



## 2025 Legislative Update

This update summarizes legislation adopted during the 2025 regular legislative session of the CT General Assembly, which ended on June 4, 2025, that impacts (or may be of interest to) CCIC member institutions.

### SESSION OVERVIEW

On Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the legislature approved a \$51 billion biennium budget via **HB 7287**. The package, which spends \$27.2 billion next fiscal year and \$28.6 billion in 2026-27, increases spending 4.6% next fiscal year and another 5.3% in 2026-27. It carries forward \$480.3 million from this fiscal year's nearly \$2.4 billion surplus to spend in the coming biennium.

As to budget matters of greatest interest to the independent colleges, the budget bill:

- **Roberta Willis Scholarship Program:** Commits to sustaining the heightened level of funding on state scholarships through the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program that has occurred over the last few years with supplemental ARPA funding. The FY 26 allocation for this program will be \$41 million (\$26 appropriated and \$15 million carry-forward) and the FY 27 appropriation for this program will be \$41 million. Legislators also amended the statute governing the RWSP program to require that the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to annually notify institutions of their estimated funding for these awards by November 1.
- **CT Student Loan Reimbursement Program:** Allocates additional resources to this relatively new program administered by CT OHE in both FY 26 (\$5 million) and FY 27 (\$6 million).
- **Finish Line Scholars:** Appropriates \$7.7 million in the second year of the budget (FY 27) for the Board of Regents to create a “finish line scholarship” for community college students that received a PACT grant to complete their bachelor’s degree for free at a CSU, up to 72 credit hours, beginning in the fall of 2026.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** Reported allocates funding to support the creation of an AI Innovation/Safety Institute; an AI Symposium hosted by the CT AI Alliance; and access to high performance computing. More details to come.
- **Dual Credit:** Allocates \$6 million to the State Department of Education (SDE) in FY 27 to support the articulation of dual credit courses between school districts and institutions of higher education, exam fees for high- need students, and support the enrollment of additional high- need students in dual credit classes.
- **Aspiring Teachers Scholarship:** Appropriates \$6 million annually for this \$10,000 a year scholarship administered by SDE for eligible CT students that want to enroll in a teacher preparation program in the state.

Key legislation that died this session includes:

- Local Endowment Tax
- Prohibition on Scholarship Displacement
- Changes to in-state collegiate sports betting

Budget Line Item	FY 25	FY 26 Budgeted	FY 27 Budgeted
<b>Agency: OPM</b>			
Tiered PILOT	\$339,410,167	\$345,980,314	\$345,980,314
<b>Agency: OHE</b>			
Roberta Willis Scholarship Program General Fund	\$24,888,637	\$26,288,637 (+\$15 million carry forward)	\$41,288,637
Minority Advancement Program	\$1,659,292	\$1,674,835	\$1,674,835
Minority Teacher Incentive Program	\$570,134	\$570,134	\$570,134
Student Loan Forgiveness	\$6,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$6,000,000
Health Care Adjunct Grant Program (Public colleges only)	\$500,000	\$260,000	\$260,000
<b>Agency: SDE</b>			
Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship Program	\$10,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000
Dual Enrollment			\$6,000,000
Funding for FAFSA Completion Support	\$500,000*	0	0
Teacher Residency	\$1,500,000*	0	0
<b>Agency: CSCU</b>			
Debt-Free Community College (PACT)	\$28,500,000	\$34,150,000	\$34,150,000
PACT Expansion (Finish Line Scholarship)			\$7,700,000
<b>Agency: DPH</b>			
Healthcare Provider Loan Reimbursement (DPH)	\$3,000,000*	0	0

\*Allocation from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) stabilization fund

Below you will find a detailed summary of the legislation that passed impacting, or of interest to, the independent colleges.

## KEY LEGISLATION THAT PASSED

### State Budget Bill Summary

**H.B. 7287: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET**, is the budget bill (summarized above) that also includes language to implement the state budget (the “implementer”) and various provisions from other, unrelated, bills. Of interest to higher education, this bill:

- **Prison Education:** Expands the responsibilities of OPM’s Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) to include developing and implementing policies for the state-wide delivery of postsecondary educational programs in correctional facilities, including, but not limited to, policies pertaining to federal Pell grants and prison education programs. **(§71)**
- **Finish Line Scholars:** Requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to establish a finish line scholars program awarding grants (within available appropriations) to students who received a PACT grant and then enroll in a bachelor’s program at Charter Oak State College or the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) after earning at least 60 credits at a community college. Beginning in Fall 2026, eligible students will receive a grant equal to the greater of (1) the unpaid portion of a student’s eligible institutional costs (tuition and required fees) after subtracting the student’s financial aid, or (2) a minimum award of \$500 for a full-time student or \$300 for a part-time student. The award cannot be used to replace a student’s financial aid (which under the bill does not include federal, state, or private student loans). The award must be available until an eligible student earns (1) 72 credits or (2) a bachelor’s degree, whichever comes first. **(§78)**
- **OHE Adjunct Professor Reporting Requirement:** Requires the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to annually report to the Appropriations Committee, in addition to the Public Health Committee as currently required, on the program that provides \$20,000 grants to certain licensed health care providers who work as adjunct professors at public higher education institutions for at least one academic year. **(§105)**
- **Law Enforcement Training:** Requires DESPP, in consultation with POST, to establish a (1) social work and law enforcement project at SCSU and (2) crime scene processing, forensic evidence, and criminal investigations police training center at CCSU. **(§147 & 148)**
- **Inclusive Educational Opportunities:** Requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), in consultation with the departments of Developmental Services, Education, and Social Services, to develop a plan for inclusive educational programs at universities within CSCU for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are at least age 18. **(§150)**
- **Roberta Willis Scholarship Program:** Requires OHE to notify each institution annually by November 1 of the estimated amount of funds allocated to the institution for these awards in the following fiscal year and makes other technical changes, such as deleting references to “estimated family contribution.” **(§280 & 281)**
- **Dual Credit:** Requires SDE to administer funds for programs to support advanced and dual credit courses and programs within available appropriations, beginning in FY 27. Specifically,

the bill requires SDE to create a fee-waiver grant program to expand opportunities for high-need high school students to access advanced courses or programs. School boards may apply to SDE, as the commissioner requires, to be reimbursed for any fees the board is charged for high-need students who enroll in advanced courses or programs (e.g., honors classes, advanced placement (AP) classes, dual enrollment, or dual credit). The bill also allows SDE to pay SERC up to \$500,000 per fiscal year for programming that directly supports school boards in articulating and expanding dual credit courses. SERC must prioritize alliance districts when spending any funds it receives. Additional changes to dual credit were made in Public Act 25-99, described below. (§333)

- **Occupational License and Certification Fees:** Eliminates numerous occupational license or certification fees for health care professionals and educators, including PA, RN, APRN, LPN, PT, MFT, Social Worker and the initial educator certificate. (§§ 440-458)

## State Bond Bill Summary

**H.B. 7288: AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE AND CONCERNING GRANT PROGRAMS, STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS, REVISIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS STATUTES AND VARIOUS PROVISIONS REVISING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027,** includes authorizations for state bond funds and includes other items that are budget related. Of interest to higher education institutions:

- **Bond Authorizations of Interest:**
  - **DECD:** Manufacturing Innovation Fund: \$20 million and \$25 million (§ 13(c) & 32(c))
  - **OWS:** \$30 million in FY 26 for supporting workforce innovation and sustainability (§ 111)
  - **DESPP:** \$10 million in FY 26 & FY 27 for nonprofit security infrastructure competitive grant program. (§ 64)
  - **DECD:** \$50 million for the DECD commissioner to create a strategic supply chain program, which may provide grants, loans, subsidies, or tax credits in support of proposed projects to establish, grow, upgrade, or expand companies, facilities, or workforce training efforts within the supply chains of major and emerging industries in Connecticut, as determined by the commissioner. (§ 115)
- **College credit for basic police training:** Requires POST to (1) study whether college-level criminal justice courses can be substituted for its police basic training courses and (2) create a related pilot program at the University of New Haven. (§ 195)
- **OHE Student Loan Reimbursement Program Changes:** Makes various changes to the OHE student loan reimbursement program, including: 1) expanding eligibility to individuals holding a degree from any level and to certain former Stone Academy students; 2) making various changes to the volunteer hour requirement; 3) changing the income criteria qualification to be based on federal adjusted gross income rather than Connecticut adjusted gross income; 4) specifying that OHE must reimburse each program participant who meets the program's requirements for student loan payments paid during the preceding calendar year, and 5) carrying over the program's funding to be made available in FY 26. (§ 214 & 215)

- **CSCU Higher Ed Sustainability Advisory Board:** The bill establishes a subcommittee of the Higher Education Financial Sustainability Advisory Board called the Subcommittee on Educational Alignment and Need (SEAN), to monitor Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) expenditures and sustainability plans and requires the board to make recommendations to the General Assembly on these plans. ([§ 216 & 217](#))

## Legislation Impacting Higher Education

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### Higher Ed Committee Bills

*(Note: Many of the higher education bills were rolled into other bills this session and therefore the summary is organized by issue, versus bill number)*

#### **Roberta Willis Scholarship Program**

When originally introduced in the Higher Education Committee, SB 5 sought to fully fund the Roberta Willis Scholarship Program *and* to require the Office of Higher Education (OHE) to provide earlier notice of that funding to participating institutions. The bill was amended in the Senate to only address the timing issue and ultimately this language was incorporated into the budget bill. As passed and signed into law, OHE is now required to annually notify institutions of their estimated funding for these awards by November 1.

- [Bill \(Sec. 280 & 281\)](#)
- [Testimony on SB 5](#)

#### **Dual Credit**

Legislation was originally introduced by the Governor to create a statewide dual credit policy that includes definitions of dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment, to build off the work of the [State Department of Education](#) (SDE) to expand capacity to provide dual credit courses at both the institutional level and in school districts. In conjunction with this bill, the Governor's budget proposes \$7.5 million for dual credit in FY 27. The Higher Ed Committee made slight modifications to the bill and its definitions before moving it forward.

The language was ultimately amended and rolled into another bill, [Public Act 25-99](#), and requires:

- SDE to develop a **model agreement** between secondary schools and postsecondary institutions for the provision of dual enrollment courses and concurrent enrollment courses.
- Institutions of higher education that offer dual credit courses to:
  - Obtain accreditation from the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) on or before July 1, 2028, unless the SDE approves an extension of time for an accreditation in writing.
  - Obtain NACEP accreditation for such courses offered by the institution.
  - Report annually to SDE on certain data points regarding the students enrolled in such courses.
- [Testimony](#)

- [Public Act 25-99](#)

### ***Finish Line Scholars Program for PACT Transfers***

HB 6885 as originally introduced sought to expand the state's free college program to the Connecticut State University System (CSU's). Before passing out of the Committee, the bill was revised and now proposes a new debt-free college program for students that received a PACT grant at a CT community college and transfer to any public four-year institution -- "finish line scholars' program." Transfers must have completed 60 credits at the community college to be eligible for the new scholarship. Funding would be available for up to the first 72 credits a student earns at the four-year institution.

The language in HB 6885 was incorporated in the state budget bill, along with \$7.7 million in FY 27.

- [Testimony](#)
- [Budget Bill \(Sec. 78\)](#)

### ***Promise Programs Task Force***

A bill was approved that seeks to create a committee to study the concept of expanding Promise Programs in other communities in our state.

- [Bill](#)

### ***Veoci Reporting***

OHE presently collects data on each program of higher education offered in the state, through a system called Veoci. This data collection is authorized under **10a-35b**. Legislation passed as part of **Public Act 25-99 (§ 9)** which limits OHE's discretion to collect data from CT institutions of higher education to the following elements **only**:

- (1) Credential status type;
- (2) the entity that owns or offers the credential;
- (3) the type of credential being offered;
- (4) a short description of the credential;
- (5) the name of the credential;
- (7) the language in which the credential is offered;
- (8) the estimated duration for completion;
- (11) the estimated cost for earning the credential; and
- (12) a listing of online or physical locations where the credential is offered.

### **Public Health Committee Bills**

**SB 1450: AN ACT CONCERNING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE**, requires:

- DPH to create, within available appropriations, a loan reimbursement program for health care providers, with some of the awards targeted to primary care providers and those employed in rural communities or at federally qualified health centers (FQHCs).

- DPH, in collaboration with a Connecticut-based educational or educational technology provider and within available appropriations, to create a pilot program providing home-based virtual education to people seeking certification as a nurse's aide or emergency medical technician (EMT). The bill specifies that it does not eliminate existing requirements for these people to receive in-person practical training.
- SDE to add radiologic technology, nuclear medicine technology, and respiratory care to an existing plan on promoting health care career options to middle and high school students. Lastly, the bill requires DPH, within available appropriations, to create a program giving grants to recruit athletic trainers from other states to move to Connecticut to work here. The grants are for their relocation costs.

### **Environment Committee Bills**

**HB 6277: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADOPTION OF ANIMALS FROM CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**, requires public and private higher education institutions, under certain circumstances, to offer any rabbit, guinea pig, or ferret used for research or testing to an animal adoption or rescue organization for adoption. An institution must make the adoption offer when the (1) research or testing is complete, (2) destruction of the animal is not required, and (3) animal is no longer needed by the institution. Existing law already requires institutions to make an adoption offer for cats and dogs used in research or testing.

### **Commerce Committee Bills**

**SB 1179: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY MAKERSPACE INITIATIVE PROGRAM**, requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioner to establish and administer, by January 1, 2026, a pilot program to give financial assistance (e.g., grants, loans, or financing) to entities establishing or expanding makerspaces that may serve as self-sustaining models in Connecticut.

### **Other Committee Bills**

**Public Act 25-55: AN ACT REFORMING THE MOTOR VEHICLE TOWING STATUTES**, makes numerous changes to laws on nonconsensual towing and the abandoned vehicle disposal process. Of interest:

- The bill requires specific written authorization from a property owner or lessee (or their agent) before a wrecker service (towing company) performs a private property tow, rather than allowing property owners or lessees to give towing companies broad authorization to tow unauthorized vehicles.
- The bill bans generally private property owners from booting vehicles on their property but includes a special exemption from this new law for private higher education institutions or secondary schools, as long as they give five days' notice.
- See the [Bill Summary](#) for more details.

**Public Act 25-9: AN ACT PROHIBITING LIBRARIES FROM AGREEING TO CERTAIN TERMS IN ELECTRONIC BOOK AND DIGITAL AUDIOBOOK LICENSE AGREEMENTS OR CONTRACT**,



prohibits publicly funded libraries – including at an institution of higher education -- from entering or renewing contracts and licensing agreements (collectively referred to as “agreements” below) with publishers of electronic literary materials (i.e. electronic books (eBooks) and digital audiobooks) that prevent, limit, or restrict the library from performing certain customary operational or lending functions specified in the bill. However, the prohibition only applies starting 60 days after the secretary of the state determines that a substantially similar law has been enacted by one or more other states with a combined population of at least seven million.

## Key Legislation that Died

### Higher Education Committee Bills

- **HB 6078: AN ACT CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION ON THE CAMPUSES OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**
- **HB 7100: AN ACT REQUIRING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE TO DISCLOSE CERTAIN INFORMATION TO VICTIMS IN TITLE IX PROCEEDINGS**
- **SB 977: AN ACT PROTECTING PARTICIPANTS IN TITLE IX PROCEEDINGS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**
- **HB 5170: AN ACT CONCERNING FEES CHARGED BY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**
- **SB 1411: AN ACT ALLOWING STUDENTS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO LIVE OFF CAMPUS**

### Education Committee Bills

- **HB 7168: AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**
- **SB 1392: AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION**
- **SB 1513: AN ACT CONCERNING ASPIRING EDUCATORS**

### General Law Committee Bills

- **SB 2: AN ACT CONCERNING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **HB 5271: AN ACT PROHIBITING GAMING-RELATED ADVERTISING, MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION** (an amendment had been filed on this bill to legalize in-state collegiate sports betting)

### Planning & Development Committee Bills

- **HB 7147: AN ACT AUTHORIZING MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPOSE A TAX ON THE ENDOWMENT FUNDS OF PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**