
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 445

AN ACT CONCERNING A JOBS PROGRAM FOR YOUTH IMPACTED BY THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM, REVIEW OF PROBATION VIOLATIONS AND STATE-WIDE EXPANSION OF TRUANCY CLINICS.

SUMMARY

This bill generally requires a review of probation violations and the creation of a youth jobs program and probate court truancy clinics. More specifically, it requires the:

1. judicial branch's Court Support Services Division's (CSSD) executive director to review probation violations during the five years preceding the bill's passage and submit a report on them to the Judiciary Committee by January 1, 2025;
2. CSSD executive director, along with the Workforce Investment Boards, to develop and implement a jobs program to connect youth impacted by the juvenile justice system with employment opportunities and report on the program to the Judiciary Committee by December 1, 2025; and
3. probate court administrator to (a) establish, presumably, truancy clinics in each town's associated regional children's probate court or probate court for identifying and resolving the cause of referred students' trancies and (b) annually report on the clinics' effectiveness to the Judiciary Committee beginning by January 1, 2026.

The bill also makes conforming and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provision on the probate court's truancy clinics is effective July 1, 2024.

CSSD'S PROBATION VIOLATIONS REVIEW

Within 30 days after the bill's passage, it requires the CSSD executive director to review probation violations during the five years preceding the bill's passage. The review must evaluate the rates at which people on probation commit probation violations, categorized by violation type, and the court's responses to the violations.

The CSSD executive director must report on the review, including any legislative recommendations, to the Judiciary Committee by January 1, 2025.

JOBS PROGRAM FOR YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

By January 1, 2025, the bill requires the CSSD executive director and the Workforce Investment Boards to develop and implement a jobs program for the purpose of connecting youth impacted by the juvenile justice system with employment opportunities with local businesses and organizations. The program must assist the youths to obtain apprenticeships, learn trade skills, and become aware of union jobs. The executive director and the Workforce Investment Boards must make local large employers and eligible youth aware of the program.

The CSSD executive director must report on the program to the Judiciary Committee by December 1, 2025.

PROBATE COURT TRUANCY CLINIC

Truancy Clinics Required

Under current law, the probate court administrator may, within available appropriations, establish a truancy clinic within (1) any regional children's probate court that serves a town designated as an alliance district or (2) any probate court that serves a town designated as an alliance district that is not served by a regional children's probate court. The bill eliminates this discretion and instead requires the probate court administrator to establish, presumably, truancy clinics in each town's associated regional children's probate court or probate court. By law, these truancy clinics must operate for the purpose of identifying and resolving the cause of a child's truancy using nonpunitive procedures.

Referrals

The bill makes changes to the statute that allows referrals to the clinic. Under current law, if a truancy clinic is established, the principal of any elementary or middle school located in a town served by the clinic, or the principal's designee, may refer to the clinic a parent or guardian with a child enrolled in the school who is, or of at risk of becoming, a truant. The bill changes the effective date of this allowance to when a truancy clinic is established and extends it to apply to high school principals and their students.

By law, when a truancy clinic receives a referral, it must prepare a citation and summons for the child's parent or guardian to appear at the clinic. An attendance officer or police officer must deliver the citation and summons and a copy of the referral to the parent or guardian. After the initial appearance, the parent or guardian's participation in the truancy clinic is voluntary.

Under the bill, as under existing law, the administrative judge of the regional children's probate court or the probate judge administering a truancy clinic may refer any matter referred to the clinic to a probate magistrate or attorney probate referee assigned by the probate court administrator.

Reporting

The bill carries forward an existing annual reporting requirement under which each administrative judge of a regional children's probate court and each probate judge who administers a truancy clinic must file a report with the probate court administrator assessing the effectiveness of each truancy clinic in the judge's respective court by September 1.

The bill adds an annual reporting requirement under which the probate court administrator must submit a report to the Judiciary Committee assessing the effectiveness of the truancy clinics beginning by January 1, 2026.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 36 Nay 1 (03/26/2024)