

Public Safety and Security Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6859

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CERTAIN EVIDENCE AND RECORDS, FIREARM INFORMATION, SECURITY GUARDS,

Title: FIREARM TRANSFERS AND SCHOOL SECURITY GRANTS.

Vote Date: 3/18/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/11/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill aims to reduce the burden of storing and maintaining pieces of evidence related to sexual assault kits. Ensure proper disclosure of severe juvenile offenses, enforce opt-ins to national and international evidence and firearms databases and to adjust the regulations surrounding firearm transfers to include a change in necessary forms as well as a change in the process by which transfers of estates occur.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE

In section 5, subsection (h), the phrase "is pending with" has been replaced with "has been received and is being processed by the commissioner. The phrase "conducts or has" has been replaced with "conducted or had". The word "determines" has been replaced with "determined". Lastly, subsection (c)(4) has been added to clarify "if the commissioner provides to the applicant a notice stating that the application is incomplete, the applicant submits a complete application not later than thirty days after receiving such notice."

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Commissioner Ronnell A. Higgins Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection](#)

Commissioner Higgins addresses HB 6859 by each section.

Section 1

Commissioner Higgins states that under current state law the Division of Scientific Services is required to retain sexual assault evidence until criminal proceedings conclude, which led the Division to holding evidence for decades with no resolution. In

Section 2

Commissioner Higgins states that this section aligns with the federal Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. This section seeks to strengthen public safety by requiring the disclosure of serious juvenile offenses. Currently, individuals with an SJO conviction cannot possess a firearm. However, if an individual is over 21 this conviction is not disclosed, allowing them to illegally obtain a permit to possess a firearm.

Section 3

of the bill aims to reduce firearms trafficking by requiring law enforcement agencies to opt in to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and Explosives eTrace database as well as National Integrated Ballistic Information Network. NIBIN database holds information on 5.7 million pieces of evidence from guns and ammunition. This evidence can be used to link crime scenes across the United States and even internationally. Critical data has been collected, and 4,149 leads were generated from evidence acquired in 2024. In January of 2025 an arrest was made in connection to a gun found in Waterbury. This gun had ties to a homicide in Maine, and an assault in New Haven.

Sections 4-6

aim to require training form security guards who are permitted to carry electronic defense weapons. In the field these tools can be used to increase control and precision, de-escalate tense situations, and reduce fatalities or other serious injuries. DESPP issues a blue card to armed security guards who are 21 years of age or older. HB 6859 allows blue care holders to carry defensive weapons if they complete course training approved by the department and submit to a background check. They also must compete training dictated by the manufacturers of those tools. The bill also states that applicants must submit applications within a 90-day processing period within which they can still work.

Section 7

clarifies that estate administrators or heirs may transfer more than three firearms within a 30-day period to execute the wishes of the deceased. The bill clarifies these transfers are not considered sales at retail. This clarification reduces the burden on the agency's Special Licensing and Firearms Unit. Section 7-8 removes the need to use a DPS-67 form at the time of a firearms sale because the DPS-3c form collects all the necessary information. DESPP also recommends extending the use of DPS-3c form to handguns for consistency across the process. The DPS-67 form has become redundant as its function is replaced by background checks associated with permits and eligibility certificates.

Section 10-11

seek to update the school security grant program to better align with federal standards. This proposal updates the checklist to reflect current national and state recommendations, which includes those from the School Security Infrastructure Council. The legislature also established the Multi-Media School Security Grant Program, which funds direct communication systems between schools and law enforcement agencies. However, non-public schools have not fully utilized this grant program. HB 6859 would allow unused funds to be redirected to the nonpublic School Security Program, which has more applications.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Dom Basile, Oakville Connecticut Resident

Dom Basile states that as the current trustee of an estate, that the three gun a month rule was meant to curtail straw purchases. However, Mr. Basile states that as it relates to settling a deceased persons estate, it has become a burdensome processed for grieving families.

Stephen Bennett,

Mr. Bennet states that beneficiaries or trustee of an estate must pay for storage during the holding period between transfers, which is an added financial cost to the process. Mr. Bennett also states that it can take up to a year or more to transfer all the firearms from an estate depending on whether the deceased individual was a collector or acquired many firearms over the course of several years.

Carolyn Graziano

Mrs. Graziano supports the bill and states that the 3 gun transfer limit imposes a hardship and what can turn into an over year long process to either take possession or sell guns rightfully.

Brandon Beaudoin

Mr. Beaudoin adds that processing multiple transfers creates a back log for the Special Licensing Firearms Unit which is in tern very stressful for Federal Firearms License holders, like himself, who facilitate transfer processes.

Tom Maloney,

Mr. Maloney suggests that the committee considers that bulk transfers should be considered for transfers amongst family members because many people face situations in which a family member has reached an age where they can no longer enjoy the use of a firearm but would like to pass them on to a family member.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Stephen Amity Executive Director and General Counsel for the National Association of Security Companies

Executive Director Amity states the legislature created Public Act 18-20 which was enacted eto respond to significant delays in onboarding security guards due to the Connecticut State police ending policy that allowed security guards to work while their license application was pending. Director Amity states that PA 18-20 allows for a security guard applicant to start working provisionally if they 1. submit an application (have an application "pending"); 2. pass a criminal background check; 3. successfully complete the required security officer training; and 4. the provisional guard cannot work at certain locations. Executive Director Amity states that without a provision to work provisionally, it can take the Special Licensing and Firearms Unit 8 to 12 weeks to process an application and issue a guard card. Executive Director Amity states that HB 6859, creates confusion as it pertains to PA 18-20 because HB 6859 requires that a pending application be "complete" before the person can start working provisionally. Director Amity argues that this word brings up questions such as "what does it

mean for a pending application to be “complete?” and “How will applicants know when their application is “complete?”” He states that questions like these will inevitably impede the process and create delays again as agencies such as local businesses will have to potentially wait to hire new and necessary staff until after their applications are complete.

Reported by: Geva Tinker

Date: 3/28/25