

Judiciary Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1388

AN ACT CONCERNING FAILURE TO MOVE OVER FOR AN EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESULTING IN THE DEATH OF THE OPERATOR OR OTHER

Title: OCCUPANT OF THE EMERGENCY VEHICLE.

Vote Date: 4/4/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/7/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

There has been an alarming increase recently in the number of fatalities caused by individuals who aren't allowing for the proper space for emergency vehicles. This bill provides that a violation of section 14-283b that results in the death of the operator, or any occupant of an emergency vehicle constitutes circumstances evincing an extreme indifference to human life in a criminal prosecution for manslaughter in the first degree.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Garrett Eucalitto, Commissioner, Department of Transportation (CTDOT): He testified in support of this legislation and hopes to see it go further with the addition of a penalty, to take further preventative measures, for the Aggravated Endangerment of a Highway Worker. He cites the deaths of CTDOT employee Andrew DiDomenico and CT State Trooper Aaron Pelletier as well as nearly 100 separate instances of traffic collisions with CTDOT vehicles as reasons that we need to take further measures to keep those who work on highways safer.

Patrick Griffin, Chief States Attorney, Connecticut State Division of Criminal Justice: The Office of the Chief States Attorney supports this legislation but has doubts regarding its efficacy. He believes that the proposed amendment puts the cart of extreme indifference before the horses of recklessness and grave risk of death, which remain elements that the state must factually prove to convict someone of manslaughter in the first degree. Additionally, they believe this may complicate prosecutions and is ambiguous, at best, regarding the term "operator" and "occupant". They state that present statute remains an effective prosecutorial tool.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Salvatore, Vincenzo and Shari DiDomenico, family of Andrew DiDomenico:

The DiDomenico family supports this legislation because they lost their family member, Andrew, a CTDOT employee, to a roadway accident. They believe that the penalty the driver will face is not enough and constitutes a miscarriage of justice. They feel the proposed penalties under this legislation would hold drivers to a level of stronger accountability which could deter reckless driving and prevent further losses of life on the roadways.

CTDOT Employees:

Eoin McClure
Matthew Randazzo
Brian Weaver
Eric LeBarron
Frank Tartamella

Timothy McCue (Crew Chief)
John Rich
Alex Javier Benitez
Joe Seaman

Joseph Mirabello
Domenic Tartaglia
Brian Francione
John Slavin

These CTDOT employees support this legislation because they believe that current policies targeting the prevention of reckless driving on our highways are inefficient and do not work, leaving CTDOT employees at risk. They cite the example of Andrew DiDomenico, a CTDOT employee struck and killed on the job last year, and how the penalty that the intoxicated driver faces does not seem harsh enough to deter drivers.

CTDOT North Haven Maintenance Facility:

Joshua Bauchmann
Kasey Moriarty
Andrew Grzedzinski
Andrew Valeri
Nicholas Atkins
Justin Halkovertz
Ryan Massimino
Anthony Malerba

Joseph Kelly
Selena Armstrong
James King
James Mustakos
Antonio Sanchez
Jason Brissette
Jeffrey Spencer

Cosmo Ignoto
Henry Bell
Elias Medina
Justin Maturo
Edward Beardsley
Joseph Harvey
Edward Shurdho

The members of the CTDOT North Haven Maintenance Facility support this legislation because they all worked closely with Andrew DiDomenico, who was tragically struck and killed in 2024 by a negligent, intoxicated driver. The members of the facility believe that the driver who struck DiDomenico should face a much harsher penalty; this could lead to safer driving practices, which in turn keeps CT's maintenance workers safer.

CTDOT East Haven Maintenance Facility:

Anthony Pannone
Nick Orrino
Lorenzo Davis

Robert Fassbender
Mike Frank
John Aponte

Miguel Perez
Paulo Gomez
Ed Thomasi
Bill Kiniry

The members of the CTDOT East Haven Maintenance Facility support this legislation because they believe the measures in this bill could be a matter of saving lives of CTDOT employees and other highway workers as well. They believe the penalties for the driver who killed Andrew DiDomenico face are not sufficient enough to deter others from driving recklessly and until this legislation passes, many DOT employees feel fearful for their lives because of Andrew's death.

Ronald and Michelle Goodman:

They support this legislation because they were very close with Andrew DiDomenico, a CTDOT employee who lost his life on the job last year due to a negligent driver. They believe that the ten-year maximum penalty for this driver is not enough, and the lack of stricter punishments endangers highway workers as it doesn't prevent reckless driving.

Susan and Jeffrey Scanlon: The Scanlon family supports this legislation because they were close friends of Andrew DiDomenico, and they feel that the current laws penalizing reckless driving do not go far enough. They stated that the driver who killed DiDomenico will face a maximum of ten years, which does not do enough to prevent other drivers from changing their behavior and preventing other instances like Andrew's from occurring.

Lisa Simonetti:

She supports this legislation because she believes that the proposed penalties against reckless drivers could potentially be enough to deter unsafe driving. This would keep highway workers safer and could prevent more instances, such as the death of Andrew DiDomenico, who was a close family friend.

Kyle Dupre: He supports this legislation because he believes that the sentence for the individual who struck and killed DOT worker Andrew DiDomenico is a miscarriage of justice and doesn't believe this will do much to prevent reckless driving. He believes that stricter penalties must be enforced to keep highway workers safe.

Alexa and Joe Warren: They support this legislation because Joe worked closely with Andrew DiDomenico, who was struck and killed while working on a CT highway. Joe, a CTDOT worker, believes that more must be done to punish unsafe drivers to prevent accidents like Andrew's from happening again.

Maureen Miller: She supports this legislation because she feels that the stricter penalties proposed under this bill would be sufficient to deter reckless driving on our highways; this, in turn, could prevent roadway fatalities like that of Andrew DiDomenico.

Residents of New Haven: This group of concerned residents of New Haven support this legislation because they have seen the reckless driving that takes place on CT highways and believe it is only a matter of time before another person is killed. They believe current policies do not do enough to truly deter reckless driving, which puts motorists and highway workers at serious risk.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Griffin Olshan

Date: April 7, 2025