

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 26-85—SB 383

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY RELATED TO HIGHER
EDUCATION**

SUMMARY: This act eliminates the requirement for the chief workforce officer, in consultation with various others, to establish a human services career pipeline program. But it retains requirements for the officer to (1) develop a plan for a pipeline program (the act also extends the deadline for the plan) and (2) consult with a similar list of entities on the greatest needs of human services providers and barriers to hiring and retaining these providers.

The act extends, from January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2027, the deadline for the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) to implement a program to support individuals pursuing training for a commercial driver's license (CDL). It also makes changes to the types of trainings that can be added to the program and changes reporting requirements.

Finally, the act eliminates the requirement for OWS to establish a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system pipeline training pilot program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except the changes related to the CDL training program are effective upon passage.

§ 1 — HUMAN SERVICES WORKFORCE

Elimination of Required Pipeline Program

The act eliminates the requirement that the officer establish, and annually report on, a human services career pipeline program to ensure there are enough trained providers to serve people who are elderly and people who have disabilities, cognitive impairment, or mental illness. Prior law required this program to (1) be established within available appropriations and in consultation with various others and (2) include training and certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, administering medication, job placement, and service provider retention incentives.

Extended Deadline for Required Pipeline Program Plan

Existing law requires the officer to develop a plan for a human services career pipeline program in consultation with the labor commissioner and report on the plan to the Aging, Appropriations, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Human Services, Labor and Public Employees, and Public Health committees. The act extends the expired deadline (from July 1, 2024, to July 1, 2026) for the officer to report on the plan.

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By law, the plan must include (1) a strategy to increase how many state residents pursue human services careers, (2) recommendations for salaries and working conditions to retain adequate providers to serve state residents, and (3) estimated funding needs for the program.

Changes to Required Study

Existing law requires the officer to consult with certain other entities to determine the greatest needs for human services providers and barriers to hiring and retaining them. The act:

1. specifies that the determination of providers' greatest needs relates to what providers need in order to serve people who are elderly and people who have disabilities, cognitive impairment, or a behavioral health disorder; and
2. requires the officer to consult with the public health commissioner when making this determination, in addition to the already required consultation with the commissioners of aging and disability services, developmental services, labor, mental health and addiction services, and social services; Council on Developmental Disabilities; and Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council.

§ 2 — CDL TRAINING PROGRAM

The act extends the expired deadline (from January 1, 2025, to January 1, 2027) for OWS to implement a program to support individuals pursuing CDL training. By law, (1) OWS can competitively choose a consultant to support the program's design and implementation and (2) its design must consider metrics to identify training providers, incentive-based payments for providers, and a way to target potential students.

The law required OWS to identify additional career training opportunities to expand the CDL training program by July 1, 2025. The act (1) eliminates the requirement that these additional training opportunities only require one year or less of training and (2) requires the officer to approve adding or removing a training opportunity from the program.

Reports

The act eliminates requirements for OWS to report to the Appropriations; Commerce; Education; Finance, Revenue and Bonding; Higher Education and Employment Advancement; and Labor and Public Employees committees on the (1) design and implementation of the CDL training program and (2) additional training opportunities.

The act also (1) eliminates an annual reporting requirement to the governor and these same committees set to begin by July 1, 2026, on the CDL program and (2) replaces it with a requirement to annually report beginning by October 1, 2027, on the training opportunities as part of OWS's annual report to the governor and the Appropriations, Commerce, Education, Higher Education and Employment

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Advancement, and Labor and Public Employees committees. As under existing law, information about the program must include completion and job placement rates, starting wages, wage gains and growth, funds used for payment obligations, grants, wrap-around services, the percentage of participants complying with repayment obligations, and the total repayment received.

§ 3 — HEATING, VENTILATION, AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM PIPELINE TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM ELIMINATION

The act eliminates the requirement that OWS establish, in consultation with the Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Higher Education (OHE), and Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) and within available appropriations, a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system pipeline training pilot program. It eliminates provisions that required:

1. the program to include pre-apprenticeship workforce pipeline training programs to support individuals from underserved and underrepresented populations and historically marginalized communities;
2. OWS to develop criteria with DOL to prioritize (a) low-income and underrepresented individuals in municipalities with more than 100,000 people and (b) nonprofit and community-based organizations serving low-income and underrepresented individuals; and
3. OWS, in consultation with DOL, OHE, and CTECS, to identify recent participants in training programs and support their transition into immediate job vacancies.