
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1377

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

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SUMMARY

This bill makes various changes in transportation-related statutes. It also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes. A section-by-section analysis follows.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except the provisions related to the Connecticut Plane Coordinate System are effective January 1, 2026.

§§ 1 & 2 — CONNECTICUT PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM

Replaces the Connecticut coordinate systems by establishing a new Connecticut Plane Coordinate System based on National Geodetic Survey updates to the National Spatial Reference System

Under current law, the Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioner is responsible for the extension, revision, and maintenance of the Connecticut coordinate systems. (Coordinate systems generally allow geographic datasets to use common locations so that they can be viewed and used together.) The bill instead requires the commissioner, or his designee, to adopt and maintain a detailed description of the federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Geodetic Survey's (NGS) Connecticut Plane Coordinate System (CPCS), and allows them to publish additional systems. Under the bill, the CPCS is identical to NGS's state plane coordinate system for Connecticut.

Current law generally adopts the coordinate systems established by NGS. The bill replaces the current Connecticut coordinate systems by establishing a new Connecticut Plane Coordinate System (CPCS) based on NGS updates to the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS). NSRS is a consistent coordinate system that defines latitude, longitude, height,

scale, gravity, and orientation throughout the United States. (NGS defines and maintains NSRS.)

Under existing law, describing the location of any survey station or land boundary corner in the state using the system of plane coordinates is considered a complete, legal, and satisfactory description. The bill requires the method and source for establishing coordinates to be described in the land or deed record. Under the bill, whenever land surveys or deeds reference coordinates, a statement of the metadata of observations must be included in the record. “Metadata” is information about the data element that provides its context, such as the geodetic reference system used, applicable epoch, statement of relative accuracy, and observation date.

The bill also removes provisions related to the Connecticut coordinate systems that it replaces and makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes to implement the new system, including defining axes, coordinates, and units of measurement. It also includes a conforming change specifying that current law’s prohibition on knowingly injuring, destroying, disturbing, or removing any monument established by NGS or Connecticut Geodetic Survey for use in determining spatial locations under the Connecticut coordinate systems or precise elevation data, instead applies to the CPCS (rather than the Connecticut Geodetic Survey and Connecticut coordinate systems). As under existing law, violators may be fined between \$2,000 and \$5,000.

State Mapping Projects

Under the bill, after (1) the official NGS release or authorization of any subsequent updates to the CPCS and (2) related approval by the DOT commissioner or his designee, new state mapping projects must be based on the current system (unless a different system is determined to be needed). Mapping coordinates based on the CPCS must state their basis in the metadata (see above).

The bill requires any mapping based on a different system to contain projection information and a clear statement of purpose in the metadata

about the decision to use the system. When feasible, mapping projects based on different systems should be made available in CPCS unless doing so creates an undue hardship or burden on the project creator.

The bill specifies that its provisions do not (1) prohibit appropriate use of other datums, geodetic reference frames, or plane coordinate systems or (2) require revisions to any prepared or recorded survey, mapping project, deed, record, or other document that utilized other, previously state-authorized coordinate systems.

§§ 3 & 15 — SPECIAL CROSSWALK MARKINGS

Eliminates provisions of current law related to special markings for certain crosswalks

The bill eliminates a provision of current law specifically allowing local traffic authorities to install specially marked crosswalks near schools. The bill also repeals a statute (CGS § 14-300a) requiring the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) and local traffic authorities, on roads under their respective jurisdictions, to provide special pedestrian street or sidewalk markings at intersections and streets in proximity to projects designated for, or with a high share of, elderly people.

Existing law allows local traffic authorities to designate crosswalks in a manner that complies with OSTA regulations, which generally require all markings on public roads to comply with the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD) (Conn. Agencies Regs., § 14-298-600). (In practice, high visibility crosswalks are generally used on public roads.)

§ 4 — LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SIGNALS

Requires light rail and bus rapid transit operators to comply with light rail transit signals when they are in place

The bill specifies that (1) a “light rail transit signal” has the same meaning as is described in the federal MUTCD and (2) includes bus rapid transit signals. The bill requires these signals to have multiple lenses showing horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines. Under the bill, light rail and bus rapid transit operators must comply with signals in the following manner when they are in place:

1. a white vertical or diagonal line means they may proceed straight, left, or right;
2. a white horizontal line means they must stop; and
3. a flashing white vertical or diagonal line means they must prepare to stop.

§ 5 — PARKING DISTANCE FROM CROSSWALKS AND CERTAIN SIGNS

Increases, generally from 25 to 30 feet, the distance from an intersection or approach to a marked crosswalk (or stop sign) within which vehicles are prohibited from parking

The bill increases (1) from 25 to 30 feet, the distance from an intersection or approach to a marked crosswalk within which vehicles are prohibited from parking and (2) from 10 to 20 feet, this parking prohibition distance when there is a curb extension (if it has a width at least equal to that of the parking lane). It also specifies that these parking prohibitions do not apply to available marked parking spaces.

The bill requires OSTA and local traffic authorities, when installing or reinstalling markings for an intersection or approach to a marked crosswalk and allowing for nearby parking, to do so in a manner that complies with the bill's requirements discussed above. These provisions take effect July 1, 2025, though the requirement on installing or reinstalling markings applies starting on October 1, 2025.

The bill similarly increases, from 25 to 30 feet, the distance from a local traffic authority-erected stop sign within which vehicles are prohibited from parking, and also applies this requirement to yield signs these authorities put up. It eliminates current law's exception to this stop sign parking distance requirement for intersections of one-way streets located in New Haven, if the local traffic authority has jurisdiction and allows it.

As under existing law, (1) certain vehicles are exempt from these parking distance requirements (such as emergency vehicles and maintenance vehicles with flashing lights) and (2) violations are infractions.

§ 6 — SERVICE SIGNS ON LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAYS

Allows “EV CHARGING” to be included on limited access highway specific service signs

The bill allows “EV CHARGING,” or any other word permitted under the federal MUTCD, to be included on “specific service signs.” Under current law, these are rectangular signs generally visible from limited access highways with (1) the words “GAS,” “FOOD,” “LODGING,” “CAMPING,” or “ATTRACTION” and (2) exit directional information for the designated service (including separately attached business sign panels related to the service). Under the MUTCD, to be eligible for an electric vehicle (EV) charging business identification sign panel, a business’s chargers must meet certain requirements (such as continuous operation at least 16 hours per day, seven days per week).

Existing law allows the DOT commissioner to enter into an agreement with a qualifying person or company for the erection, maintenance, and removal of a specific service sign within the rights-of-way of state-maintained limited access highways, other than parkways. (DOT regulations set related parameters, such as application and sign installation requirements).

§§ 7-9 — FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Allows DOT to take certain actions related to federal surface transportation funding a municipality receives directly

By law, the DOT commissioner may enter into agreements with the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, local officials, or both, for accepting and spending federal and state funding the department receives related to certain roadways and facilities eligible for federal surface transportation funding. This includes using the funding to develop plans and establish programs for, and construct improvements on or to, these roadways and facilities. The bill (1) also allows DOT to do so for federal surface transportation funding a municipality receives directly and (2) specifies this federal funding includes any the U.S. Secretary of Transportation allocates to DOT or municipalities under any congressional act providing federal surface transportation funding.

Current law gives DOT the authority to construct and maintain the improvements of land abutting a federal surface transportation urban

program roadway or facility by condemning property or rights of access and exit. The bill specifies this authority extends to condemning property for any “federal surface transportation urban program roadway or facility.” Under the bill, this term includes any state or locally maintained roadway or facility that is eligible for surface transportation urban program funding according to any congressional act providing this funding.

§§ 10-12 — RAILROAD FACILITY SURVEYS AND RAIL ENTRY PERMITS

Allows the DOT commissioner or his agents to enter private property to conduct certain railroad facilities-related surveys or testing; additionally allows the commissioner to issue entry permits to anyone seeking nonexclusive, temporary access to state-owned property that supports rail operations

Existing law allows the DOT commissioner, or his agent, to enter private property to conduct surveys, inspections, or geological investigations related to locating, relocating, constructing, or reconstructing any proposed or existing highway (i.e. public road). The bill additionally allows the commissioner or his agent to do so for proposed or existing railroad facilities.

The bill similarly extends this right of entry, after reasonable notice is provided to the affected property owner, to tests (such as borings and soundings) needed to accomplish the above objectives with respect to railroad facilities, as existing law permits for highways. As under existing law for highway-related entries, DOT is liable for any resulting damages.

Existing law empowers a railroad company’s agents to enter places, as designated by the company’s directors, to conduct surveys and determine the location of railroad construction. The bill extends this authority to the DOT commissioner and his agents.

The bill also allows the DOT commissioner to issue an entry permit, on a form he requires, to anyone seeking nonexclusive, temporary access to state-owned property that supports rail operations (including any rail right-of-way). The permit must specify the permittee’s required insurance coverage, as determined by the commissioner in consultation

with the state's director of insurance and risk management, and name the state as an additional insured. Under the bill, the state is not liable for injuries or damages to any person or property that result, directly or indirectly, from a permittee's activities on the property.

§ 13 — TRANSIT DISTRICT FUNDING

Requires DOT to fund urban transit districts based on a formula set in federal law, as current law required through FY 24; eliminates a related requirement that DOT establish a grant program to provide additional funding to these transit districts

The bill requires DOT to return to funding urban transit districts based on a formula for urbanized areas set in federal law, as it had been required to do prior to this fiscal year. The bill eliminates provisions that (1) freeze urban transit districts' funding to their FY 24 level and (2) require DOT to establish a grant program to provide additional funding to these transit districts (see below). Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, transit districts located in rural areas are funded based on a federal formula for rural areas.

As discussed above, the bill eliminates current law's provisions related to a DOT grant program to provide urban transit districts with additional funding for certain purposes (such as maintaining and expanding transit services, providing regional services, and upgrading transit-related infrastructure). Current law requires prioritizing grants to transit districts formed by a municipality with a population of at least 100,000 (or with member municipalities with a combined population meeting this threshold). By law, an "urbanized area" must be defined and designated as such under the most recent decennial census and have a population of at least 50,000.

§§ 14 & 15 —REGIONAL COMMUTER AND FREIGHT MOBILITY DISCUSSIONS REPEAL

Repeals a statute generally requiring the governor to have ongoing formal discussions with surrounding states about regional commuter and freight mobility and report on these discussions

The bill repeals a statute (CGS § 13b-79y) generally requiring the governor to (1) have ongoing formal discussions with surrounding states about regional commuter and freight mobility and (2) biennially report to the legislature on these discussions and any actions taken or

recommended as their result.

§ 15 — AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE PILOT PROGRAM REPEAL

Repeals a statute generally requiring the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to create an autonomous vehicle testing pilot program

The bill repeals a statute (CGS § 13a-260) that generally requires OPM, in consultation with certain agencies, to create an autonomous vehicle testing pilot program in certain municipalities selected for participation.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 1 (03/19/2025)