

# Judiciary Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-7139

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF STATE MARSHALS AND THE  
ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE STATE MARSHAL COMMISSION AND

**Title:** THE STATE MARSHALS ADVISORY BOARD.

**Vote Date:** 4/7/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/10/2025

**File No.:** 770

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

Connecticut State Marshals and the State Marshals Commission worked on legislation to improve the efficiency of their work. This bill makes several changes in statute affecting the day-to-day operations of a State Marshal.

### SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language makes various revisions to the sections related to regulations concerning professional requirements (Sec. 5), electronic transmission of process (Sections 13 and 14), and adds new sections regarding signature requirements following input from the Judicial Branch (Sections 24 and 25). There are also conforming changes and technical modifications made to other sections of the bill.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**External Affairs, Judicial Branch, State of Connecticut:** They testified that they take no position on this bill, however they have concerns on certain sections as drafted. Section 13 seems to conflict with Section 23. Section 13 allows for process to be delivered electronically. Section 23(f)(1) amends CGS section 52-50 to require that process be delivered as a signed original and all copies, with the exception only of matters where process has been filed in court before being delivered to a marshal, are available on the Judicial Branch's public website. This will not work for family court as the documents are private and not posted to the public website. Those that have a fee waiver will cause the Judicial Branch an additional cost associated with making copies for every self-represented

party. Currently Connecticut statute requires state marshals to accept documents for service of restraining orders electronically. This could cause a delay in serving these orders and returning them to court. Also, there are several lines in Sections 21 and 22 that indicate that the mileage fee is "subject to adjustment within thirty days of any revision" to the mileage reimbursement rate. If a marshal needs to file a subsequent invoice, the Judicial Branch will incur the costs to process these additional invoices at no fault of their own. We recommend that the bill require the Commission to notify the Judicial Branch immediately to avoid this from happening. Also, in lines 410-414 they request it be clarified on what a "special occasion" means. Without this clarification the Judicial Branch will not know whether process can be directed to a marshal electronically. They also assume that lines 505-507 do not prohibit the court from waiving and not paying the electronic service but respectfully asked for clarification.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Brian Mezick, President, State Marshal Association of CT:** They testified in support of this bill. HB7139 will modernize state marshal operations in the state by updating the process. It will update the procedures, statutory guidelines, and professional standards for the state marshals. Sections 13 and 23 will modernize the state marshal system by allowing attorneys and public agencies to electronically transmit legal documents to state marshals, except if statute of limitations is about to expire. The bill will allow processing by traditional delivery and electronic transmission, updating the system to a 2025 standard while maintaining the integrity of the system process. Sections 10-20 will improve the process by defining procedures and enhancing access to information regarding the process service. Other sections improve the operations of the state marshal system. By reforming the system, it will enhance efficiency, accountability, and fairness allowing marshals to serve the needs of attorneys and the public.

**Liza Andrews, VP of Government-Public Relations, Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence:** They testified that they have concerns regarding wording in sections 13 and 14 related to the receipt and service of electronic process and fees associated with such service. Section 13 of the bill outlines procedures for service of electronic process from "an attorney-at-law or public agency". Electronic service of family violence restraining orders has been standard practice since the pandemic and included in statute since 2021. The CCADV supports the attempt to streamline electronic process procedures for state marshals and the attempt to modernize our state judicial system. They respectfully ask that language clarify that fees associated when delivering the service of a restraining order cannot be charged to the applicant/victims and that electronic processing of restraining orders be accepted directly from the applicant/victims.

**Alinor Sterling, President, Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association:** They testified in support of this bill. HB7139 will streamline the administrative burden often faced by attorneys by reducing delays and eliminating logistical burdens that can have a negative impact on legal proceedings. The modernization of the process by allowing electronic transmission will align Connecticut with technological standards, enhance convenience for practitioners, and will prove to be more efficient. Also included are safeguards to the process as well as compensating marshals for additional responsibilities. Delays and procedural missteps in document service can significantly impact case outcome, especially involving time-sensitive

injunctions and subpoenas. The CTLA respectfully asks that the Judiciary Committee support Section 13 of the proposed legislation.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by:** Bonnie Gray

**Date:** April 21, 2025