



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Committee Bill No. 2

LCO No. 4301



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS OF CHILDREN.

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
2 2024, the Department of Public Health shall hire, on or before January 1,
3 2024, a full-time employee to assist in the licensure of social workers
4 pursuant to chapter 383b of the general statutes.

5 Sec. 2. Section 11-24a of the general statutes is repealed and the
6 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

7 (a) As used in sections 11-24b, as amended by this act, 11-24c and 11-
8 31a:

9 (1) "Board" means the State Library Board.

10 (2) "Public library" means a library that serves its residents through
11 its outlet or outlets without charging a borrower's card fee and which
12 receives its financial support in whole or in part from local tax funds.

13 (3) "Principal public library" means the public library which has been
14 so designated by the local municipal governing board.

15 (4) "Local funds" means moneys received by a public library from any
16 source, public or private, excluding state or federal grants.

17 (5) "General library purposes" means all functions of a public library,
18 including the purchase of land or the construction, alteration or
19 remodeling of buildings.

20 (6) "Sanctuary public library" means a principal public library that
21 makes available and lends any book that has been banned, censored or
22 challenged by a person, organization or entity and any related library
23 materials and does not prohibit or otherwise limit the availability of any
24 book or related library materials by banning, censoring or challenging
25 such book or related library materials at such library.

26 (b) A municipality may have more than one public library, but may
27 designate only one library as its principal public library. A principal
28 public library may be designated for more than one town if it meets
29 conditions established and approved by the State Library Board. In any
30 town or municipality where there are multiple libraries, there shall be a
31 separate board or governing body and a different library director and
32 staff for each public library. Each public library shall be a separate
33 library facility and there shall be a separate town appropriation to each
34 public library.

35 (c) Any public library not designated as a principal public library
36 shall be a "nonprincipal public library". A nonprincipal public library in
37 a municipality may be eligible to receive a state grant, construction cost
38 grant, emergency repair grant or Connecticard grant provided it meets
39 the following conditions: There is a separate board of trustees or
40 governing body for each such nonprincipal public library; there is a
41 different library director and staff for each such library; there is a
42 separate library facility; and there is a separate town appropriation to
43 each such library.

44 Sec. 3. Section 11-24b of the general statutes is repealed and the
45 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

46 (a) Each principal public library, as defined in section 11-24a, as
47 amended by this act, shall be eligible to receive a state grant in
48 accordance with the provisions of subsections (b) [,] and (c) [and (d)] of
49 this section provided the following requirements are met:

50 (1) An annual statistical report which includes certification that the
51 grant, when received, shall be used for library purposes is filed with the
52 State Library Board in such manner as the board may require. The report
53 shall include information concerning local library governance, hours of
54 service, type of facilities, library policies, resources, programs and
55 services available, measurement of levels of services provided,
56 personnel and fiscal information concerning library receipts and
57 expenditures;

58 (2) Documents certifying the legal establishment of the principal
59 public library in accordance with the provisions of section 11-20 are filed
60 with the board;

61 (3) The library is a participating library in the Connecticard program
62 established pursuant to section 11-31b;

63 (4) Except for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2010, to June 30, 2015,
64 inclusive, the principal public library shall not have had the amount of
65 its annual tax levy or appropriation reduced to an amount which is less
66 than the average amount levied or appropriated for the library for the
67 three fiscal years immediately preceding the year of the grant, except
68 that if the expenditures of the library in any one year in such three-year
69 period are unusually high as compared with expenditures in the other
70 two years, the library may request an exception to this requirement and
71 the board, upon review of the expenditures for that year, may grant an
72 exception;

73 (5) State grant funds shall be expended within two years of the date
74 of receipt of such funds. If the funds are not expended in that period,

75 the library shall submit a plan to the State Librarian for the expenditure
76 of any unspent balance;

77 (6) Principal public libraries shall not charge individuals residing in
78 the town in which the library is located or the town in which the contract
79 library is located for borrowing and lending library materials, accessing
80 information, advice and assistance and programs and services which
81 promote literacy; and

82 (7) Principal public libraries shall provide equal access to library
83 service for all individuals and shall not discriminate upon the basis of
84 age, race, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin,
85 handicap or place of residency in the town in which the library is located
86 or the town in which the contract library is located.

87 (b) Within the limits of amounts appropriated and subject to the
88 provisions of subsection (d) of this section, the amount each principal
89 public library shall be eligible to receive annually as a state grant shall
90 be determined by the State Library Board as follows:

91 (1) Principal public libraries, as defined in section 11-24a, as amended
92 by this act, shall receive a base grant of one thousand two hundred
93 dollars for each fiscal year.

94 (2) Of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section less the
95 amount distributed as base grants, sixty per cent shall be set aside and
96 paid in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section
97 to principal public libraries. [pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.]

98 (3) Of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section less the
99 amount distributed as base grants, forty per cent shall be set aside and
100 paid in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section
101 to principal public libraries [pursuant to subsection (d) of this section]
102 that receive a grant under this subsection and subsection (c) of this
103 section and that are sanctuary public libraries.

104 (c) The principal public library for each town shall be eligible to

105 receive an equalization grant in an amount determined as follows:

106 (1) The adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as defined in
107 subsection (a) of section 10-261, for all towns in the state shall be ranked
108 from highest to lowest.

109 (2) The adjusted equalized net grand list per capita, as ranked for all
110 towns in the state from highest to lowest shall be divided into the
111 following four classes: Class A, towns ranked from one to forty-two,
112 inclusive; class B, towns ranked from forty-three to eighty-four,
113 inclusive; class C, towns ranked from eighty-five to one hundred
114 twenty-six, inclusive; and, class D, towns ranked from one hundred
115 twenty-seven to one hundred sixty-nine, inclusive. Funds available for
116 purposes of this subsection pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b)
117 of this section shall be distributed among the four classes so that
118 principal public libraries for class B, C, and D towns, respectively, shall
119 receive two times, three times and four times as much on a per capita
120 basis as principal public libraries for class A towns.

121 (3) Grants to the principal public library for each town shall be
122 determined as follows: Said funds available for purposes of this
123 subsection shall be multiplied by the per cent of funds for each class to
124 determine an appropriation per class; the appropriation per class shall
125 be divided by the total population per class to determine an amount per
126 capita; the grant for the principal public library for each town shall be
127 the town's total population multiplied by the amount per capita. For
128 purposes of this subdivision, "total population" of a town means that
129 enumerated in the most recent federal decennial census of population.

130 (d) [The] A principal public library [for each town] that receives a
131 grant under subsections (b) and (c) of this section and is a sanctuary
132 public library shall be eligible to receive an incentive grant in an amount
133 to be determined as follows:

134 (1) The State Library Board shall, in such manner as prescribed by the
135 board, determine for each fiscal year, a state-wide average for per capita

136 library expenditures and each town's individual per capita library
137 expenditure based on the annual statistical report filed in accordance
138 with subsection (a) of this section.

139 (2) The per capita library expenditure of each town shall be ranked
140 from highest to lowest and the ranked expenditures shall be divided
141 into the following classes: Class A, towns which meet or exceed the
142 state-wide average for per capita library expenditures; class B, towns
143 which meet seventy-five to ninety-nine per cent, inclusive, of the state-
144 wide average; class C, towns which meet fifty to seventy-four per cent,
145 inclusive, of the state-wide average; and, class D, towns which fall below
146 fifty per cent of the state-wide average. Funds available for purposes of
147 this subsection pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of this
148 section shall be distributed among the four classes so that such principal
149 public libraries for class A and B towns, respectively, shall receive three
150 times and two times as much on a per capita basis as such principal
151 public libraries for class C towns.

152 (3) Grants to [the] such principal public [library for each town]
153 libraries under this subsection shall be determined as follows: Said
154 funds available for purposes of this subsection shall be multiplied by the
155 per cent of funds per class to determine an appropriation per class; the
156 appropriation per class shall be divided by the total population per class
157 to determine an amount per capita; the grant for [the] each such
158 principal public library [for each town] shall be the town's total
159 population multiplied by the amount per capita. For purposes of this
160 subdivision, "total population" of a town means that enumerated in the
161 most recent federal decennial census of population.

162 (e) Application for grants under this section shall be made to the State
163 Library Board in such form and at such time as the board designates.
164 The grant may be used for general library purposes and no portion of
165 the grant money shall revert to the general fund of the town or towns
166 normally served by such library.

167 (f) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall make

168 available, upon the request of the State Library Board, such information
169 as is needed by the board to determine grant payments in accordance
170 with the provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

171 (g) The State Library Board shall report triennially to the joint
172 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
173 matters relating to education on the impact of the state grants
174 distributed pursuant to this section.

175 (h) The State Library Board shall, in accordance with the provisions
176 of chapter 54, adopt regulations to implement the provisions of this
177 section.

178 Sec. 4. Subsection (h) of section 17a-248g of the general statutes is
179 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
180 *2023*):

181 (h) For the fiscal [years] year ending June 30, 2023, and [June 30, 2024]
182 each fiscal year thereafter, the commissioner shall make a general
183 administrative payment to providers in the amount of two hundred
184 dollars for each child with an individualized family service plan on the
185 first day of the billing month and whose plan accounts for less than nine
186 hours of service during such billing month, provided at least one service
187 is provided by such provider during such billing month.

188 Sec. 5. Section 17a-248 of the general statutes is repealed and the
189 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

190 As used in this section, [and] sections 17a-248b to 17a-248g, inclusive,
191 as amended by this act, 38a-490a and 38a-516a and section 7 of this act,
192 unless the context otherwise requires:

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

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

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

198 (4) "Eligible children" means children (A) (i) from birth to thirty-six
199 months of age, who are not eligible for special education and related
200 services pursuant to sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive, and (ii) thirty-
201 six months of age or older, who are receiving early intervention services
202 and are eligible or being evaluated for participation in preschool
203 services pursuant to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities
204 Education Act, 20 USC 1411 et seq., until such children are enrolled in
205 such preschool services, and (B) who need early intervention services
206 because such children are:

207 [(I)] (i) Experiencing a significant developmental delay as measured
208 by standardized diagnostic instruments and procedures, including
209 informed clinical opinion, in one or more of the following areas:
210 Cognitive development; physical development, including vision or
211 hearing; communication development; social or emotional
212 development; or adaptive skills; or

213 [(II)] (ii) Diagnosed as having a physical or mental condition that has
214 a high probability of resulting in developmental delay.

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

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

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

224 (8) "Parent" means (A) a biological, adoptive or foster parent of a
225 child; (B) a guardian, except for the Commissioner of Children and

226 Families; (C) an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive
227 parent, including, but not limited to, a grandparent, stepparent, or other
228 relative with whom the child lives; (D) an individual who is legally
229 responsible for the child's welfare; or (E) an individual appointed to be
230 a surrogate parent.

231 (9) "Participating agencies" includes, but is not limited to, the
232 Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, Children and
233 Families and Developmental Services, the Office of Early Childhood, the
234 Insurance Department and the Department of Aging and Disability
235 Services.

236 (10) "Qualified personnel" means persons who meet the standards
237 specified in 34 CFR Part 303.31, as from time to time amended, and who
238 are licensed physicians or psychologists or persons holding a state-
239 approved or recognized license, certificate or registration in one or more
240 of the following fields: (A) Special education, including teaching of the
241 blind and the deaf; (B) speech and language pathology and audiology;
242 (C) occupational therapy; (D) physical therapy; (E) social work; (F)
243 nursing; (G) dietary or nutritional counseling; and (H) other fields
244 designated by the commissioner that meet requirements that apply to
245 the area in which the person is providing early intervention services,
246 provided there is no conflict with existing professional licensing,
247 certification and registration requirements.

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

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

255 Sec. 6. Subsection (b) of section 17a-248e of the general statutes is
256 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*

257 2023):

258 (b) The individualized family service plan shall be in writing and
259 contain: (1) A statement of the child's present level of physical
260 development, cognitive development, language and speech
261 development and self-help skills, based on acceptable objective criteria;
262 (2) a statement of the family's priority, resources and concerns relating
263 to enhancing the development of the eligible child; (3) a statement of the
264 major outcomes expected to be achieved for the child and the family and
265 the criteria, procedures and timelines used to determine the degree to
266 which progress toward achieving the outcomes are being made, and
267 whether modifications or revisions of the outcomes are necessary; (4) a
268 statement of specific early intervention services necessary to meet the
269 unique needs of the eligible child and the family, including the
270 frequency, intensity and the method of delivering services; (5) a
271 statement of the natural environments in which the services shall be
272 provided; (6) the projected dates for initiation of services and the
273 anticipated duration of such services; (7) the name of the approved
274 comprehensive service provider that will provide or procure the
275 services specified in the individualized family service plan; (8) the name
276 of the individual service coordinator from the profession most
277 immediately relevant to the eligible child's or the family's needs who
278 will be responsible for the implementation of the plan and coordination
279 with the other agencies and providers or an otherwise qualified
280 provider selected by a parent; and (9) the steps to be taken to support
281 the transition of the child who is eligible for participation in preschool
282 programs under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 USC
283 1471 et seq., as appropriate. The individualized family service plan shall
284 be translated into and provided in Spanish for any family whose
285 primary language is Spanish.

286 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) On and after July 1, 2023, an
287 eligible child whose primary language is Spanish shall be entitled to
288 receive early intervention services from Spanish-speaking qualified
289 personnel and a Spanish-speaking service coordinator.

290 Sec. 8. Section 31-57r of the general statutes is repealed and the
291 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

292 As used in this section and sections 31-57s to 31-57w, inclusive:

293 (1) "Child" means a biological, adopted or foster child, stepchild, legal
294 ward of a service worker, or a child of a service worker standing in loco
295 parentis, who is (A) under eighteen years of age; or (B) eighteen years
296 of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical
297 disability;

298 (2) "Day or temporary worker" means an individual who performs
299 work for another on (A) a per diem basis, or (B) an occasional or
300 irregular basis for only the time required to complete such work,
301 whether such individual is paid by the person for whom such work is
302 performed or by an employment agency or temporary help service, as
303 defined in section 31-129;

304 (3) "Employee" means an individual engaged in service to an
305 employer in the business of the employer;

306 (4) "Employer" means any person, firm, business, educational
307 institution, nonprofit agency, corporation, limited liability company or
308 other entity that employs fifty or more individuals in the state, which
309 shall be determined based on such person's, firm's, business',
310 educational institution's, nonprofit agency's, corporation's, limited
311 liability company's or other entity's payroll for the week containing
312 October first, annually. "Employer" does not include: (A) Any business
313 establishment classified in sector 31, 32 or 33 in the North American
314 Industrial Classification System, or (B) any nationally chartered
315 organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the
316 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
317 internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time
318 amended, that provides all of the following services: Recreation, child
319 care and education;

320 (5) "Family violence" has the same meaning as provided in section

321 46b-38a;

322 (6) "Mental health wellness day" means a day during which a service
323 worker attends to such service worker's emotional and psychological
324 well-being in lieu of attending a regularly scheduled shift;

325 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) "Retaliatory personnel action" means any termination,
326 suspension, constructive discharge, demotion, unfavorable
327 reassignment, refusal to promote, disciplinary action or other adverse
328 employment action taken by an employer against an employee or a
329 service worker;

330 ~~[(7)]~~ (8) "Service worker" means an employee primarily engaged in
331 an occupation with one of the following broad or detailed occupation
332 code numbers and titles, as defined by the federal Bureau of Labor
333 Statistics Standard Occupational Classification system or any successor
334 system: (A) 11-9050 Food Service Managers; (B) 11-9110 Medical and
335 Health Services Managers; (C) 21-1020 Social Workers; (D) 21-1093
336 Social and Human Service Assistants; (E) 21-1094 Community Health
337 Workers; (F) 21-1099 Community and Social Service Specialists, All
338 Other; (G) 25-4020 Librarians; (H) 29-1050 Pharmacists; (I) 29-1070
339 Physician Assistants; (J) 29-1120 Therapists; (K) 29-1140 Registered
340 Nurses; (L) 29-1150 Nurse Anesthetists; (M) 29-1160 Nurse Midwives;
341 (N) 29-1170 Nurse Practitioners; (O) 29-2020 Dental Hygienists; (P) 29-
342 2040 Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics; (Q) 29-2050
343 Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians; (R) 29-2060
344 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; (S) 31-1011 Home
345 Health Aides; (T) 31-1012 Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants; (U)
346 31-1013 Psychiatric Aides; (V) 31-9091 Dental Assistants; (W) 31-9092
347 Medical Assistants; (X) 33-9032 Security Guards; (Y) 33-9091 Crossing
348 Guards; (Z) 35-1010 Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving
349 Workers; (AA) 35-2010 Cooks; (BB) 35-2020 Food Preparation Workers;
350 (CC) 35-3010 Bartenders; (DD) 35-3020 Fast Food and Counter Workers;
351 (EE) 35-3030 Waiters and Waitresses; (FF) 35-3040 Food Servers,
352 Nonrestaurant; (GG) 35-9010 Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants
353 and Bartender Helpers; (HH) 35-9020 Dishwashers; (II) 35-9030 Hosts

354 and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge and Coffee Shop; (JJ) 35-9090
355 Miscellaneous Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers; (KK) 37-
356 2011 Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners;
357 (LL) 37-2019 Building Cleaning Workers, All Other; (MM) 39-3030
358 Ushers, Lobby Attendants and Ticket Takers; (NN) 39-5010 Barbers,
359 Hairdressers, Hairstylists and Cosmetologists; (OO) 39-6010 Baggage
360 Porters, Bellhops and Concierges; (PP) 39-9010 Child Care Workers;
361 (QQ) 39-9021 Personal Care Aides; (RR) 41-1010 First-Line Supervisors
362 of Sales Workers; (SS) 41-2011 Cashiers; (TT) 41-2021 Counter and
363 Rental Clerks; (UU) 41-2030 Retail Salespersons; (VV) 43-3070 Tellers;
364 (WW) 43-4080 Hotel, Motel and Resort Desk Clerks; (XX) 43-4170
365 Receptionists and Information Clerks; (YY) 43-5020 Couriers and
366 Messengers; (ZZ) 43-6010 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants;
367 (AAA) 43-9010 Computer Operators; (BBB) 43-9020 Data Entry and
368 Information Processing Workers; (CCC) 43-9030 Desktop Publishers;
369 (DDD) 43-9040 Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks; (EEE)
370 43-9050 Mail Clerks and Mail Machine Operators, Except Postal Service;
371 (FFF) 43-9060 Office Clerks, General; (GGG) 43-9070 Office Machine
372 Operators, Except Computer; (HHH) 43-9080 Proofreaders and Copy
373 Markers; (III) 43-9110 Statistical Assistants; (JJJ) 43-9190 Miscellaneous
374 Office and Administrative Support Workers; (KKK) 51-3010 Bakers;
375 (LLL) 51-3020 Butchers and Other Meat, Poultry and Fish Processing
376 Workers; (MMM) 51-3090 Miscellaneous Food Processing Workers;
377 (NNN) 53-3010 Ambulance Drivers and Attendants, Except Emergency
378 Medical Technicians; (OOO) 53-3020 Bus Drivers; (PPP) 53-3040 Taxi
379 Drivers and Chauffeurs; or (QQQ) 29-2034 Radiologic Technologists,
380 and is (i) paid on an hourly basis, or (ii) not exempt from the minimum
381 wage and overtime compensation requirements of the Fair Labor
382 Standards Act of 1938 and the regulations promulgated thereunder, as
383 amended from time to time. "Service worker" does not include day or
384 temporary workers;

385 [(8)] (9) "Sexual assault" means any act that constitutes a violation of
386 section 53a-70b of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to
387 January 1, 2019, or section 53a-70, 53a-70a, 53a-71, 53a-72a, 53a-72b or

388 53a-73a;

389 [(9)] (10) "Spouse" means a husband or wife, as the case may be; and

390 [(10)] (11) "Year" means any three-hundred-sixty-five-day period
391 used by an employer to calculate employee benefits.

392 Sec. 9. Subsection (a) of section 31-57t of the general statutes is
393 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
394 *1, 2023*):

395 (a) An employer shall permit a service worker to use the paid sick
396 leave accrued pursuant to section 31-57s:

397 (1) For (A) a service worker's illness, injury or health condition, (B)
398 the medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's mental
399 illness or physical illness, injury or health condition, [or] (C)
400 preventative medical care for a service worker, or (D) a mental health
401 wellness day;

402 (2) For (A) a service worker's child's or spouse's illness, injury or
403 health condition, (B) the medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service
404 worker's child's or spouse's mental or physical illness, injury or health
405 condition, or (C) preventative medical care for a child or spouse of a
406 service worker; and

407 (3) Where a service worker is a victim of family violence or sexual
408 assault (A) for medical care or psychological or other counseling for
409 physical or psychological injury or disability, (B) to obtain services from
410 a victim services organization, (C) to relocate due to such family
411 violence or sexual assault, or (D) to participate in any civil or criminal
412 proceedings related to or resulting from such family violence or sexual
413 assault.

414 Sec. 10. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Commissioner of Social
415 Services shall provide Medicaid reimbursement, to the extent
416 permissible under federal law, for suicide risk assessments and other

417 mental health evaluations and services provided at a school-based
418 health center or public school.

419 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall (1) amend the Medicaid
420 state plan, if necessary, to provide reimbursement for the suicide risk
421 assessments and mental health evaluations and services described in
422 subsection (a) of this section, and (2) set reimbursement at a level that
423 ensures an adequate pool of providers for such suicide risk assessments
424 and mental health evaluations and services.

425 Sec. 11. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) There is established an Office
426 of the Behavioral Health Advocate which shall be within the Insurance
427 Department for administrative purposes only.

428 (b) The Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate may:

429 (1) Assist mental and behavioral health care providers, who are
430 licensed, certified or registered in the state, with receiving payments for
431 claims submitted to health carriers for services provided to covered
432 patients;

433 (2) Provide information to the public, agencies, legislators and others
434 regarding the problems and concerns of mental and behavioral health
435 care providers and make recommendations for resolving such problems
436 and concerns;

437 (3) Analyze and monitor the development and implementation of
438 federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies relating to mental
439 and behavioral health care providers and recommend changes as
440 necessary;

441 (4) Facilitate public comment by mental and behavioral health care
442 providers on laws, regulations and policies, including, but not limited
443 to, the policies and actions of health carriers;

444 (5) Coordinate services with the Healthcare Advocate to assist
445 individuals with obtaining access to and coverage for mental and

446 behavioral health care services and to fulfill the duties set forth in
447 subsections (e) and (g) of section 38a-1041 of the general statutes;

448 (6) Ensure that mental and behavioral health care providers have
449 timely access to the services provided by the office;

450 (7) Establish a toll-free number, or any other free calling option, to
451 allow access to the services provided by the Behavioral Health
452 Advocate;

453 (8) Pursue administrative remedies on behalf of and with the consent
454 of any mental and behavioral health care providers;

455 (9) Adopt regulations, pursuant to chapter 54 of the general statutes,
456 to carry out the provisions of this section; and

457 (10) Take any other actions necessary to fulfill the purposes of this
458 section.

459 (c) The Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate shall make a referral
460 to the Insurance Commissioner if the Behavioral Health Advocate finds
461 that a health carrier may have engaged in a pattern or practice that is in
462 violation of any provision of section 38a-476a or sections 38a-488a to
463 38a-489, inclusive, of the general statutes.

464 (d) All state agencies shall comply with reasonable requests of the
465 Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate for information and
466 assistance.

467 (e) Not later than January 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the
468 Behavioral Health Advocate shall submit, in accordance with the
469 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing
470 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
471 relating to children, public health, and insurance and real estate a report
472 concerning the activities of the Behavioral Health Advocate. The report
473 shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the subject matter,
474 disposition and number of claims processed by the Behavioral Health

475 Advocate on behalf of mental and behavioral health care providers, (2)
476 common problems and concerns discerned by the Behavioral Health
477 Advocate from mental and behavioral health care providers or other
478 relevant sources, and (3) the need, if any, for administrative, legislative
479 or executive remedies to assist mental and behavioral health care
480 providers.

481 Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) (a) The Office of the Behavioral
482 Health Advocate shall be under the direction of the Behavioral Health
483 Advocate who shall be appointed by the Governor, with the approval
484 of the General Assembly. The Behavioral Health Advocate shall be an
485 elector of the state with expertise and experience in the fields of mental
486 or behavioral health care, health insurance and advocacy for parity in
487 mental and behavioral health access and outcomes. In addition to the
488 Behavioral Health Advocate, the Office of the Behavioral Health
489 Advocate shall consist of a staff of not more than three persons, which
490 staff may be increased as the requirements and resources of the office
491 permit.

492 (b) If the General Assembly is not in session at the time of the
493 Governor's designation of a candidate for Behavioral Health Advocate,
494 the candidate shall serve as the acting Behavioral Health Advocate until
495 the General Assembly meets and confirms the candidate as Behavioral
496 Health Advocate. A candidate serving as acting Behavioral Health
497 Advocate is entitled to compensation and has all the powers, duties and
498 privileges of the Behavioral Health Advocate. A Behavioral Health
499 Advocate shall serve a term of four years, not including any time served
500 as acting Behavioral Health Advocate, and may be reappointed by the
501 Governor or shall remain in the position until a successor is confirmed.

502 (c) Upon a vacancy in the position of the Behavioral Health Advocate,
503 the most senior attorney in the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate
504 shall serve as the acting Behavioral Health Advocate until the vacancy
505 is filled pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of this section. The acting
506 Behavioral Health Advocate has all the powers, duties and privileges of
507 the Behavioral Health Advocate.

508 Sec. 13. Subsection (a) of section 20-195o of the general statutes is
509 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
510 *2023*):

511 (a) Application for licensure shall be on forms prescribed and
512 furnished by the commissioner. Each applicant shall furnish evidence
513 satisfactory to the commissioner that he or she has met the requirements
514 of section 20-195n. The application fee for a clinical social worker license
515 shall be [three hundred fifteen] two hundred dollars. The application fee
516 for a master social worker license shall be [two hundred twenty] one
517 hundred fifty dollars.

518 Sec. 14. Subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (e) of section 19a-88 of
519 the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
520 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

521 (e) (1) Each person holding a license or certificate issued under
522 section 19a-514, 20-65k, 20-74s, 20-185k, 20-185l, 20-195cc or 20-206ll and
523 chapters 370 to 373, inclusive, 375, 378 to 381a, inclusive, 383, [to 383c,
524 inclusive] 383a, 383c, 383g, 384, 384a, 384b, 385, 393a, 395, 399 or 400a
525 and section 20-206n or 20-206o shall, annually, or, in the case of a person
526 holding a license as a marital and family therapist associate under
527 section 20-195c on or before twenty-four months after the date of initial
528 licensure, during the month of such person's birth, apply for renewal of
529 such license or certificate to the Department of Public Health, giving
530 such person's name in full, such person's residence and business address
531 and such other information as the department requests.

532 (2) Each person holding a license or certificate issued under section
533 19a-514, and chapters 383b, 384a, 384c, 384d, 386, 387, 388 and 398 shall
534 apply for renewal of such license or certificate once every two years,
535 during the month of such person's birth, giving such person's name in
536 full, such person's residence and business address and such other
537 information as the department requests.

538 Sec. 15. Section 24 of public act 22-81 is repealed and the following is

539 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

540 (a) There is established a task force to continue to study the
541 comprehensive needs of children in the state and the extent to which
542 such needs are being met by educators, community members and local
543 and state agencies. The task force shall (1) address subdivisions (1) to
544 (6), inclusive, of subsection (a) of section 30 of public act 21-46, (2)
545 provide recommendations to meet the demand for infant and toddler
546 care in the state by increasing access to and enrollment in child care
547 centers, group child care homes and family child care homes, and
548 identify resources to assist such centers and homes in meeting such
549 demand, [and] (3) study the feasibility of adjusting school start times to
550 improve students' mental and physical well-being, and (4) review and
551 analyze the efficacy of those programs designed to assist and support
552 the needs of children and their families that have received and expended
553 federal funds received pursuant to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and
554 Economic Security Act, P.L. 116-136, as amended from time to time, the
555 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act,
556 P.L. 116-260, as amended from time to time, and the American Rescue
557 Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to time, and, based
558 on such analysis, make recommendations about which of those
559 programs should receive a more permanent funding structure from the
560 state.

561 (b) The task force shall consist of the members appointed to the task
562 force to study the comprehensive needs of children pursuant to
563 subsection (b) of section 30 of public act 21-46, except that if any member
564 declines such appointment, a new appointee shall be selected by the
565 appointing authority pursuant to said subsection.

566 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivisions (1) to
567 (6), inclusive, of subsection (b) of section 30 of public act 21-46 may be a
568 member of the General Assembly.

569 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later
570 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall

571 be filled by the appointing authority not later than thirty days after the
572 vacancy occurs. If a vacancy is not filled by the appointing authority, the
573 chairpersons of the task force may fill such vacancy.

574 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro
575 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from
576 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule
577 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty
578 days after the effective date of this section.

579 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
580 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
581 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

582 (g) Not later than January 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024, the task force
583 shall update the report issued pursuant to subsection (g) of section 30 of
584 public act 21-46, and submit such updated report and any additional
585 findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the
586 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, in
587 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.
588 The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or
589 January 1, 2024, whichever is later.

590 Sec. 16. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024,
591 the Department of Social Services shall hire temporary and part-time
592 employees who will be responsible for collaborating with nonprofit
593 organizations to identify and enroll eligible children in the HUSKY
594 Health program.

595 Sec. 17. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024,
596 the Department of Education shall hire one full-time employee who will
597 be responsible for awarding a grant to and collaborating with a
598 nonprofit organization that specializes in identifying and providing
599 services for at-risk teenage students who are experiencing depression,
600 anxiety, substance abuse struggles and trauma and conflict-related
601 stresses, for the purpose of training school behavioral health providers

602 to be able to identify and provide services for such at-risk teenage
 603 students.

604 Sec. 18. (*Effective from passage*) The sum of one hundred fifty thousand
 605 dollars is allocated, in accordance with the provisions of special act 21-
 606 1, from the federal funds designated for the state pursuant to the
 607 provisions of Section 602 of Subtitle M of Title IX of the American Rescue
 608 Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2, as amended from time to time, to the
 609 Department of Social Services, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024,
 610 for the purpose of hiring temporary and part-time employees who will
 611 be responsible for collaborating with nonprofit organizations to identify
 612 and enroll eligible children in the HUSKY Health program, in
 613 accordance with the provisions of section 16 of this act.

614 Sec. 19. (*Effective July 1, 2023*) The sum of fifteen thousand dollars is
 615 appropriated to the Department of Education from the General Fund,
 616 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, for the purpose of awarding a
 617 grant to a nonprofit organization described in section 17 of this act, for
 618 the training of school behavioral health providers to identify and
 619 provide services for at-risk teenage students who are experiencing
 620 depression, anxiety, substance abuse struggles, and trauma and conflict-
 621 related stresses.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	11-24a
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	11-24b
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248g(h)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	17a-248e(b)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	31-57r
Sec. 9	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	31-57t(a)
Sec. 10	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 11	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

Sec. 12	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 13	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	20-195o(a)
Sec. 14	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	19a-88(e)(1) and (2)
Sec. 15	<i>from passage</i>	PA 22-81, Sec. 24
Sec. 16	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 17	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 18	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 19	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section

KID *Joint Favorable*

APP *Joint Favorable*