

General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5222 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION'S
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS STATUTES CONCERNING

Title: CONSUMER PROTECTION.

Vote Date: 3/11/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/23/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL

General Law Committee on behalf of the Department of Consumer Protection

REASONS FOR BILL

The Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) submitted this omnibus consumer protection proposal to the General Law Committee with the intent of improving health and safety in the state. Their [written testimony](#) explains the bill and details the rationale for its provisions.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE

The main change in the substitute language (LCO 2968) is that it responds to feedback received during the committee process and removes the provisions regarding accountants. It also makes other minor changes.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Consumer Protection \(DCP\)--Bryan Cafferelli, Commissioner](#)--DCP's written testimony explains the reasons the Department proposed these amendments to various areas of consumer protection statutes.

- **General Consumer Protection**

- **Sections 1 and 2** intend to give DCP authority to perform accountancy investigations in a manner that is co-equal with the Board of Accountancy.
- **Section 12** increases DCP's authority to prevent the sale of adulterated food and beverage products.
- **Section 13** is a response to charity donation bins being placed on private property without property owners' permission. It intends to ensure that donations are going to charities registered with DCP and to increase the Department's authority to enforce complaints about unauthorized placement of bins.

- **Licensing**
 - **Sections 4 through 6** streamline the license renewal process for professional engineers and landscape surveyors by moving from annual renewal to renewal every two years.
 - **Section 7** intends to ensure that real estate agents have relevant and timely education by requiring applicants to take the exam within two years of application.
 - **Section 8** intends to clarify existing practice by writing into statute that P-licenses are required to work on underground petroleum storage tanks.
 - **Section 9** intends to clarify that contractors shall not “rent” their licenses to one or more businesses that they do not own or work for.
 - **Sections 3 and 10** eliminate continuing education requirements for interior designers.
 - **Section 18** repeals statutes regarding an apartment listing service credential. No one has applied for it since its creation in 1981.
- **Enhancing background check requirements**
 - **Section 11** addresses an issue where local background checks were hiding criminal history of those applying for Homemaker Companion Agency credentials. Statewide and national background checks would now be required, as they reveal results for the whole state.
- **Funeral service contracts**
 - **Sections 14-16** provide greater protections for families who enter pre-need funeral service contracts. These provisions are a response to a 2025 investigation of a provider who exploited individuals with these contracts. The changes would require consumers to be presented with a fact sheet, give them a three-day right of cancellation, and that they be notified of an escrow deposit within 10 days instead of 25.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT

None recorded.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION

125 Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) testified in opposition to Sections 1 and 2 of HB 5222. They all express highly similar points regarding these sections of the bill. The CPAs oppose assigning authority over enforcement and discipline to DCP because the agency does not have professional expertise in accountancy. They argue that only those working within the profession have sufficient expertise to make decisions regarding compliance matters. The CPAs argue that keeping final authority with state boards is in line with national practices and standards.

Requested amendment: **Strike Sections 1 and 2.—This change was incorporated into the substitute language.**

[Elizabeth](#) and [Margaret Daly](#), sisters whose family was scammed by Pietras Funeral Home in Vernon, submitted written testimony in opposition to HB 5222, arguing that its protections are not strong enough to prevent abuse of prepaid funeral contracts. Their written testimony describes the same scenario. When their mother died, she had opened a prepaid funeral, so

Elizabeth, Margaret, and their father all then decided to open their own prepaid funerals at Pietras. The three family members made regular payments, but they experienced frustration when making sure their accounts were credited each month. Elizabeth and Margaret described “getting the runaround” as to where their money was and why it was not with the escrow bank. Shortly after their father’s passing in 2024, they read an article in the Journal Inquirer detailing Mr. Pietras’s arrest related to charges that he took prepaid funeral funds from individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities. When the sisters filed a report with the Vernon Police Department, they saw a visibly upset elderly woman leaving with a Pietras folder in her hand. Both Elizabeth and Margaret argue that HB 5222 does not go far enough to stop fraud, and they offer suggestions to strengthen its provisions regarding prepaid funeral contracts.

Requested amendments

- “Change the legislation to be in line with what happens when you finance the purchase of a car through a dealership.” **Use an escrow bank** so the funeral home does not have to administer the funds, manage the contract, or go to the bank. Contracts would also be FDIC insured.
- **Require escrow banks (above) to send a list of prepaid contracts** to the Office of the Attorney General

Connecticut Funeral Directors Association, Inc. (CFDA)--Jonathan L. Green, President and Legislative Chair—CFDA presented written and spoken testimony in opposition to sections 14, 15, and 16 of HB 5222. While they support the general goals of consumer protection and transparency regarding pre-need funeral contracts, they argue that the changes are overly burdensome and do not provide meaningful additional protection for consumers. CFDA contends that shortening the notification period from 25 days to 10 is not practical, and it will not prevent fraud. They object to allowing cancellation of “irrevocable” pre-need contracts and point out that this provision could unintentionally open up a new way to defraud Medicaid. CFDA asks the committee to reconsider these proposed changes.

Connecticut Bankers Association, Tom Mongellow, President and Chief Operating Officer—CBA submitted written testimony in opposition to the language regarding prepaid funeral deposits in Sections 14 and 15. They argue that the reduced three-day timeline for banks to notify funeral contract customers that their funds have been deposited presents “practical and logistical challenges.” CBA also objects to removing the word “initial” from the notification requirement. They argue that this change appears to require notice for every deposit that is made, thereby complicating compliance obligations. CBA asks the committee to oppose both sections.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Connecticut Energy Marketers Association (CEMA), Chris Herb, President—CEMA submitted general comments regarding Sections 8 and 9 of HB 5222.

- **Section 8: P licenses and installing tanks**—CEMA states that they are okay with codifying the current practice of allowing plumbers to install petroleum tanks. They want to make sure it does *not* include installing heat pumps, boilers, and furnaces.
- **Section 9: Preventing contractors from “renting” their license** to one or more businesses that they don’t work for—CEMA testifies that they support efforts to stop

these “rentals.” They want to make sure language in line 259 does not prohibit *owners* from using their license for more than one company that they own.

CEMA states that they met with DCP and that the Department assured them that the intent was aligned with what CEMA is seeking.

Reported by: Betsy Francolino

Date: March 18, 2026