
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 307

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISIONS TO THE COMMERCE STATUTES.

SUMMARY

This bill makes several changes to Department of Community and Economic Development (DECD) statutes. It removes references to specific DECD offices (making DECD responsible generally for certain activities) and eliminates or delays certain reporting requirements. It also adds an absentee member policy for appointed members of the Manufacturing Innovation Advisory Board and Connecticut Tourism Council. The bill also makes other minor and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 1-6 — OFFICE DESIGNATIONS REMOVED

The bill removes references to specific offices within DECD and generally shifts the offices' responsibilities to the department or commissioner. Specifically, it removes references to the offices of Film, Television and Digital Media; Data Infrastructure Administration and Security; Permit Ombudsman; and Brownfield Remediation and Development.

The bill also removes a requirement that the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection; Connecticut Innovations, Inc.; Office of Policy and Management (OPM); and Department of Public Health each designate a staff member as their liaison to work with the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development. By law and under the bill, these entities must enter a memorandum of understanding about their respective brownfield and remediation activities.

§§ 7-10 & 14-18 — REPORTING REQUIREMENTS MODIFIED

The bill eliminates annual reporting requirements for the following:

1. the Youth Service Corps grant program (gives certain municipalities grants to establish local Youth Service Programs that have paid, community-based service learning and academic and workforce development programs for eligible Connecticut youth and young adults) (current law requires DECD to report annually to the Children and Commerce committees);
2. Connecticut Innovation's plan to increase funding to state businesses under the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs (federal grant programs rewarding small business innovation) (current law requires DECD to report annually to the Commerce and Veterans' and Military Affairs committees); and
3. the innovation place program (a program that awards grants of up to \$50,000 to startups in certain municipalities with entrepreneurial and innovation potential and gives them access to support services, such as mentoring and coworking space) (current law requires DECD to report annually to the Commerce and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees).

The bill also eliminates Connecticut Innovations' annual report to DECD on economic cluster bond funds.

Additionally, the bill delays, from January 1 to February 1, the due date for the DECD commissioner's annual reports to the Commerce Committee for the:

1. makerspace program (a pilot program to give financial assistance to entities establishing or expanding makerspaces that could be models for self-sustaining makerspaces, which are generally community spaces for entrepreneurs) and
2. Invest CT Fund program (through which participants qualify for tax credits against their insurance premiums and surplus lines broker taxes by investing in eligible businesses through state-certified Invest CT funds).

It also delays, from January 1 to February 1, the due date for the DECD commissioner's report to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on the Good to Great program (a program to give grants to nonprofit organizations that own or operate cultural and historic sites in the state for capital improvements).

Lastly, the bill changes the reporting requirement for the Connecticut Clean Economy Council from twice per year (biannually) to every two years (biennially), beginning February 15, 2026. The council, established in 2025, advises on strategies and policies that strengthen the state's climate mitigation, clean energy, resilience, and sustainability programs, particularly for vulnerable communities. It must report on its work, and any findings and recommendations, to the governor; OPM; and the Commerce, Energy and Technology, Environment, and Higher Education and Employment Advancement, committees.

§§ 11 & 12 — MANUFACTURING INNOVATION ADVISORY BOARD

The bill makes several changes to the Manufacturing Innovation Advisory Board (which is responsible for the strategic direction of the Manufacturing Innovation Fund (MIF) and the financial assistance application process for eligible recipients). The bill allows the board to consult any individual or entity to accomplish its purposes. It also expands the eligibility criteria for appointed members. Specifically, the bill allows for board members who:

1. have skill, knowledge, and experience in industries and science related to biotechnology, semiconductors, or clean energy production (in addition to aerospace, medical devices, digital manufacturing or communication, or advanced manufacturing, as under current law) or
2. are community college faculty or technical high school teachers in a related discipline (in addition to university faculty or graduate degree holders, as under current law).

Absentee Member Procedure

The bill also requires that any appointed board member who fails to

attend three consecutive meetings or half of all meetings held in a calendar year be deemed to have resigned. The appointing authority must fill the resulting vacancy (1) in the same manner as the original appointment and (2) for the unexpired term of the member they are replacing. If the vacancy is not filled within 60 days, the board's chairperson must temporarily fill the vacancy until the appointing authority makes an appointment.

Reporting

The bill delays the due date, from January 1 to February 1, for DECD's annual report on the MIF to the advisory board. The bill also requires DECD (MIF's administrator) to submit the report, after advisory board approval, to the Commerce Committee. Current law requires the advisory board to submit the approved report.

§ 13 — CONNECTICUT TOURISM COUNCIL

Absentee Member Procedure

The bill requires that any appointed member of the Connecticut Tourism Council who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or half of all meetings held in a calendar year be deemed to have resigned. The appointing authority must fill the resulting vacancy (1) in the same manner as the original appointment and (2) for the unexpired term of the member they are replacing. If the vacancy is not filled within 60 days, the council chairperson must temporarily fill the vacancy until the appointing authority makes an appointment.

By law, the Connecticut Tourism Council consults with DECD on the state's tourism promotion efforts, including the strategic marketing plan.

Reporting

The bill requires the DECD commissioner, rather than the council as under current law, to annually submit to the Commerce Committee a report describing tourism promotion efforts in the state and evaluating the department's strategic marketing plan. It also delays the report's due date, from January 1 to February 1.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 1 (03/24/2026)