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## OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7160 (as amended by House "A" and "C")\*

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND CONCERNING PENALTIES FOR OPERATING A MOTOR VEHICLE AND VESSEL WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR OR ANY DRUG, PONTOON BOATS, TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES, VIDEO PRESENTATION UPON LICENSE RENEWAL AND THE SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES COURSE.**

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§§ 26-28 — HIGHWAY WORK ZONE AND ROADSIDE VEHICLE SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM

*Creates a new DMV-administered highway work zone and roadside vehicle safety awareness program and related requirements; generally requires driver's license applicants and violators of the "move over" law or highway worker endangerment law to take the program and requires suspension of violators' licenses if they commit specified additional violations within a certain time period after completing it*

§§ 29-34 — YELLOW ENVELOPES FOR PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

*Requires DMV, in consultation with CWCSEO and other specified entities, to develop yellow envelopes and related public awareness materials for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities*

§§ 35-58 — E-BIKES AND OTHER ONE-, TWO-, AND THREE-WHEELED VEHICLES

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*Increases current law's enhanced penalties for violations of the “move over” law and the law on endangering highway workers that result in the injury or death of an emergency vehicle driver or occupant or a highway worker*

**BACKGROUND**

**SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes to motor vehicle laws. A section-by-section analysis follows.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Various, see below.

\*House Amendment “A,” among other things, removes the provisions on pontoon boat registration fees and adds provisions on (1) a highway work zone and roadside safety awareness program, (2) yellow envelopes, (3) e-bikes and other vehicles, (4) payment plans and license suspension for motor vehicle violations, and (5) driving under the influence (DUI) incident reports.

\*House Amendment “C” adds provisions increasing penalties for violating the “move over” law or endangering a highway worker.

**§§ 1 & 2 — BUSINESS ENTITY APPLICATIONS FOR CERTAIN BUSINESS LICENSES**

*Modifies who must undergo a state and national criminal records check for electronic issuance, dealer, and repairers licenses by specifying that all those named on the license application must do so*

By law, an applicant for a car dealer, repairer, or electronic issuance license may be denied a new or renewal license based on being convicted of, or found civilly liable for, certain crimes or violations. If the license applicant is a business entity, the license may be denied based on the history of certain individuals who own or control the business.

The bill changes which individuals' civil and criminal history must

be considered in licensing decisions. Under current law, it applies to the applicant or, if the applicant is a business entity, its officers and major stockholders. The bill instead specifies that any individual listed on the license application form must undergo a fingerprint-based state and national criminal records check.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2026

### **§ 1 — ELECTRONIC ISSUANCE LICENSES**

*Explicitly prohibits DMV from issuing an electronic issuance license to dealers, repairers, motor vehicle leasing or rental companies, or department contractors*

Existing law prohibits anyone from engaging in the business of electronically filing registration or title applications without an electronic issuance license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

The bill prohibits DMV from issuing an electronic issuance license to licensed car dealers, repairers, leasing and rental companies, and contractors authorized to handle DMV transactions. Existing law, unchanged by the bill, allows these entities to use the department's electronic system to register vehicles or issue titles without getting an electronic issuance license.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2026

### **§ 3 — DRIVER'S LICENSE RENEWAL WITHOUT PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

*Makes minor changes to the law permitting renewal of a driver's license without the holder's personal appearance*

Existing law allows the DMV commissioner to renew someone's driver's license without his or her personal appearance under several specified conditions. Under current law, one condition is that the person must have personally appeared to renew his or her license within the time limitations set in state or federal law. The bill changes this requirement to refer specifically to the timeframe set in the federal Real ID regulations (i.e. within 16 years). It also explicitly allows the commissioner to require appearance within a shorter period of time, at his discretion.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

**§§ 4 & 27 — EIGHT-HOUR SAFE DRIVING COURSE**

*Increases the maximum fee for the eight-hour safe driving course from \$150 to \$200 and requires any course held through distance learning to require participants to use a camera*

By law, youth and adult instruction permit holders must take an eight-hour course on safe driving practices before getting their driver's license. Under existing law, this course can be offered in-person in a group setting, through distance learning, or a hybrid of both, and any course held fully or partially through distance learning must be taught in real time by a live instructor and have interactive components. The bill additionally requires that participants in any distance learning component be required to use a camera.

The bill also increases, from \$150 to \$200, the maximum fee that driving schools and high schools may charge for the eight-hour course.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, for the fee increase and January 1, 2026, for the camera requirement.

**§ 5 — COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE OR PERMIT RESTORATION**

*Requires people who had their CDL downgraded or CLP canceled to pay the \$175 license restoration fee when seeking to restore the CDL or CLP*

The bill requires any commercial driver's license (CDL) holder whose license was downgraded to a class D license to pay the \$175 license restoration fee in order to restore their CDL. It requires the same for commercial learner's permit (CLP) holders seeking to restore a cancelled CLP. By law, CDL holders may have their license downgraded, or their CLP canceled, for failure to comply with certain requirements, such as the requirement to periodically submit a medical certificate.

Under existing law, this restoration fee applies when someone seeks to restore their license after having it suspended or to restore their CDL after being disqualified from driving a commercial vehicle.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

**§§ 6 & 7 — DEALERS AND REPAIRERS**

*Modifies the standard for determining when a dealer or repairer can expand an existing licensed location on adjacent property without getting another license and increases the dealer and repairer record retention period*

### **Licensees Adding Adjacent Land**

Existing law generally requires car dealers and repairers to get a separate license from DMV for each place of business they operate, but it makes an exception to this requirement for dealers and repairers that expand a licensed location by adding buildings or certain land.

Under current law, this exception applies when a dealer or repairer adds adjacent land to its place of business. Under the bill, this exemption instead applies only when a dealer adds land directly bordering or sharing a common boundary with the licensed location without any intervening highway or private roadway. Existing law allows the DMV commissioner to require licensees that add buildings or land to their business to show evidence that they comply with municipal zoning requirements, among other things.

### **Records Retention**

By law, dealers and repairers must retain records of purchase, sale, and repair transactions related to motor vehicles or major component parts. The bill extends the law's required retention period from two to three years after the transaction. Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, DMV may suspend or revoke a dealer or repairer's license or impose a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for failing to comply with this requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

### **§§ 8 & 9 — MOTOR VEHICLE RECYCLERS**

*Requires motor vehicle recyclers to stop operating if their license expires, imposes a late fee for late renewal applications, and prohibits DMV from renewing a license that has been expired for more than 45 days*

By law, motor vehicle recyclers must biennially renew their license. If a recycler's license expires before its renewal is approved by DMV, the bill specifies that a recycler must stop operating until DMV receives its renewal application, fee, and surety bond and approves its renewal application.

The bill imposes a \$100 late fee on renewal applications that are submitted after the license's expiration date. It also prohibits DMV from renewing a recycler's license that has been expired for more than 45 days, but it allows a recycler whose license can no longer be renewed to apply for a new license.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

**§§ 10, 20-24 & 62— TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING CHANGES**

*Makes several minor, technical, and conforming changes to the motor vehicle statutes*

The bill makes several minor, technical, and conforming changes to the motor vehicle statutes and HB 7162, as amended by House "A".

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except § 11, which is effective October 1, 2025.

**§ 11 — TITLING OLDER VEHICLES**

*Prohibits DMV from requiring a surety bond as a condition of issuing a title to vehicles older than 20 model years old*

The bill requires DMV to develop a streamlined process for issuing title certificates at an owner's request for vehicles older than 20 model years and for which a title was not issued upon registration. By February 1, 2026, DMV must submit a description of the new process and any legislative recommendations to the Transportation Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**§§ 12-21 — RECIPROCAL SUSPENSION PENALTIES FOR DRIVING AND BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

*Imposes reciprocal credential suspension penalties for convictions of DUI and BUI and related administrative per se violations*

The bill imposes reciprocal driver's license, boating certificate, and personal watercraft certificate suspension penalties for convictions of DUI and boating under the influence (BUI) and related administrative per se violations.

Under the administrative per se laws, drivers or boaters may have their credentials suspended for the following reasons, separately from the criminal process: (1) having a blood alcohol content (BAC) in excess

of the applicable per se limit (generally, 0.08%); (2) being found, based on a police officer’s investigation, to have been driving or boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and (3) refusing a chemical test (e.g., a breath test) or the nontestimonial portion of a drug influence evaluation (or DIE, which is an evaluation done by a specially trained police officer to determine a person’s impairment from using drugs).

**Penalties**

The table below shows the penalties that apply under the bill for each offense. Generally, the bill applies the credential suspension penalties for one offense to the equivalent offense in the other law (e.g., a second DUI offense also subjects a person to the certificate suspension that applies for a second BUI offense). For driver’s license suspensions, a required period of ignition interlock device (IID) use applies as a condition of license restoration, regardless of whether the offense triggering the suspension was committed in a motor vehicle or a boat.

Under the bill, offenders are subject to a suspension penalty for all three credentials, regardless of whether they currently hold them. If an offender does not have one of the credentials, the suspension applies to a person’s operating privilege or right to operate a vessel (effectively, this means the person cannot get the credential for the length of the suspension).

**Table: Certificate and License Suspension Penalties Under the Bill**

<b>Offense (§)</b>		<b>Driver’s License</b>	<b>Boating or Personal Watercraft Certificate</b>
<b>BUI (§ 14), DUI (§ 15), or DUI with a child passenger (§ 20)</b>	First	45 day suspension, plus one year IID use	One year suspension
	Second	45 day suspension plus three years IID use, with operation in the first year limited to certain travel (e.g., to work or school)	Three year suspension (or until age 21, whichever is longer)
	Third and subsequent	Permanent revocation*	Permanent revocation
<b>Administrative Per Se for BUI (§ 16) or</b>	First	<u>Age 21 and over:</u> 45 days, plus 6 months IID use	<u>General:</u> 90 days <u>BAC of 0.16 or more:</u>



<b>Offense (§)</b>		<b>Driver's License</b>	<b>Boating or Personal Watercraft Certificate</b>
<b>DUI (§ 17)</b>		<u>Under age 21</u> : 45 days, plus 1 year IID use <u>Test/DIE Refusal</u> : 45 days, plus 1 year IID use	120 days <u>Test/DIE Refusal</u> : 6 months
	Second	<u>Age 21 and over</u> : 45 days, plus 1 year IID use <u>Under age 21</u> : 45 days, plus 2 year IID use <u>Test/DIE Refusal</u> : 45 days, plus 2 year IID use	<u>General</u> : 9 months <u>BAC of 0.16 or more</u> : 10 months <u>Test Refusal/DIE</u> : 1 year
	Third and subsequent	<u>Age 21 and over</u> : 45 days, plus 2 years IID use <u>Under age 21</u> : 45 days, plus 3 years IID use <u>Test/DIE Refusal</u> : 45 days, plus 3 years IID use	<u>General</u> : 2 years <u>BAC of 0.16 or more</u> : 2 years, 6 months <u>Test/DIE Refusal</u> : 3 years
<b>DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children (§ 21)</b>	All	45 day suspension plus 3 years IID use, with operation in the first year limited to certain travel (e.g., to work or school)	1 year suspension

\*The offender is eligible for reinstatement after two years. If reinstated, he or she must drive with an IID unless the DMV commissioner lifts this requirement after 15 years.

The bill also deems equivalent boating and driving offenses as prior convictions under the bill, as shown in the table below.

**Table: Offenses Considered Prior Convictions, Current Law vs. Bill**

<b>Offense (§)</b>	<b>Considered a Prior Conviction of the Offense Under Current Law</b>	<b>Considered a Prior Conviction of the Offense Under the Bill</b>
<b>BUI (§ 14)</b>	BUI	BUI and DUI
<b>DUI (§ 15)</b>	DUI, DUI with a child passenger, DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children, 2nd degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, 2nd degree assault with a motor vehicle, or an offense committed in another state that is equivalent to any of these offenses	DUI, DUI with a child passenger, DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children, 2nd degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, 2nd degree assault with a motor vehicle, BUI, reckless operation of a vessel while under the influence, or an offense committed in another state that is equivalent to any of these offenses
<b>Administrative Per Se, BUI (§ 16)</b>	BUI administrative per se	BUI and DUI administrative per se

<b>Offense (§)</b>	<b>Considered a Prior Conviction of the Offense Under Current Law</b>	<b>Considered a Prior Conviction of the Offense Under the Bill</b>
<b>Administrative Per Se, DUI (§ 17)</b>	DUI administrative per se	BUI and DUI administrative per se
<b>DUI with a child passenger (§ 20)</b>	DUI, DUI under age 21, DUI with a child passenger, DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children, 2nd degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, 2nd degree assault with a motor vehicle, or an offense committed in another state that is equivalent to any of these offenses	DUI, DUI under age 21, DUI with a child passenger, DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children, 2nd degree manslaughter with a motor vehicle, 2nd degree assault with a motor vehicle, BUI, reckless operation of a vessel while under the influence, or an offense committed in another state that is equivalent to any of these offenses

### **Administration**

Under the bill, the court must report each DUI and BUI conviction to DMV and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the commissioners must suspend the offender's driver's license and boating or personal watercraft as the bill requires.

The bill also requires the DMV and DEEP commissioners to notify each other when they suspend a person's driver's license or certificate, and the commissioner receiving the notice must suspend the applicable credential.

### **Credential Issuance**

The bill prohibits DMV from issuing a driver's license to anyone whose boating or personal watercraft certificate is suspended or revoked or subject to pending action by DEEP that may result in suspension or revocation due to DUI or reckless operation of a vessel. It also prohibits DEEP from issuing a boating certificate to anyone whose driver's license is suspended or revoked, or subject to pending action at DMV that may result in suspension or revocation due to DUI, DUI under age 21, DUI with a child passenger, or DUI in a school bus or other vehicle designated for carrying children.

The bill also requires DEEP and DMV to notify each other of any

pending actions that may result in suspensions, together with the person's identifying information.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

**§ 25 — VIDEO ON TRAFFIC SAFETY LAWS AT LICENSE RENEWAL**

*Increases the frequency with which driver's license holders must watch a traffic safety video to every renewal, rather than every other renewal*

By law, the DMV commissioner must develop and revise a video about state laws impacting drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as ways to drive safely and reduce transportation-related fatalities and severe injuries. Current law requires the commissioner to require people to watch the video every other renewal. The bill instead requires that driver's license holders watch the video each time they renew their license. (Generally, a driver's license must be renewed every eight years.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

**§§ 26-28 — HIGHWAY WORK ZONE AND ROADSIDE VEHICLE SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM**

*Creates a new DMV-administered highway work zone and roadside vehicle safety awareness program and related requirements; generally requires driver's license applicants and violators of the "move over" law or highway worker endangerment law to take the program and requires suspension of violators' licenses if they commit specified additional violations within a certain time period after completing it*

The bill creates a new highway work zone and roadside vehicle safety awareness program administered by DMV. Starting January 1, 2026, it generally requires this program to be completed by (1) applicants for a driver's license or learner's permit and (2) drivers convicted of violating the "move over" law or the law on endangering highway workers.

Specifically, the bill requires 16- and 17-year-old driver's license applicants who get a learner's permit on or after January 11, 2026, to submit a program completion certificate to the DMV commissioner, as he prescribes. Beginning on the same date, it also generally applies this requirement to any driver's license applicant who (1) has not previously held a Connecticut license and (2) does not hold a valid license issued by (a) another state or U.S. territory or possession or (b) a foreign

country with which the commissioner has an agreement for reciprocal recognition of driver training requirements.

The bill establishes program requirements and allows the commissioner to certify organizations (e.g., licensed driving schools) to offer the program. It requires a violator's driving record to reflect program participation for a specified time period and sets license suspension requirements for drivers who commit certain additional violations during this time period.

The bill also requires the DMV commissioner to adopt regulations to implement the program.

***Program Requirements***

Under the bill, the highway work zone and roadside vehicle safety awareness program must, at minimum, do the following and end with a written or electronic test:

1. review principles of safe motor vehicle operation,
2. highlight dangers of highway work zones and emphasize risks related to driving unsafely in them,
3. include testimonials from highway workers and their families,
4. emphasize the dangers of vehicles located on the highway shoulder, and
5. review proper interactions with emergency vehicles.

DMV and other program providers (see below) may offer it in person, virtually (i.e. through distance learning), or by a combination of both. The virtual option must have interactive components (e.g., mandatory interactions, participation, or testing).

***Program Fee.*** The bill sets a maximum \$200 fee providers may charge for the program. (The cap specifically applies when the program is provided to 16- and 17-year-olds according to related driver's license application requirements, as described above, but appears to apply for

other required participants as well.)

***Program Providers***

The bill requires DMV to offer the program and allows the commissioner to certify other organizations (e.g., licensed driving schools) to do so. He must determine how many program providers are needed.

Under the bill, each organization or driving school seeking certification or recertification must apply to DMV as the commissioner prescribes and submit a \$350 application fee. Certifications are valid for two years and are not transferable. Additionally, each applicant must:

1. be registered to do business in Connecticut and maintain good standing with the Office of the Secretary of the State;
2. have a permanent place of business in the state where all program records are maintained and accessible to DMV during normal business hours;
3. submit to the DMV commissioner for approval a detailed curriculum and lesson plan (including any changes to them), which will be used in each program;
4. electronically transmit to the commissioner, at the times and in the form he prescribes, information on enrollment and program completion; and
5. file and maintain a \$50,000 surety bond (a) conditioned on compliance with state and federal laws or regulations related to the program and (b) provided as indemnity for the state's or any person's losses or expenses due to the program provider's acts or omissions.

This bond must be executed in the name of the state for the benefit of any aggrieved party, but the penalty of the bond may only be imposed on the DMV commissioner's order after a hearing.

Under the bill, the commissioner has discretion over provider

recertification.

**Background Check.** Before the DMV commissioner certifies an applicant to provide the program, he must investigate the applicant's character, driving history, and criminal history (including its principals and officers, in the case of business entities). The bill requires applicants to submit to the commissioner any information on current or past criminal or civil actions.

### ***Driving Records and License Suspension***

Under the bill, anyone required to attend the program due to a "move over" law or highway worker endangerment law violation, as discussed above, must have the requirement and its completion date posted on his or her driving record. The program completion date must stay on the driver's record until he or she has gone 36 consecutive months without any subsequent (1) moving or suspension violations or (2) violations of the "move over" law.

If a driver commits one of these violations before 36 months pass, the commissioner must suspend his or her driver's license for (1) 30 days upon a first conviction, (2) 60 days upon a second conviction, and (3) 90 days upon a third or subsequent conviction.

"Moving violations" and "suspension violations" are violations specified in existing law for which the DMV commissioner can require a driver, after committing a certain number of them, to attend a four-hour operator's retraining program. These violations include, for example, speeding and reckless driving.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

### **§§ 29-34 — YELLOW ENVELOPES FOR PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

*Requires DMV, in consultation with CWCSEO and other specified entities, to develop yellow envelopes and related public awareness materials for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities*

This bill requires DMV, in consultation with the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) and other specified entities, to develop yellow envelopes and related public

awareness materials for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities (see below). As required under existing law, DMV similarly offers blue envelopes by request to people with autism spectrum disorder, which (1) include information about improving communication between these individuals and police officers and (2) hold their driver's license, registration, and insurance card (CGS § 14-11j). (These envelopes are meant to be handed to officers during a traffic stop.)

The bill requires DMV to provide the yellow envelopes and public awareness materials to its department offices and certain first responders (i.e. law enforcement units, municipal and volunteer fire departments and ambulance services, commercial ambulance and rescue services, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, and state-operated ambulance and paramedic intercept services). It correspondingly requires these people and entities to give the envelopes and materials, by request and at no cost, to people with a cognitive impairment or physical disability (or their parent, guardian, family member, or driver).

The bill requires CWCSEO to coordinate and identify related education and training programs for first responders. It also requires several existing trainings for various first responders to begin providing information about the blue and yellow envelopes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the training requirements unrelated to CWCSEO are effective January 1, 2026.

### ***Yellow Envelopes and Public Awareness Materials***

The bill requires DMV, by January 1, 2026, to take the following actions in consultation with CWCSEO; one state association each of police chiefs, fire chiefs, and EMS personnel; the Office of Emergency Medical Services; and at least one organization that advocates for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities:

1. design yellow envelopes (a) to hold a driver's license, registration, insurance card, and other materials about a person's

cognitive impairment or physical disability and (b) with written information on how police, EMS, or firefighters can accommodate and effectively interact with these individuals; and

2. develop brochures about both yellow and blue envelopes, as well as certain other public awareness materials (e.g., lanyards and stickers) that generally have the same information as must be written on these envelopes.

### ***CWCSEO Training Coordination***

The bill requires CWCSEO to coordinate and identify education and training programs for first responders related to improving their interactions with people with a cognitive impairment, physical disability, or autism spectrum disorder. This includes techniques for handling incidents, promoting accommodations, and enhancing communication. CWCSEO must do so in consultation with (1) at least one organization that advocates for these individuals and offers courses certified by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council and (2) one state association each of police chiefs, fire chiefs, and EMS personnel.

### ***First Responder Trainings***

The bill also requires several existing trainings for various first responders to provide information about the blue and yellow envelopes, including:

1. the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of State Police's police basic or field training program, starting by January 1, 2026;
2. the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control's optional fire service training and education program; and
3. certain Department of Public Health-approved training programs available to members of various ambulance, rescue, and paramedic intercept services.

Existing law generally already requires these trainings to give



information on techniques for handling incidents involving people with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairment, and nonverbal learning disorder.

## **§§ 35-58 — E-BIKES AND OTHER ONE-, TWO-, AND THREE-WHEELED VEHICLES**

*Makes various changes related to e-bike modification and labeling, e-bike sales, e-bike use on trails, e-bike violation penalties, and the definitions of motor-driven cycle and electric scooter*

The bill makes various changes related to the laws governing the manufacture, sale, and use of electric bicycles (e-bikes) and the legal classification of lower speed one-, two-, and three-wheeled vehicles.

Regarding e-bikes, among other things, the bill:

1. generally requires anyone who modifies an e-bike to change its motor-powered speed capability or motor engagement to also modify the required label appropriately,
2. prohibits sellers from representing vehicles as e-bikes if they do not meet state law's definition of an e-bike and requires them to disclose the vehicle's likely legal classification to customers,
3. broadly permits class 1 e-bikes on bicycle or multi-use trails or paths, and
4. imposes penalties for several existing e-bike laws.

The bill modifies definitions applicable to lower speed one-, two-, and three-wheeled vehicles and clarifies the treatment of electric powered vehicles in these categories by:

1. replacing the definition of "electric foot scooter" with one for "electric scooter" and broadening the definition to also include certain electric scooters designed to be ridden sitting down (e.g., by increasing the scooter weight limit to 100 pounds) and
2. expanding the "motor-driven cycle" definition to include (a) motorized unicycles and (b) vehicles with an electric or hybrid motor, if the motor has a capacity under 50 cubic centimeters (cc),

has a wattage less than 3,700 watts, or produces five-brake horsepower or less.

The bill also makes numerous technical and conforming changes, principally related to the electric scooter definition.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

### ***E-bike Modification and Out-Of-Class Vehicles***

***E-Bike Classification.*** Under existing law and unchanged by the bill, an e-bike is a bicycle that (1) has operable foot pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts and (2) qualifies as a class 1, class 2, or class 3 bicycle (see table below).

**Table: E-bike Classes**

<b><i>Class</i></b>	<b><i>Motor Engagement</i></b>	<b><i>Motor Disengagement</i></b>	<b><i>Top Speed</i></b>
Class 1	Only while the rider uses the foot pedals	When the rider stops pedaling or when it hits the top speed	20 mph
Class 2	While the rider pedals or with a throttle (i.e. they may be powered exclusively by the motor)	When the brakes are applied or when it hits the top speed	20 mph
Class 3	Only while the rider uses the foot pedals	When the rider stops pedaling or when it hits the top speed	28 mph

***Vehicles That Are Not E-bikes Under the Law.*** The bill specifies that a vehicle with an electric motor for propulsion is not considered an e-bike under the law if it (1) does not meet the definition of an e-bike as sold or offered for sale or (2) has one or multiple operating modes, a throttle, and the capability to exceed 20 mph on motor power alone in any mode when the throttle is engaged.

It also specifies that these vehicles are not e-bikes under the law if they have been configured or modified by someone (or are designed, manufactured, or intended by the manufacturer, importer, or seller to be configured or modified) to not meet existing law's e-bike definition due to:

1. the inclusion of a mechanical switch or button;
2. a change in the software controlling the electric drive system;
3. the use of a mobile application; or
4. any other means intended by a person, manufacturer, importer, or seller to modify the vehicle, or allow it to be modified, to no longer meet the definition.

**Labeling.** Existing law requires manufacturers of e-bikes offered for sale in Connecticut to, among other things, (1) attach a label to each e-bike that states the bike's classification, maximum speed, and motor wattage, and (2) ensure that the motor disengages according to the specifications of its classification. The bill specifies that the label must be in at least nine-point type size.

Additionally, the bill generally requires anyone who modifies an e-bike to change its motor-powered speed capability or motor engagement to also modify the label appropriately. Specifically, if the e-bike no longer meets the definition of an e-bike, the person must remove the label. If the modification changes the e-bike's classification, the person must replace the label with one that accounts for the modification and has the new applicable classification, including its maximum speed and motor wattage.

The bill imposes a penalty for violating the labeling requirements of (1) up to \$100 for a first offense and (2) \$100 to \$300 for a subsequent offense.

**Prohibition on Misrepresentation and Required Disclosures.** The bill prohibits sellers of vehicles that have an electric motor but are not considered an "e-bike" under the law (see above) from (1) selling them as e-bikes or (2) offering them for sale if they are labeled as class 1, class 2, or class 3 e-bikes.

The bill also requires sellers of these vehicles who describe them as an "electric bicycle," "electric bike," "e-bike," or other similar term, before the time of sale, to give consumers a clear and conspicuous

written statement:

1. disclosing the name or classification of the vehicle under state law, or the most likely classification after an intended or anticipated modification described above (see § 2(a)(3)), and
2. stating that (a) the vehicle does not meet the law's definition of "e-bike," (b) it is subject to applicable motor vehicle laws if used on public roads or lands, and (c) insurance policies may not cover accidents involving the vehicle and owners should contact their insurance company for available property damage and liability insurance coverage.

Under the bill, sellers must also include this information in any digital or print advertisements for these vehicles (e.g., social media, e-mail, newspapers, magazines, brochures, and posters).

### ***E-bikes on Trails***

The bill broadly permits the use of class 1 e-bikes on bicycle or multi-use trails or paths. While e-bikes may generally be ridden wherever regular bicycles are allowed, current law prohibits the use of both class 1 and 2 e-bikes on bicycle and certain multi-use trails or paths, except where permitted by local ordinance. This includes multi-use trails and paths designated for non-motorized traffic and with a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the soil and without added surfacing materials. Existing law, unchanged by the bill, prohibits class 3 e-bikes from all bicycle and multi-use trails or paths.

### ***Penalties for E-bike Law Violations***

The bill imposes a specific penalty for the following e-bike laws by making violations infractions: (1) riding e-bikes where prohibited, including on trails and paths under certain circumstances (as described above); (2) riding a class 3 e-bike under age 16; and (3) riding an e-bike, including as a passenger, without a helmet meeting the law's requirements.

Under current law, there is no specific penalty for violating these provisions, but riders or passengers may be subject to the general

penalty for vehicle highway use violations that are not designated an infraction or do not have a specified penalty (i.e. a fine of up to \$50, CGS § 14-296). By making these violations infractions, the bill treats e-bike law violations the same as bicycle and other traffic violations.

### ***Manufacturer Penalties***

The bill also imposes a penalty on e-bike manufacturers of up to \$100 for a first offense, and \$100 to \$300 for a subsequent offense, for failing to (1) ensure e-bikes they offer for sale in Connecticut comply with applicable federal requirements for bicycles and e-bikes, (2) equip these class 3 e-bikes with a speedometer, and (3) ensure that e-bike motors disengage according to the specifications of their classification. Current law does not specify a penalty for these violations.

### ***One-, Two-, and Three-wheeled Vehicle Classifications***

***Motor-Driven Cycles.*** Under current law, a “motor-driven cycle” is any of the following with a seat at least 26 inches high and a motor displacing less than 50cc: a (1) motorcycle; (2) motor scooter; or (3) bicycle with attached motor, except electric bicycles. Because cc is a measurement of cylinder volume in an internal combustion engine, this definition only explicitly captures gas-powered vehicles. So, it is unclear under current law whether a similar electric-powered vehicle would be considered a motor-driven cycle or a motorcycle.

The bill expands this definition to include vehicles with gasoline, electric, or hybrid motors that have a capacity of less than 50cc, have a wattage of 3,700 watts or less, or produce five brake horsepower or less, as applicable. It also (1) excludes electric scooters (see below) from the motor-driven cycle definition and (2) incorporates into this definition one-wheeled vehicles “with a floorboard that can be stood upon while riding or with foot rests for the operator” (i.e. motorized unicycles). (These vehicles are not subject to the motor-related or minimum seat height requirements.)

As under existing law, street-legal two- or three-wheeled vehicles that exceed these engine capacities are generally considered motorcycles. Unlike motorcycles, motor-driven cycles do not need to be

registered and riders do not need a motorcycle endorsement.

**Modification of Electric Foot Scooter Definition.** The bill replaces the definition of “electric foot scooter” with one for “electric scooter” and broadens the definition to also include certain electric scooters designed to be ridden while sitting down. In doing so, it treats certain low-powered, seated electric scooters in the same way that electric foot scooters are treated under the law.

Under current law, an electric foot scooter is a device that (1) weighs up to 75 pounds; (2) has two or three wheels, handlebars, and a floorboard that a rider can stand on; (3) is powered by an electric motor and human power; and (4) has a maximum speed of 20 mph on a paved level surface, with or without human propulsion. The bill renames these devices “electric scooters” and (1) increases their maximum weight to 100 pounds, (2) eliminates the floorboard requirement and instead requires they be designed to be ridden in either an upright or seated position, and (3) excludes e-bikes and one-wheeled vehicles from the definition.

## **§§ 59 & 60 — PAYMENT PLANS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE VIOLATIONS**

*Requires CIB, starting July 1, 2028, and within available resources, to allow people to pay motor vehicle tickets through a payment plan and sets parameters for administering the plans*

### **Installment Plan Overview**

Starting July 1, 2028, the bill allows anyone charged with a motor vehicle-related infraction or violation processed through the Centralized Infractions Bureau (CIB) to pay under a 12-month installment plan and CIB must provide this option, within available resources, on its website. The payment plans must include all fines and related fees or costs, and CIB may accept payments higher than the monthly installment amount. The bill allows CIB to assess an additional fee of up to \$15 to cover related administrative costs, which must be deposited in the Judicial Data Processing Revolving Fund.

Like payments made through CIB under existing law, agreeing to enter into a payment plan (1) is considered a plea of nolo contendere (no

contest) and is not admissible in any civil or criminal proceeding and (2) does not result in the DMV commissioner assessing points against the person's driver's license.

Existing law requires the Judicial Department to provide notice about paying through CIB to law enforcement agencies and direct them to give it to anyone alleged to have committed a motor vehicle infraction or violation when issuing the complaint. Under the bill, starting on July 1, 2028, the department also must post information about the option to pay through an installment payment plan on its website.

### ***Failure to Make Installment Payments***

When a person fails to make a timely payment on an installment plan for the first or second time, the bill requires CIB to assess a \$15 late fee (deposited in the Judicial Data Processing Revolving Fund) and allow the person an additional 30 days to make the missed payment for each instance. However, for a third missed payment, CIB must end the payment plan and report it to the DMV commissioner in the same way it reports other circumstances for a driver's license suspension.

## **§ 60 — DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSION FOR FAILURE TO PAY OR FAILURE TO APPEAR**

*Requires DMV to send notice to someone whose license may be suspended for failure to pay or appear; specifies information the notice must contain*

Existing law gives the DMV commissioner broad authority to suspend or revoke a driver's license for any cause he deems sufficient. It also establishes a license suspension procedure requiring the court to notify the commissioner when someone:

1. is arrested for a violation of any motor vehicle-related statute and willfully fails to appear for a scheduled court appearance;
2. is charged with a motor-vehicle related infraction or violation processed through CIB (or certain other violations) and fails to pay the related fine and any additional fees, or plead not guilty, by the required date or willfully fails to comply with court-set remote events and deadlines or appear for a scheduled court appearance; or

3. fails to pay certain related additional surcharges, fees, and costs.

Under current practice, DMV then suspends the person's license. The bill codifies the requirement to suspend a person's driver's license for failure to pay or appear and sets a 60-day notice period before the suspension takes effect. The bill requires DMV, after receiving a report from the court, to send a suspension notice (1) informing the person that his or her license will be suspended within 60 days after the notice date unless the person reopens judgment with the court of jurisdiction during this time period and (2) giving instructions on how to file a motion to reopen and apply for a fee waiver within the court of jurisdiction.

### **§ 61 — INCIDENT REPORTS AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE PER SE PROCESS**

*Eliminates the requirement that police officers mail DUI incident reports to DMV within six business days, but retains the requirement that reports be prepared during this timeframe*

By law, someone arrested for DUI is subject to administrative licensing sanctions through DMV in addition to criminal prosecution. This process is referred to as "administrative per se," and the sanctions may occur when (1) a driver refuses to submit to a blood, breath, or urine test or the nontestimonial portion of a DIE; (2) a test indicates an elevated BAC; or (3) the officer concludes through investigation (e.g., a DIE) that the driver was under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or both.

When any of the above circumstances occur, the arresting officer must prepare a report and, under current law, send it to DMV within six business days after the incident. The bill eliminates a specific timeframe for mailing the report, but still requires it to be prepared within six business days.

As under existing law, the report must be sworn to by the officer under penalty of false statement and state, among other things, the grounds for the officer's belief that there was probable cause to arrest the person for DUI. Generally, reports prepared and sent under this law are an exception to hearsay under the rules of evidence and are admissible at an administrative per se license suspension hearing



without the officer's testimony (see *Background – Related Case*).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

### ***Background — Related Case***

In a 2024 decision, the Connecticut Supreme Court held that failure to comply with the law's preparation and mailing timeframe (at the time, three business days) rendered a DUI incident report inadmissible in an administrative license suspension hearing in the absence of testimony from the arresting officer. The court stated that (1) the purpose of the timeframe and the other report requirements (e.g., a sworn statement) is to provide sufficient indicators of reliability so that the report may be admissible under a hearsay exemption and (2) adherence to the timeframe is mandatory for the report to be admissible (*Marshall v. Commissioner of Motor Vehicles*, 348 Conn. 778 (2024)).

### **§ 63 — LOW-SPEED VEHICLE DEALERS**

*Allows DMV to issue a dealer's license to qualifying LSV dealers that meet certain alternative criteria*

The bill allows DMV to issue a dealer's license to qualifying low-speed vehicle (LSV) dealers that meet certain criteria without having to meet all criteria that apply to dealers under existing law. Specifically, DMV may do this for businesses that (1) merchandise new electric LSVs under a manufacturer's or importer's contract for each make of vehicle prior to July 1, 2025, and (2) incidental to the business, sell and repair these vehicles.

Qualifying LSV dealers seeking a license must apply to the commissioner (with a \$340 application fee), pass a criminal records check, and furnish a \$25,000 surety bond, among other things. Licenses issued under the bill are renewed biennially and are not transferable and must be revoked by, or surrendered to, DMV upon the business' sale, transfer, or conveyance.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

### **§§ 64 & 65 — FINES FOR VIOLATIONS OF "MOVE OVER" LAW OR AGGRAVATED ENDANGERMENT OF A HIGHWAY WORKER**

*Increases current law's enhanced penalties for violations of the "move over" law and the law on endangering highway workers that result in the injury or death of an emergency vehicle driver or occupant or a highway worker*

### **"Move Over" Law**

The state's "move over" law requires drivers, when approaching slow or stationary emergency vehicles in the shoulder, lane, or breakdown lane, to (1) immediately slow down to a speed reasonably below the speed limit and (2) if traveling in the lane adjacent to the shoulder or lane with the emergency vehicle, move over one lane unless it would be unsafe to do so. (While these provisions specifically apply on public roads with at least two travel lanes going in the same direction, the requirement to slow down generally also applies to two-lane roads with undivided traffic proceeding in opposite directions.)

Under current law, violations are generally infractions; however, violators are subject to higher fines if the violation results in an emergency vehicle driver's or occupant's injury (up to \$2,500) or death (up to \$10,000). The bill increases these enhanced penalties to \$5,000 and \$20,000, respectively.

### **Endangerment of a Highway Worker**

Under existing law, drivers generally commit the offense of endangerment of a highway worker if they are convicted of any of the following in a highway work zone with a highway worker nearby:

1. exceeding the posted speed limit by at least 15 mph;
2. failing to obey certain traffic control devices for any reason other than an emergency, avoiding an obstacle, or protecting another person's health and safety;
3. driving through or around the work zone in a lane not clearly designated for this use; or
4. physically assaulting, attempting to assault, or threatening a highway worker with a motor vehicle or other instrument.

Drivers commit the offense of "aggravated endangerment of a highway worker" if they are convicted of one of the above offenses that

resulted in a highway worker’s serious physical injury or death. The bill increases the enhanced penalties for this offense from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (in the case of injury) and from \$10,000 to \$20,000 (in the case of death).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

**BACKGROUND**

***Related Bills***

sHB 7060 (File 558), favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, has similar provisions on the Highway Work Zone and Roadside Vehicle Safety Awareness Program, the move over law, and endangerment of a highway worker penalties.

sHB 7159 (File 562), favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, has similar provisions on the yellow envelope program.

sHB 6862 (File 553), favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, has similar provisions on e-bikes, motor-driven cycles, and electric scooters.

sHB 7161 (File 563), favorably reported by the Transportation and Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committees, has similar provisions on a payment plan for motor vehicle violations.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute  
Yea 33 Nay 2 (03/19/2025)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable  
Yea 38 Nay 12 (05/05/2025)