
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 7066

Emergency Certification

AN ACT CONCERNING INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES, THE PURCHASE AND OPERATION OF CERTAIN DRONES, GRANTS TO CERTAIN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, AND STUDENT ATHLETE COMPENSATION THROUGH ENDORSEMENT CONTRACTS AND REVENUE SHARING AGREEMENTS.

SUMMARY

This bill makes changes related to (1) procedures for interactions between school personnel and immigration authorities; (2) unmanned aircraft (i.e., drone) purchase and operation; and (3) student athlete compensation.

The bill requires (1) public school superintendents to designate at least one administrator at each school to be responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities and (2) boards of education to update their school security and safety plans with procedures on interacting with immigration authorities. It also provides school staff with protection against discipline for following the bill's provisions (§§ 1-4).

Regarding drones, the bill generally prohibits, beginning on varying dates, state agencies, municipalities, and those who contract with either from purchasing or using certain drones assembled or manufactured by a covered foreign entity (e.g., China or Russia) (§ 5). It also prohibits, with certain exceptions, (1) operating drones in close proximity to critical infrastructure facilities or to surveil these facilities or (2) equipping an aircraft or drone with a deadly weapon or certain other dangerous devices (§§ 6-8).

Regarding student athletes, the bill (1) allows student athletes to receive compensation through endorsement contracts for use of their

person, name, image, or likeness (NIL) or employment unrelated to an intercollegiate athletic program, and obtain representation, once they have agreed to attend a higher education institution and participate in sports, instead of only once they are enrolled and participating and (2) authorizes a higher education institution, or an entity acting on its behalf, to compensate a student athlete through an endorsement contract or a revenue sharing agreement under a policy adopted by the institution (§§ 12 & 13).

The bill also makes several changes to FY 25 appropriations (§§ 9-11, see fiscal note) and various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Various, see below.

§§ 1-4 — INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES

The bill requires each public school superintendent to designate at least one administrator at each school in the school district to be responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities who appear in person at the school or contact the school to request information. This same requirement also applies to each regional educational services center (RESC), charter school governing authority, and endowed academy designated as a public high school regarding the schools under each of their respective jurisdictions.

It also requires all local and regional boards of education (i.e., “school boards”) to update their school security and safety plans for each school to include protocols for interacting with immigration authorities that are in line with guidance from the State Department of Education (SDE). The bill specifically refers to the guidance SDE issued on January 28, 2025, which among other things, recommends each school district designate at least one administrator to be responsible for interacting with immigration authorities.

The bill requires the designated administrator to implement the updated security and safety plan protocols when they interact with immigration authorities. The bill defines these authorities as officers or employees of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement or

the Department of Homeland Security, or people paid by or acting as their agents, who are charged with civil enforcement of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The bill also prohibits a school board, RESC, charter school authority, or endowed academy from disciplining, suspending, terminating, or otherwise punishing an employee or an administrator, designated under the bill, for implementing the updated school security and safety plan relating to staff interacting with an immigration authority.

Finally, within seven days of the bill's enactment the education commissioner must notify all public school authorities listed above of its contents.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage (except a conforming change, § 3, is effective July 1, 2025).

Updated School Security and Safety Plan

The bill requires all school boards to update, for the 2024-25 school year (the current year), their school security and safety plans to cover protocols for interacting with federal immigration authorities. Schools must base these protocols on the recent SDE guidance regarding immigration authorities interacting with public schools (i.e., "Guidance to K-12 Public Schools Pertaining to Immigration Activities," issued January 28, 2025). Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, these plans must cover each school in the district and also be based on the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP)-developed security and safety plan standards (see *Background – School Security and Safety Plans*).

The bill specifically requires school boards to do the following in the plans:

1. designate at least one administrator at each school to serve as the individual responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities;
2. specify that this administrator, or any other school employee,

may request certain information from the immigration authorities or take certain other actions (see below); and

3. permit other school personnel to direct immigration authorities to the designated administrator if they request access to records, information, the school building interior, or other school personnel to communicate with.

Actions Staff May Take. The bill details the following actions that the designated administrator or any other school employee may take:

1. request and record a federal immigration authority's identification, including the name, badge or identification number, telephone number, and business card;
2. ask the immigration authority if he or she has a judicial warrant to support the authority's request and, if so, to show the warrant;
3. review warrants or other materials that the authority provides to determine who issued the warrant and what it or the other material authorizes the authority to do; and
4. consult with the school district's legal counsel (or legal counsel's guidance) on how to interact with the immigration authority regarding the request's nature, whether a warrant is produced, the warrant's details (including whether it is a judicial warrant or an administrative warrant), whether the immigration authority is claiming exigent circumstances, and any other consideration the legal counsel has identified.

Protections for Staff

The bill prohibits a school board, RESC, charter school authority, or endowed academy from disciplining, suspending, terminating, or otherwise punishing an employee or an administrator, designated under the bill, for implementing the updated school security and safety plan relating to staff interacting with an immigration authority.

This protection specifically applies to staff (1) taking any of the

permitted actions listed above and (2) directing the immigration authority to communicate with the designated administrator.

School Security and Safety Committee

Under current law, the school security and safety committee at each school must include one administrator. The bill instead requires that the administrator designated to interact with immigration authorities serve on the committee. By law, the other members of the committee include a local police officer, a local first responder, a teacher employed at the school, a mental health professional, a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the school, and any other person the school board deems necessary.

Background — School Security and Safety Plans

By law, the plans require an all-hazards approach to emergencies at public schools and must include, among other things, (1) involvement of local officials, including the municipal chief executive officer, the school superintendent, law enforcement, fire, public health, emergency management and emergency medical services, in the development of school security and safety plans; (2) a command center organization structure; (3) crisis management procedures; (4) a requirement that local law enforcement and other local public safety officials evaluate, score, and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills; and (5) procedures for managing various types of emergencies (CGS § 10-222n).

§ 5 — DRONES FROM CERTAIN FOREIGN ENTITIES PROHIBITED

The bill generally prohibits, beginning on varying dates shown in the table below, DESPP, state agencies with department heads, and municipalities from purchasing and then operating small unmanned aircraft systems (i.e., drones, see definition below) assembled or manufactured by a covered foreign entity. These provisions also prohibit an individual or entity with a contract with an agency or a municipality from purchasing or operating one of these drones pursuant to the contract.

It specifies this prohibition does not impair any contract entered into before these dates. The bill also prohibits state or federal funds,

including contract, cooperative agreement, or grant funding, from being used to purchase or operate these drones after the dates that apply to state entities.

Table: Effective Dates of Prohibitions

<i>Covered Entity</i>	<i>Prohibited Action</i>	<i>Effective Date</i>
DESPP	Purchase	October 1, 2025
	Operate	October 1, 2027
State agencies, municipalities, and individuals or entities who contract with them	Purchase	October 1, 2026
	Operate	October 1, 2028

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Covered Foreign Entities, Persons, and Drones

Under the bill, a “covered foreign entity” means:

1. any person on the federal Consolidated Screening List or Entity List (15 C.F.R. Part 744, Supp. 4);
2. the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and any of their governmental subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities;
3. any person domiciled in, or under the control or influence of, these countries; and
4. any affiliate or subsidiary of any foreign government or person described above.

A “person” means any individual, association, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust, government, governmental subdivision, agency, instrumentality, or other legal entity.

A “small unmanned aircraft system” (drone) means any unmanned, powered aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds, including anything attached to or carried by it, that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. It also includes all (1) elements associated with the aircraft, (2) elements required for the

operator to operate the aircraft safely and efficiently in the national airspace system, and (3) communication links and components that control the aircraft.

Waiver

Between the applicable prohibition date and December 31, 2034, the bill allows the DESPP commissioner, state agency heads, and municipalities' chief law enforcement officers or fire department chiefs to waive the prohibitions. Each may do so if he or she determines the waiver is needed (1) because of exigent circumstances (i.e., significantly changed circumstances that were unforeseeable and pose an imminent threat to public health or safety); (2) to counter another drone; or (3) for a criminal investigation.

If DESPP, a state agency, or a municipality uses such a foreign entity drone during this period, the person granting the waiver must provide a certified written statement within seven days disclosing the (1) reason the waiver was needed and (2) facts supporting the determination. For the state or municipal waiver, the applicable person must submit the statement to the DESPP commissioner, as he prescribes.

The bill requires DESPP to maintain each written statement the commissioner creates and those submitted to the department. The commissioner must, upon request, disclose a copy of the written statement to any General Assembly member. The statement is also subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

§§ 6-8 — UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OPERATION

Critical Infrastructure Facilities (§§ 6 & 7)

The bill prohibits any "person" from operating, or programming to operate, an unmanned aircraft (i.e., drone) at a height of less than 250 feet above ground level of a "critical infrastructure facility" (see below) or within 100 horizontal feet of one. It specifies this prohibition also extends to inside any tunnels located on a limited access highway. Under the bill, "person" includes any individual, association, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust, government or subdivision, agency, instrumentality, or other legal entity. By law, an

unmanned aircraft is a powered aircraft that (1) uses aerodynamic forces to provide vertical lift, (2) is operated remotely by a pilot in command or that is capable of autonomous flight, (3) does not carry a human operator, and (4) can be expendable or recoverable.

Additionally, the bill prohibits using an unmanned aircraft to surveil, gather evidence, or collect information related to a critical infrastructure facility without prior approval from the facility's owner or administrator.

The bill exempts the following individuals while performing their official duties: (1) employees of the federal government, the state, or its political subdivisions; (2) public service company employees (e.g., electric distribution, gas, and telephone companies); (3) U.S. or state armed forces members; and (4) firefighters, police officers, and emergency management directors. This exemption also covers operating unmanned aircraft on behalf of these entities. The bill also exempts people operating unmanned aircraft for commercial purposes in compliance with Federal Aviation Administration authorization (if doing so is necessary for these purposes). However, the commercial purposes exemption does not apply to the bill's surveillance provisions discussed above.

The bill makes a violation of its critical infrastructure facility provisions a class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to 364 days in prison, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both.

Critical Infrastructure Facility Defined. Under the bill, a "critical infrastructure facility" is a limited access highway (or tunnel located on one) and any of the following types of properties, if they are (1) completely enclosed by a fence or other physical barrier that is clearly designed to exclude intruders or (2) clearly marked with at least one sign posted on the property stating that operating unmanned aircraft is prohibited, which is reasonably likely to come to an intruder's attention:

1. an electrical generating facility, electric substation or switchyard, or electric control system;

2. a facility for storing, receiving, or processing petroleum products and other fuels;
3. a chemical or rubber manufacturing or storage facility;
4. a correctional facility;
5. a telecommunications central office or wireless telecommunications infrastructure;
6. a commercial port, harbor, rail yard, truck terminal, or other freight transportation facility;
7. a gas manufacturing or distribution plant;
8. a television or radio station transmission facility licensed by the Federal Communications Commission;
9. any portion of an above-ground oil, gas, or chemical pipeline;
10. a dam classified as a high or significant hazard by the energy and environmental protection commissioner;
11. an air navigation facility;
12. a military facility;
13. a reservoir, water treatment plant, distribution system and pumping station or wastewater treatment plant, collection system and pump station;
14. a facility used primarily by a defense contractor, as defined in federal law;
15. a government office building;
16. a hospital;
17. a public safety building or facility; or
18. a state- or locally-owned bridge.

Deadly Weapons (§§ 6 & 8)

The bill prohibits any “person” (see above) from equipping an aircraft or unmanned aircraft with a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, ammunition, explosive, or incendiary device. However, it exempts aircraft and unmanned aircraft operated by a (1) U.S. or state armed forces member performing official duties or (2) police officer, firefighter, or emergency management director during rescue services or while providing emergency services to people in dangerous situations, when the aircraft or unmanned aircraft is equipped with a motorized breaching tool.

The bill makes a violation of this provision a class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to 364 days in prison, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 9-11 — FY 25 APPROPRIATIONS CHANGES

Please refer to the fiscal note for a summary of these sections.

§§ 12 & 13 — STUDENT ATHLETE COMPENSATION***Student Athletes***

The bill expands the time frame during which student athletes can receive compensation through endorsement contracts or employment unrelated to an intercollegiate athletic program and obtain legal or professional representation. Currently, student athletes must be enrolled in a higher education institution and participate in an intercollegiate athletic program to do these things. The bill instead requires the student to attend or agree to attend the higher education institution and participate or agree to participate in an intercollegiate athletic program.

Compensation by Institutions

The bill removes a prohibition on student athletes receiving NIL compensation as an inducement to attend, enroll in, or continue attending a specific higher education institution or intercollegiate athletic program. Instead, it allows a student athlete (including one who

has agreed to attend an institution) to earn compensation through an endorsement contract or revenue sharing agreement directly with an institution or an entity acting on its behalf if the (1) institution has a policy allowing it and (2) student follows the policy.

Under the bill, a “revenue sharing agreement” is an agreement between an institution, or an entity acting on its behalf, and a student athlete that allows the student to share a portion of the institution’s revenue as compensation.

The bill prohibits institutions from using any state funds appropriated to it for this type of compensation. But it also allows an institution, or an entity acting on its behalf, to create, negotiate, assist, or enable opportunities for a student or prospective student to earn NIL or other compensation related to participation in an intercollegiate athletic program.

Annual Reports by Institutions

The bill requires public higher education institutions that enter revenue sharing agreements with student athletes to annually report, beginning by January 1, 2026, to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee on the (1) amount of total revenue used to compensate student athletes and (2) total number of student athletes compensated.

Institution Policies

The bill applies the policies that institutions must adopt regarding student athlete endorsement contracts and employment to the expanded group of student athletes eligible to enter these agreements under the bill and endorsement contracts with institutions. These policies must (1) require student athletes to disclose these agreements and any representation agreements to their institution, (2) prohibit agreements that conflict with an institution’s agreements, (3) prohibit endorsement contracts and employment that interferes with official team activities and academic obligations, and (4) identify prohibited endorsements.

Disclosure of Agreements

The bill expands, to include records of compensation under a revenue sharing agreement, the current prohibition on public higher education institutions disclosing records of student athlete compensation under the Freedom of Information Act unless the student consents in writing.

Other Provisions

Existing law provides that institutions, athletic associations (including the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)), and athletic conferences are not required to compensate student athletes for NIL. The bill adds that they are not required to enter into revenue sharing agreements with student athletes.

Existing law also provides that scholarships from an institution are not compensation, and the bill adds that other financial aid is not compensation.

The bill applies various other provisions from existing law to the expanded agreements that student athletes may enter under the bill. Among other things, these provisions provide that:

1. student athletes and others are not required to compensate an institution, association, or conference for a student athlete's endorsement contract or employment activity entered into under these provisions;
2. student athletes are not employees of an institution;
3. institutions are not required to take actions that violate the federal Discrimination Based on Sex and Blindness Act;
4. student athletes are not prohibited from employment activities involving coaching or playing a sport that are unrelated to any intercollegiate athletic program;
5. institutions can use an athlete's NIL for official team activities;
6. institutions are not required to allow student athletes to use institutional marks (such as logos); and

7. an association or conference cannot, on the basis of these agreements, (a) prevent an institution or athletic program from participating in intercollegiate sports, (b) restrict or revoke a student athlete's eligibility to participate in intercollegiate athletics, or (c) prevent a student athlete from earning compensation from these agreements or having legal or agent representation.

The bill additionally prohibits an association or conference from acting on a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking adverse action against an institution, an entity acting on its behalf, an institution employee, or a student athlete because of action permitted by the provisions on student athlete compensation.

The bill makes a number of related changes, makes technical changes, and deletes obsolete provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Background — Student Athlete Endorsement Contracts

By law, an endorsement contract is a written agreement to employ a student athlete or compensate a student athlete for the use of the athlete's person, name, image, or likeness by another party to promote a product, service, or event.

Background — Potential Lawsuit Settlements

Last year, two lawsuits against the NCAA and five athletic conferences (which do not involve any Connecticut higher education institutions) reached potential settlements (*In re: College Athlete NIL Litigation*, Case No. 4:20-cv-03919-CW (N.D. Cal.); *Hubbard v. NCAA*, Case No. 4:23-cv-01593 (N.D. Cal.)). The proposed settlements would result in, among other things, changes to NCAA rules governing student athletes; current and certain former student athletes receiving compensation; and creation of a revenue sharing system that permits institutions to compensate student athletes in the future. A court hearing to consider final approval of the settlements is currently set for April 7, 2025.