

# Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1113  
AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN THE  
**Title:** STATE.  
**Vote Date:** 2/4/2025  
**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable  
**PH Date:** 1/30/2025  
**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

There are many unfilled jobs in Connecticut's workforce and a lack of understanding as to why or how to fill the open jobs best and most efficiently. This bill would create a study looking into why so many jobs are unfilled, how to develop the workforce to fill those jobs, and benefit the economy by filling those jobs.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Connecticut State Colleges & Universities, Chancellor, Terrence Cheng](#): Claims that as a system serving over 65,000 students annually across the state, CSCU is uniquely positioned to address the state's workforce needs. They believe it is possible to leverage data gathered from the Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN) to provide critical insights into student pathways, workforce outcomes, and the alignment of academic programs with industry needs and by integrating this data, a study can be done to highlight gaps in education-to-employment pipelines, particularly in underrepresented or high-demand fields and inform strategies for strengthening partnerships between education systems and employers.

[Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity, Legislative Analyst, Werner Oyanadel](#): Supports. States that workforce development plays a critical role in fostering economic mobility, especially for Connecticut's growing Latino population and other underserved communities. Believes that educational and skills gaps prevent many from accessing high-paying jobs, while limited English proficiency and a lack of bilingual workforce development programs create additional challenges. Believes that by conducting this study,

Connecticut will be in a stronger position to expand access to workforce credentialing programs, align job training initiatives with industry demands, and strengthen bilingual workforce development opportunities.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Connecticut General Assembly, State Senator, Jeff Gordon](#): States that as a state senator and physician, he can see firsthand the need for workforce development particularly in the healthcare sector. States that rural Connecticut has an especially dire shortage that patients are suffering from by waiting longer for appointments, traveling farther for care and face unnecessary complications due to delayed access. Cites the following data from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: Connecticut faces 91 federally designated Health Professional Shortage Areas: 42 for mental health, 46 for primary care, and 41 for dental services. Nursing shortages are not due to a lack of interest. Over 8,000 qualified applicants were denied admission to Connecticut nursing schools in 2020 because of limited clinical placements and teaching faculty. The pandemic exacerbated an already fragile system. Connecticut must add 7,000 healthcare workers per year to meet demand, including nurses, technicians, and behavioral health professionals. Suggests that Senate Bill 260, an act establishing a loan forgiveness program and a tuition payment program for certain health care professionals who work in rural or other underserved area or in a field with a workforce shortage, addresses this.

[Connecticut Hospital Association](#): States that Connecticut's current system is not training or attracting enough individuals interested in healthcare careers that are in demand.

[Connecticut Conference of Municipalities](#): Urges legislature to conduct study with their provisions provided in their Young People First Plan.

[Connecticut Business and Industry Association, Public Policy Associate, Jenna Grasso](#): Claims that 75,000 job openings across the state and a significant wave of impending retirements, businesses are emphasizing the demand for young skilled workers. They believe that as employers continue to express the need for young talent, it is increasingly crucial to identify effective, sustainable policy solutions and that developing workforce pipelines can create new career opportunities for Connecticut residents and help employers attract workers essential to bridging the gap as their current workforce reaches retirement age. They state that this study would provide valuable insight into the most efficient approaches for connecting young people to job openings, help foster economic growth and improve the quality of life for residents.

[Hartford Foundation for Public Giving](#): They believe there is a critical need to support residents in building basic and professional skills while providing wraparound supports needed to be successful. They cite that in Connecticut, there are approximately 44,800 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 not in school or working which represents more than ten percent of the young people including 12.8 percent of all Connecticut Black youth, 10.3 percent of Latine youth, and nine percent of white youth. They state that in Hartford, young men of color are disproportionately more likely to be disconnected from education and employment. They believe this proposed study report could provide meaningful guidance to

ensuring that workforce education programs align with existing and future job opportunities in Connecticut and provide adequate career orientations.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

[Roger Davis](#): Opposes.

**Reported by: Megan Villanova**

**Date: 2/21/2025**