

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 25-1—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 act 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 act requires (1) public school superintendents or an appropriate governing authority 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 protects school staff from being disciplined for following the act's provisions (§§ 1-4).

Regarding drones, the act 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 act allows them to (1) receive compensation through endorsement contracts for use of their person, name, image, or likeness (NIL) or employment unrelated to an intercollegiate athletic program, and (2) 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. It also 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 act also would have made several changes to FY 25 appropriations (§§ 9-11), but these sections were vetoed. Lastly, the act makes various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Various, see below.

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

The act requires each public school superintendent to designate at least one

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administrator at each school in the school district to be responsible for interacting with federal immigration authorities who either 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 serving as a public high school for the schools under each of their respective jurisdictions.

It also requires all local or 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 act specifically refers to the guidance SDE issued on January 28, 2025, which among other things, recommends that each school district designate at least one administrator to be responsible for interacting with immigration authorities.

The act requires the designated administrator to use the updated security and safety plan protocols when they interact with immigration authorities. Under the act, “immigration authorities” are officers or employees of the U.S. 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 act also prohibits a school board, RESC, charter school authority, or endowed academy from disciplining, suspending, terminating, or otherwise punishing a designated employee or administrator for implementing the updated plan or taking certain permitted actions when interacting with federal immigration officials.

Finally, within seven days of the act’s enactment (March 10, 2025) the SDE commissioner must notify all public school authorities listed above about these provisions.

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

Updated School Security and Safety Plan

The act requires all school boards to update, for the 2024-25 school year, their school security and safety plan to cover protocols for interacting with federal immigration authorities. Schools must base these protocols on the SDE guidance on 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 act, these plans must cover each school in the district, include an all-hazards approach to emergencies at public schools, and include crisis management procedures, among other things.

The act specifically requires school boards to do the following in the plan:

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

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3. allow 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.

Actions Staff May Take. The act allows the designated administrator or any other school employee to take the following actions:

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 or administrative warrant), whether the immigration authority is claiming exigent circumstances, and any other consideration the legal counsel has identified.

Protections for Staff

The act prohibits a school board, RESC, charter school authority, or endowed academy from disciplining, suspending, terminating, or otherwise punishing a designated employee or administrator for (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 prior law, the school security and safety committee at each school had to include one administrator. The act 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.

§ 5 — DRONES FROM CERTAIN FOREIGN ENTITIES PROHIBITED

Beginning on varying dates shown in the table below, the act generally prohibits the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), other state agencies with department heads, and municipalities from purchasing or 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

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purchasing or operating one of these drones pursuant to the contract.

The act specifies that the above prohibitions do not impair any contract entered into before these dates. It 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.

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

The act also sets a process for certain officials to waive these prohibitions under specified conditions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Covered Foreign Entities, Persons, and Drones

Under the act, a “covered foreign entity” is:

1. any person on the federal Consolidated Screening List or Entity List (15 C.F.R. Part 744, Supp. 4) (generally, these lists set restrictions or licensing requirements for certain parties related to exports, reexports, or item transfers);
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” is any individual, association, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust, government, governmental subdivision, agency, instrumentality, or other legal entity.

A “small unmanned aircraft system” (drone) is 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 and required for the operator to operate it safely and efficiently in the national airspace system and (2) communication links and components that control the aircraft.

Waiver

Between the applicable operation prohibition date and December 31, 2034, the act 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 submit 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 act requires DESPP to maintain each written waiver statement the commissioner creates and those submitted to the department. The commissioner must disclose a copy of the written statement to any General Assembly member upon request. The statement is also subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

§§ 6-8 — DRONE OPERATION AND PROHIBITION ON DEADLY WEAPONS

Critical Infrastructure Facilities (§§ 6 & 7)

The act generally prohibits any “person” (see § 5 above) 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 that this prohibition also extends to inside any tunnels located on a limited access highway. 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 act generally 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 act 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 individuals. The act 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 act’s surveillance provisions discussed above.

The act makes a violation of its critical infrastructure facility provisions a class A misdemeanor (see [Table on Penalties](#)).

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Critical Infrastructure Facility Defined. Under the act, 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 completely enclosed by a fence or other physical barrier that is clearly designed to exclude intruders or clearly marked with at least one sign (which is reasonably likely to come to an intruder’s attention) stating that operating unmanned aircraft is prohibited:

1. electrical generating facility, electric substation or switchyard, or electric control system;
2. facility for storing, receiving, or processing petroleum products and other fuels;
3. chemical or rubber manufacturing or storage facility;
4. correctional facility;
5. telecommunications central office or wireless telecommunications infrastructure;
6. commercial port, harbor, rail yard, truck terminal, or other freight transportation facility;
7. gas manufacturing or distribution plant;
8. 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. dam classified as a high or significant hazard by the energy and environmental protection commissioner;
11. air navigation facility;
12. military facility;
13. reservoir, water treatment plant, distribution system and pumping station or wastewater treatment plant, collection system and pump station;
14. facility used primarily by a defense contractor, as defined in federal regulations;
15. government office building;
16. hospital;
17. public safety building or facility; or
18. state- or locally-owned bridge.

Deadly Weapons (§§ 6 & 8)

The act generally prohibits any “person” (see above) from equipping an aircraft or unmanned aircraft with a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, ammunition, or an 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 act makes a violation of this provision a class A misdemeanor (see [Table on Penalties](#)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 9-11 — FY 25 APPROPRIATION CHANGES

The act would have appropriated from the General Fund in FY 25 (1) \$2,087,500 to the Judicial Department to make grants of specified amounts to various community organizations and (2) \$800,000 to the Department of Public Health to make a grant of this amount to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Inc. (These sections were vetoed by the governor but are similar to a provision adopted in SA 25-2.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 12 & 13 — STUDENT ATHLETE COMPENSATION

Student Athletes

The act 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 (see *Background — Student Athlete Endorsement Contracts*, below). Prior law required student athletes to be enrolled in a higher education institution and participate in an intercollegiate athletic program to do these things. The act instead requires the student to attend or agree to attend the institution and participate or agree to participate in an intercollegiate athletic program.

Compensation by Institutions

The act removes a prohibition on student athletes receiving NIL compensation as an incentive 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 (see *Background — Related Cases*, below).

Under the act, 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 act 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 act 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 total (1) amount of revenue used to compensate student athletes and (2) number of student athletes compensated.

Institution Policies

The act 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 act 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 act expands, to include records of compensation under a revenue sharing agreement, the existing prohibition on public higher education institutions disclosing records of student athlete compensation under the FOIA unless the student consents in writing.

Other Provisions

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

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

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

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)

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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 act 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 an action permitted by the provisions on student athlete compensation.

The act makes several 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 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 — Related Cases

A federal judge approved settlements in two lawsuits against the NCAA and five athletic conferences (which do not involve any Connecticut higher education institutions) (*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 settlements resulted 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.