

Public Safety and Security Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7054

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALE AND USE OF NONAERIAL AND

Title: NONEXPLOSIVE CONSUMER FIREWORKS AND SKY LANTERNS.

Vote Date: 3/18/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/27/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would legalize the commercial sale and personal use of nonaerial and nonexplosive fireworks and sky lanterns and would allow municipalities to adopt ordinances preventing their sale at public events and on municipal, educational, or commercial property. Many people consider nonaerial and nonexplosive fireworks to be a negligible safety concern, and forty-eight other states have already legalized them. As such, this bill seeks to legalize their sale and use while still allowing municipalities to address public safety concerns that may arise.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

In response to testimony pointing out the danger of sky lanterns, the substitute language of this bill removes all language pertaining to and allowing the sale and use of sky lanterns from this bill.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Connecticut Department of Administrative Services, Commissioner, Michelle Gilman](#)

Ms. Gilman explained that while the Department of Administrative Services appreciates the increasing the legal age to purchase fireworks from sixteen to eighteen. The Department opposes legalizing nonaerial and nonexplosive fireworks and sky lanterns. She explained that the only way to safely enjoy fireworks is by attending professional fireworks show and that fireworks cause over 31,000 fires per year according to the National Fire Protection Association. She cited multiple figures such as the high number of emergency room incidents

related to firecrackers and sparklers, the percentage of non-compliant fireworks products, and the wildfire risk posed by fireworks showing that even nonaerial and nonexplosive fireworks are unsafe. She requested that the committee oppose this bill and align with twenty-eight other states that ban sky lanterns.

Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Commissioner, Ronnell Higgins

Mr. Higgins explained the concerns that the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection has about this bill. He pointed the volume of fires started annually by fireworks and the number of injuries that children receive from fireworks, and he noted that the Department has special concerns about sky lanterns because of their ability to travel long distances. He went on to list a number of stories about fireworks going awry and seriously injuring individuals, and he stressed that fireworks should not be allowed to be used by the general public.

Connecticut Airport Authority, Executive Director, Michael Shea

Mr. Shea explained that the Connecticut Airport Authority opposes this bill, especially the provision legalizing sky lanterns. He noted that sky lanterns can launch an uncontrolled flame up to 1,200 feet in the air, depending on weather conditions, and have no way of avoiding aircraft. He requested that the committee oppose this bill due to the threat of sky lanterns to aviation.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Mike Dapkus, Owner, Dapkus Inc

As the co-owner of a fireworks company, Mr. Dapkus expressed his support for this bill. He noted that outside of Fourth of July celebrations, the biggest consumers of the non-aerial fireworks included in this bill are celebrators of Diwali. He also pointed out that these are some of the safest fireworks on the market and are legal in forty-eight other states. He recommended removing "Sky Lanterns" from the bill, as they are aerial fireworks and should be treated differently.

Matthew Jones, General Counsel, American Promotional Events Inc

Mr. Jones expressed his support for this bill, specifically for the provision allowing the sale and use of nonexplosive and nonaerial fireworks. He noted that American Promotional Events Inc has opted out of selling sky lanterns in other states due to questions about their safety. He also requested that the committee change line 64 of the bill and remove "commercial properties" to prevent municipalities from regulating commercial sale of these fireworks, as retailers should be able to sell fireworks from their commercial properties.

Members, Vallabadhan Temple

Four members of the Vallabadham Temple expressed their support for this bill and explained that the nonaerial and nonexplosive fireworks that would be commercially legalized by it are often used in celebrations of Diwali. He also noted that the 500-gram fountains mentioned in this bill would be no more powerful than the 200-gram versions that are legal now and would simply last longer and have different effects.

Additional Testimony: Eleven individuals expressed their support for increasing the legal magazine capacity of pistols to fifteen rounds. Testimony was provided by:

- [Sebastian Adorno](#)
- [William Andrews](#)
- [Zachary Dyson](#)
- [On Kang Dave-It](#)
- [Nicholas Kittle](#)
- [Anthony Mele](#)
- [Johnny Nucifora](#)
- [Josh Wojcik](#)

Additional Testimony: Fifteen individuals expressed their support for this bill. Testimony was provided by:

- [Stephen Blake](#)
- [Spejtim Fejzulai](#)
- [Cody Hess](#)
- [Ryan Johnson](#)
- [Brandon Loehle](#)
- [William Kuehnel](#)
- [Dylan Martinez](#)
- [Luis Martinez](#)
- [Ken Mittelstadt](#)
- [Ryan Naranjo](#)
- [Henry Orlich](#)
- [Alexander Rodriguez](#)
- [Frank Slapski](#)
- [Jeffrey Yale](#)

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Robert Duval, New England Regional Director/Fire Investigator, National Fire Protection Association

Mr. Duval expressed his strong opposition to this bill, explaining that for over a century the National Fire Protection Association has strongly opposed the use of consumer fireworks. He pointed out that there are always more fires on the Fourth of July than on any other day of the year, and that the passage of legislation like this would result in an undue burden on the state's firefighters and emergency room staffers.

Stephen Rabel, Fire Marshal, Milford Fire Department

Mr. Rabel expressed his strong opposition to this bill, pointing to the risk of physical harm and wildfires posed by fireworks. He also noted that fireworks can distress pets, individuals with sensory disorders, and individuals with PTSD.

Sylvie Renaudot

Ms. Renaudot expressed her opposition to HB7051 and HB5134.

Roger Nelson, Vice President, Connecticut Fire Marshals Association: Mr. Nelson expressed his opposition to this bill, stressing the inherent danger in fireworks. He explained that sky lanterns in particular are quite dangerous and have the capability to go up to 3,000

feet in the air and stay lit for up to twenty minutes. He pointed out that sky lanterns raise problems concerning pollution and air traffic along with public safety and the risk of wildfires.

Reported by: Sam Sims

Date: 3/25/2025