6) the Commissioner of [Aging and]
3825 Disability Services, or the commissioner's designee; (7) the
3826 Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's
3827 designee; (8) the Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the
3828 commissioner's designee; (9) the Secretary of the Office of Policy and
3829 Management, or the secretary's designee; (10) two persons with autism
3830 spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the Governor and the speaker
3831 of the House of Representatives; (11) two persons who are parents or
3832 guardians of a child with autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed
3833 by the Governor and the minority leader of the Senate; (12) two persons
3834 who are parents or guardians of an adult with autism spectrum
3835 disorder, one each appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate
3836 and the majority leader of the House of Representatives; (13) two
3837 persons who are advocates for persons with autism spectrum disorder,
3838 one each appointed by the Governor and the speaker of the House of
3839 Representatives; (14) two persons who are licensed professionals
3840 working in the field of autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed
3841 by the Governor and the majority leader of the Senate; (15) two persons
3842 who provide services for persons with autism spectrum disorder, one
3843 each appointed by the Governor and the minority leader of the House
3844 of Representatives; (16) two persons who shall be representatives of an
3845 institution of higher education in the state with experience in the field
3846 of autism spectrum disorder, one each appointed by the Governor and
3847 the president pro tempore of the Senate; (17) the executive director of
3848 the nonprofit entity designated by the Governor in accordance with

3849 section 46a-10b to serve as the Connecticut protection and advocacy
3850 system for persons with disabilities, or the executive director's designee;
3851 and (18) one person who is a physician who treats or diagnoses persons
3852 with autism spectrum disorder, appointed by the Governor.

3853 Sec. 109. Section 17a-248 of the general statutes is repealed and the
3854 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

3855 As used in this section, sections 17a-248b to 17a-248g, inclusive, 17a-
3856 248m, 38a-490a and 38a-516a, unless the context otherwise requires:

3857 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Early Childhood.

3858 (2) "Council" means the State Interagency Birth-to-Three
3859 Coordinating Council established pursuant to section 17a-248b.

3860 (3) "Early intervention services" means early intervention services, as
3861 defined in 34 CFR Part 303.13, as from time to time amended.

3862 (4) "Eligible children" means children (A) (i) from birth to thirty-six
3863 months of age, who are not eligible for special education and related
3864 services pursuant to sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive, and (ii) thirty-
3865 six months of age or older, who are receiving early intervention services
3866 and are eligible or being evaluated for participation in preschool
3867 services pursuant to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities
3868 Education Act, 20 USC 1411 et seq., until such children are enrolled in
3869 such preschool services, and (B) who need early intervention services
3870 because such children are:

3871 (i) Experiencing a significant developmental delay as measured by
3872 standardized diagnostic instruments and procedures, including
3873 informed clinical opinion, in one or more of the following areas:
3874 Cognitive development; physical development, including vision or
3875 hearing; communication development; social or emotional
3876 development; or adaptive skills; or

3877 (ii) Diagnosed as having a physical or mental condition that has a
3878 high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

3879 (5) "Evaluation" means a multidisciplinary professional, objective
3880 assessment conducted by appropriately qualified personnel in order to
3881 determine a child's eligibility for early intervention services.

3882 (6) "Individualized family service plan" means a written plan for
3883 providing early intervention services to an eligible child and the child's
3884 family.

3885 (7) "Lead agency" means the Office of Early Childhood, the public
3886 agency responsible for the administration of the birth-to-three system in
3887 collaboration with the participating agencies.

3888 (8) "Parent" means (A) a biological, adoptive or foster parent of a
3889 child; (B) a guardian, except for the Commissioner of Children and
3890 Families; (C) an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive
3891 parent, including, but not limited to, a grandparent, stepparent, or other
3892 relative with whom the child lives; (D) an individual who is legally
3893 responsible for the child's welfare; or (E) an individual appointed to be
3894 a surrogate parent.

3895 (9) "Participating agencies" includes, but is not limited to, the
3896 Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, Children and
3897 Families and Developmental Services, the Office of Early Childhood, the
3898 Insurance Department and the Department of [Aging and] Disability
3899 Services.

3900 (10) "Qualified personnel" means persons who meet the standards
3901 specified in 34 CFR Part 303.31, as from time to time amended, and who
3902 are licensed physicians or psychologists or persons holding a state-
3903 approved or recognized license, certificate or registration in one or more
3904 of the following fields: (A) Special education, including teaching of the
3905 blind and the deaf; (B) speech and language pathology and audiology;
3906 (C) occupational therapy; (D) physical therapy; (E) social work; (F)
3907 nursing; (G) dietary or nutritional counseling; and (H) other fields
3908 designated by the commissioner that meet requirements that apply to
3909 the area in which the person is providing early intervention services,
3910 provided there is no conflict with existing professional licensing,

3911 certification and registration requirements.

3912 (11) "Service coordinator" means a person carrying out service
3913 coordination services, as defined in 34 CFR Part 303.34, as from time to
3914 time amended.

3915 (12) "Primary care provider" means physicians and advanced practice
3916 registered nurses, licensed by the Department of Public Health, who are
3917 responsible for performing or directly supervising the primary care
3918 services for children enrolled in the birth-to-three program.

3919 Sec. 110. Subsection (e) of section 17a-451 of the general statutes is
3920 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3921 *2026*):

3922 (e) The commissioner shall collaborate and cooperate with other state
3923 agencies providing services for children with mental disorders and
3924 adults with psychiatric disabilities or persons with substance use
3925 disorders, or both, and shall coordinate the activities of the Department
3926 of Mental Health and Addiction Services with the activities of said
3927 agencies. The commissioner shall maintain on the department's Internet
3928 web site information on services provided to persons with disabilities.
3929 The department's Internet web site shall include a link to the Internet
3930 web page maintained by the Department of [Aging and] Disability
3931 Services pursuant to section 46a-33a containing information about
3932 services for deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals.

3933 Sec. 111. Subsection (b) of section 17a-667 of the general statutes is
3934 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3935 *2026*):

3936 (b) The council shall consist of the following members: (1) The
3937 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's
3938 designee; (2) the Commissioners of Children and Families, Consumer
3939 Protection, Correction, Education, Mental Health and Addiction
3940 Services, Public Health, Emergency Services and Public Protection,
3941 [Aging and] Disability Services and Social Services, the Commissioner

3942 on Aging and the Insurance Commissioner, or their designees; (3) the
 3943 Chief Court Administrator, or the Chief Court Administrator's
 3944 designee; (4) the chairperson of the Board of Regents for Higher
 3945 Education, or the chairperson's designee; (5) the president of The
 3946 University of Connecticut, or the president's designee; (6) the Chief
 3947 State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's designee; (7) the Chief
 3948 Public Defender, or the Chief Public Defender's designee; (8) the Child
 3949 Advocate, or the Child Advocate's designee; and (9) the cochairpersons
 3950 and ranking members of the joint standing committees of the General
 3951 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public health,
 3952 criminal justice and appropriations, or their designees. The
 3953 Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the
 3954 Commissioner of Children and Families shall be cochairpersons of the
 3955 council and may jointly appoint up to seven individuals to the council
 3956 as follows: (A) Two individuals in recovery from a substance use
 3957 disorder or representing an advocacy group for individuals with a
 3958 substance use disorder; (B) a provider of community-based substance
 3959 abuse services for adults; (C) a provider of community-based substance
 3960 abuse services for adolescents; (D) an addiction medicine physician; (E)
 3961 a family member of an individual in recovery from a substance use
 3962 disorder; and (F) an emergency medicine physician currently practicing
 3963 in a Connecticut hospital. The cochairpersons of the council may
 3964 establish subcommittees and working groups and may appoint
 3965 individuals other than members of the council to serve as members of
 3966 the subcommittees or working groups. Such individuals may include,
 3967 but need not be limited to: (i) Licensed alcohol and drug counselors; (ii)
 3968 pharmacists; (iii) municipal police chiefs; (iv) emergency medical
 3969 services personnel; and (v) representatives of organizations that provide
 3970 education, prevention, intervention, referrals, rehabilitation or support
 3971 services to individuals with substance use disorder or chemical
 3972 dependency.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | July 1, 2026 | New section |

| | | |
|---------|--------------|------------|
| Sec. 2 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-780 |
| Sec. 3 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-782 |
| Sec. 4 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-783 |
| Sec. 5 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-784 |
| Sec. 6 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-785 |
| Sec. 7 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-786 |
| Sec. 8 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-787 |
| Sec. 9 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-788 |
| Sec. 10 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-791 |
| Sec. 11 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-791a |
| Sec. 12 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-793 |
| Sec. 13 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-794 |
| Sec. 14 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-795 |
| Sec. 15 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-797 |
| Sec. 16 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-798 |
| Sec. 17 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-799 |
| Sec. 18 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-810(b) |
| Sec. 19 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-812 |
| Sec. 20 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-813 |
| Sec. 21 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-814 |
| Sec. 22 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-815 |
| Sec. 23 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-816 |
| Sec. 24 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-818 |
| Sec. 25 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-819 |
| Sec. 26 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-820 |
| Sec. 27 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-821 |
| Sec. 28 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-822 |
| Sec. 29 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-823 |
| Sec. 30 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-824 |
| Sec. 31 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-825 |
| Sec. 32 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-835 |
| Sec. 33 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-835a |
| Sec. 34 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-836(2) |
| Sec. 35 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-837(a) |
| Sec. 36 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-838 |
| Sec. 37 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-839 |
| Sec. 38 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-839a |
| Sec. 39 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-850 |
| Sec. 40 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-851 |
| Sec. 41 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-852(a) |
| Sec. 42 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-852a |

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| Sec. 43 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-853 |
| Sec. 44 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-854 |
| Sec. 45 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-855 |
| Sec. 46 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-856 |
| Sec. 47 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-857 |
| Sec. 48 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-858(a) |
| Sec. 49 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-859 |
| Sec. 50 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-860(b) |
| Sec. 51 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-862 |
| Sec. 52 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-870 |
| Sec. 53 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-872 |
| Sec. 54 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-876(c) |
| Sec. 55 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-879 |
| Sec. 56 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-880 |
| Sec. 57 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-885(c) |
| Sec. 58 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-4(b) |
| Sec. 59 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-28(c) |
| Sec. 60 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-90(b) |
| Sec. 61 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-337(c) |
| Sec. 62 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-352 |
| Sec. 63 | July 1, 2026 | 17b-606 |
| Sec. 64 | July 1, 2026 | 21a-3a |
| Sec. 65 | July 1, 2026 | 23-15c |
| Sec. 66 | July 1, 2026 | 26-29 |
| Sec. 67 | July 1, 2026 | 31-3i(a) |
| Sec. 68 | July 1, 2026 | 31-280(d) |
| Sec. 69 | July 1, 2026 | 31-283a |
| Sec. 70 | July 1, 2026 | 31-296(a) |
| Sec. 71 | July 1, 2026 | 31-300 |
| Sec. 72 | July 1, 2026 | 31-345(b)(2) |
| Sec. 73 | July 1, 2026 | 31-349b(a) |
| Sec. 74 | July 1, 2026 | 32-7t(c)(4) |
| Sec. 75 | July 1, 2026 | 38a-47(a) |
| Sec. 76 | July 1, 2026 | 38a-48 |
| Sec. 77 | July 1, 2026 | 38a-475 |
| Sec. 78 | July 1, 2026 | 42-339 |
| Sec. 79 | July 1, 2026 | 3-123aa(c) |
| Sec. 80 | July 1, 2026 | 4-5 |
| Sec. 81 | July 1, 2026 | 4-38c |
| Sec. 82 | July 1, 2026 | 4-61aa(a) |
| Sec. 83 | July 1, 2026 | 4-67cc |

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| Sec. 84 | July 1, 2026 | 4-89(g) |
| Sec. 85 | July 1, 2026 | 4-124xx |
| Sec. 86 | July 1, 2026 | 4a-82 |
| Sec. 87 | July 1, 2026 | 5-175a(a) |
| Sec. 88 | July 1, 2026 | 5-198 |
| Sec. 89 | July 1, 2026 | 5-259(e) |
| Sec. 90 | July 1, 2026 | 7-127b |
| Sec. 91 | July 1, 2026 | 8-119f |
| Sec. 92 | July 1, 2026 | 9-20(c) |
| Sec. 93 | July 1, 2026 | 10-74m |
| Sec. 94 | July 1, 2026 | 10-74n(a) |
| Sec. 95 | July 1, 2026 | 10-74q(a) |
| Sec. 96 | July 1, 2026 | 10-74t |
| Sec. 97 | July 1, 2026 | 10-76d(a)(9)(A) |
| Sec. 98 | July 1, 2026 | 10-76i(a) |
| Sec. 99 | July 1, 2026 | 10-76y(a) |
| Sec. 100 | July 1, 2026 | 11-1a(d) |
| Sec. 101 | July 1, 2026 | 12-217oo(a) |
| Sec. 102 | July 1, 2026 | 12-217pp |
| Sec. 103 | July 1, 2026 | 14-11b |
| Sec. 104 | July 1, 2026 | 14-44(b)(2) |
| Sec. 105 | July 1, 2026 | 14-253a(b) |
| Sec. 106 | July 1, 2026 | 14-253c(b) |
| Sec. 107 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-3(d) |
| Sec. 108 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-215j(a) |
| Sec. 109 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-248 |
| Sec. 110 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-451(e) |
| Sec. 111 | July 1, 2026 | 17a-667(b) |

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 76, the introductory language was updated for accuracy.

HS *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

| Agency Affected | Fund-Effect | FY 26 \$ | FY 27 \$ |
|--|-------------|----------|----------|
| Resources of the General Fund | GF - Cost | None | 735,000 |
| State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹ | GF - Cost | None | 357,000 |

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill creates a Department on Aging (AGE) and renames the Department of Aging and Disability Services the Department of Disability Services (ADS), which results in the following fiscal impacts.

The creation of AGE results in a cost to the General Fund of an estimated \$700,000 beginning in FY 27 to hire administrative staff for the new agency, as well as a cost of \$357,000 beginning in FY 27 to the State Comptroller in fringe benefits. An estimated eight new positions² are required to support the activities of AGE. ADS will not require new staff as required administrative staff will remain with the agency.

The bill results in an additional cost of \$35,000 in FY 27 to cover costs

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

²The eight positions consist of a Commissioner, Executive Secretary, Legislative & Administrative Advisor 1, Fiscal Administrative Manager 1, Associate Accountant, Fiscal Administrative Assistant, Grants and Contract Specialist, and Payroll Clerk.

related to agency marketing and outreach, as well as a leased vehicle for AGE.

It is anticipated that 31 positions and approximately \$3 million in personal service costs will transfer from ADS to AGE in FY 27 to align with agency responsibilities, which will not have a net fiscal impact. This assumes that there are no additional costs associated with the transfer of programs and personnel related to the activities of AGE.

The bill also makes numerous technical changes in statutory references to the Department of Aging and Disability Services, which do not have a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1158*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEPARTMENT ON AGING.*****SUMMARY**

This bill establishes a Department on Aging and transfers powers and duties related to providing services to older people (age 62 and older) and their families from the current Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) to the new department. The bill renames ADS as the "Department of Disability Services."

To transfer provisions on older people from ADS to the new department, the bill:

1. designates the new department as the State Unit on Aging under the federal Older Americans Act;
2. requires the new department to study older people's needs (e.g., nutrition, transportation, and home care);
3. requires the new department to administer a comprehensive and integrated social service delivery system for older people;
4. designates the new department as the state agency for various programs serving older people (e.g., the elderly nutrition program);
5. transfers the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman from ADS to the new department.

The bill transfers ADS personnel, functions, duties, and powers related to the above topics to the new department and makes the new department a successor department to ADS for these programs. Under

the bill, ADS regulations on aging topics remain in force as the new department's regulations until final regulations are effective. Similarly, the bill requires ADS regulations on disability topics to remain in force as the Department of Disability Service's regulations. The bill authorizes the governor to transfer funds between ADS and the new department, with the Finance Advisory Committee's approval.

The bill establishes a commissioner on aging to supervise the new department as a full-time position appointed by the governor. It requires the commissioner to have experience and knowledge of older people's needs and grants the commissioner powers and duties applicable to department heads. The bill reassigns the ADS commissioner's duties on various existing councils and working groups between the new aging commissioner and the renamed disability services commissioner, depending on subject matter. Under the bill, both the aging commissioner and the disability services commissioner are department heads and both departments are executive branch departments. The bill also expands the membership of certain councils to include both the aging commissioner and the disability services commissioner.

Lastly, the bill makes conforming changes throughout the statutes and technical changes to remove obsolete provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

COMMISSIONER ON AGING

The bill establishes a commissioner on aging to supervise the new department and requires the governor to appoint the commissioner under existing laws on department heads. These laws generally require the governor to submit department head nominees to the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee to be approved by either the House or Senate.

Powers and Duties

The bill requires the commissioner to administer all laws under the new department's jurisdiction and employ the most efficient and

practical means to provide care for and protect older people. The bill gives the aging commissioner the following powers and duties to achieve the department's purposes:

1. administer, coordinate, and direct the department's operation;
2. adopt and enforce regulations;
3. set rules for the department's internal operation and administration;
4. establish and develop programs and administer services;
5. contract for facilities, services, and programs;
6. act as an advocate for needed additional comprehensive and coordinated programs for older people;
7. help and advise all appropriate state, federal, local, and area planning agencies for older people perform their functions and duties as required by federal laws and regulations;
8. plan services and programs for older people;
9. coordinate outreach activities by public and private agencies serving older people, including area agencies on aging; and
10. consult and cooperate with area and private planning agencies.

The bill also requires the aging commissioner to appoint the state ombudsman, who heads the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, when the position becomes vacant.

DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY FOR VARIOUS PROGRAMS

The bill transfers to the new Department on Aging the statutory authority and framework to implement policies and programs that serve older people and are currently assigned to ADS. It does so mainly by replacing ADS with the new Department on Aging as the state agency for the following aging programs and activities:

1. state responsibilities under the federal Older Americans Act;
2. nutrition programs for elderly people;
3. fall prevention programs;
4. the CHOICES program, which provides free information and assistance related to health insurance issues;
5. the Aging and Disability Resource Center Program; and
6. the Alzheimer's Respite Program.

The bill makes the Department on Aging a successor department to ADS for services, duties, and functions related to services for older people.

The bill requires the Department on Aging, rather than ADS, to continuously study needs and conditions of older people in the state concerning nutrition, transportation, home care, housing, income, employment, health, recreation, and other matters. It makes the Department on Aging, rather than ADS, responsible for planning, developing, and administering a comprehensive and integrated social service delivery system for older people, in cooperation with federal, state, and local area agencies on aging.

The bill makes conforming changes, replacing ADS with the Department on Aging in laws on programs for older people. It similarly replaces ADS with the Department on Aging in laws that:

1. allow the Department of Social Services to adopt regulations, in conjunction with the department, on nursing home financial solvency and quality of care (§ 58); and
2. require the department to publish informational letters to be issued when a facility petitions for closure (§ 62).

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY SERVICES

Under the bill, the renamed Department of Disability Services retains ADS's responsibilities for programs serving people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, people who are blind or visually impaired, and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. The bill makes the Department of Disability Services a successor authority to ADS with respect to these programs and services. The bill makes conforming changes throughout the statutes, renaming the department and removing references to programs and services for older people.

RESOURCE AND PERSONNEL TRANSFER

The bill transfers ADS's functions, powers, duties, and personnel related to services and programs for older people to the new Department on Aging. It does so in keeping with a process established in existing law for transferring an agency's duties to a successor agency. Among other things, this law addresses pending actions and proceedings, completion of unfinished business, records and property, federal aid, and state appropriations. Under existing law if the duties of any employee relate to functions that are divided and assigned to two or more departments, the department heads must determine where the employee is assigned and, if they cannot agree, the governor decides.

The bill also authorizes the governor, subject to the Finance Advisory Committee's approval, to transfer funds between ADS and the Department on Aging during FY 27.

REGULATIONS AND ORDERS

Under the bill, any ADS regulation or order related to programs and services for older people in force on July 1, 2026, must continue in force and effect as a Department on Aging regulation or order until it is amended, repealed, or superseded. The bill allows the new aging commissioner to implement policies and procedures while in the process of adopting regulations as long as the commissioner's intention to adopt regulations is posted on the department's website and on the eRegulations system within 20 days after implementing the policies or procedures, which are valid until the final regulations are effective.

The bill establishes the same requirements for ADS regulations and orders related to programs and services for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, people who are blind or visually impaired, and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities continuing in force as Department of Disability Services regulations or orders.

APPOINTMENTS AND CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

For most council, commission, board, and other appointments, the bill replaces the ADS commissioner with the disability services commissioner, with some exceptions. The bill replaces the ADS commissioner with the aging commissioner on the:

1. Medical Assistance Program Oversight Committee (§ 59),
2. Long-Term Care Planning Committee (§ 61), and
3. Connecticut Homecare Program for the Elderly Advisory Committee (§ 79).

The bill replaces (1) ADS with both departments in laws that require the Chief Workforce Officer to plan for and establish a Human Services Career Pipeline Program (§ 85) and (2) the ADS commissioner with both the aging and disability services commissioners on the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council (§ 111).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable
 Yea 16 Nay 7 (03/04/2025)