

# Judiciary Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-7260

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING EXCESSIVE RECKLESS DRIVING.

**Vote Date:** 4/8/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/31/2025

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

### CO-SPONSORS:

Rep. Kerry S. Wood, 29th Dist.

Rep. Savet Constantine, 42nd Dist.

Rep. Michael D. Quinn, 82nd Dist.

Rep. William Heffernan, 115th Dist.

Rep. Joseph P. Gresko, 121st Dist.

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill aims to increase roadway safety in Connecticut by requiring the 48-hour impounding of a motor vehicle for an individual who has been arrested for reckless driving (exceeding 100 miles per hour) and has been previously been convicted for reckless driving (exceeding 100 miles per hour).

### SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language makes changes to (c) regarding increased monetary penalties in lines 20-23.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**William Tong, Attorney General, State of Connecticut:** He testified in support of this bill. HB7260 aims to improve the safety on our roads and hold those accountable who endanger our lives by their reckless and lawless behavior. The brazen lawlessness from excessive speeding, reckless lane changes to distracted and intoxicated driving cannot be tolerated. All

Connecticut families deserve to be safe on our roads. The 48-hour impoundment requirement for those who drive over one-hundred miles-per-hour will increase the accountability of those who engage in this reckless behavior. With over three-hundred fatalities in the state last year alone, it is time to take meaningful steps to ensure the safety of our roads.

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

**The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association (CPCA):** They testified in support of this bill. The CPCA testifies that there is an urgent need for stricter laws and penalties for individuals who engage in reckless driving and dangerous motor vehicle pursuits. There is an inherent risk to the public, law enforcement officers, and even the offenders. They believe the bill needs to be stronger than proposed because reducing penalties for dangerous drivers and limiting officers' ability to enforce laws embolden those who disregard the rules and endanger lives. Law abiding citizens are becoming frustrated by increasingly unsafe roads.

**Irene Haines, Representative, House of Representatives, State of Connecticut:** They testified in support of this bill with changes to two sections. The police are attempting to pull over a record numbers of "super speeders" that are endangering the lives of everyone on the roads and highways in Connecticut. They believe that stiffer penalties and amending the statute, that can suspend licenses without hearings, will deter those who drive recklessly. These serious infractions on our roadway should have more serious consequences. If changes were made and termed reckless driving infractions, they would not have to be litigated in court.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel, ACLU-CT:** They testified in opposition to this bill. Imposing longer prison sentences are counterproductive for public safety. There is no empirical evidence that shows creating a new victim class with increased criminal penalties will stop people from speeding; the lack of this evidence demonstrates that this proposed change is not needed. By imposing fines and fees in the criminal justice system it can cause a cycle of debt. In Connecticut, it is difficult to get around and removing access to one's car can cause a negative effect on a person's livelihood. This would disproportionately harm lower-income households.

**Reported by:** Bonnie Gray

**Date:** April 21, 2025