



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 651

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 296

Senate, April 16, 2026

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. WINFIELD of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION WITH RESPECT TO THE CONNECTICUT UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES ACT AND SPORTS WAGERING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 42-110d of the 2026 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

4 (a) For the purposes of this chapter the Commissioner of Consumer
5 Protection shall have the power to order an investigation and
6 examination to be made. In addition to other powers conferred upon the
7 commissioner by this chapter, the commissioner or the commissioner's
8 authorized representatives may issue subpoenas to any person involved
9 in any matter under investigation and examination, administer an oath
10 or affirmation to any person, and conduct hearings in aid of any
11 investigation or examination, provided none of the powers conferred by
12 this chapter shall be used for the purpose of compelling any natural

13 person to furnish testimony or evidence which might tend to
14 incriminate him or subject him to a penalty or forfeiture.

15 (b) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection or the commissioner's
16 authorized representatives shall have the right to (1) enter any place or
17 establishment within the state, at reasonable times, for the purpose of
18 making an investigation; (2) check the invoices and records pertaining
19 to costs and other transactions of commodities; (3) take samples of
20 commodities for evidence upon tendering the market price therefor to
21 the person having such commodity in such person's custody; (4)
22 subpoena documentary material relating to such investigation; and (5)
23 have access to, for the purpose of examination, documentary material
24 and the right to copy and receive electronic copies of such documentary
25 material of any person being investigated or proceeded against. The
26 commissioner or the commissioner's authorized representatives shall
27 have power to require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of
28 witnesses and the production of all such documentary material relating
29 to any matter under investigation.

30 (c) In addition to other powers conferred upon the Commissioner of
31 Consumer Protection, the commissioner may execute in writing and
32 cause to be served, through reasonable efforts to effectuate notice as set
33 forth in section 21a-2, an investigative demand upon any person
34 suspected of using, having used or about to use any method, act or
35 practice declared by section 42-110b to be unlawful or upon any person
36 from whom the commissioner wants assurance that section 42-110b has
37 not, is not or will not be violated. Such investigative demand shall
38 contain a description of the method, act or practice under investigation,
39 provide a reasonable time for compliance, and require such person to
40 furnish under oath or otherwise, as may be specified in said demand, a
41 report in writing setting forth relevant facts or circumstances together
42 with documentary material. Notwithstanding subsection (f) of this
43 section, responses to investigative demands issued under this
44 subsection may be withheld from public disclosure during the full
45 pendency of the investigation.

46 (d) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection, in conformance with
47 sections 4-176e to 4-185, inclusive, whenever the commissioner has
48 reason to believe that any person has been engaged or is engaged in an
49 alleged violation of any provision of this chapter, shall deliver to such
50 person, in a manner that is sufficient to effectuate notice as set forth in
51 section 21a-2, a complaint stating the charges and containing a notice of
52 a hearing, to be held upon a day and at a place therein fixed at least
53 fifteen days after the date of such complaint. The person so notified shall
54 have the right to file a written answer to the complaint and charges
55 therein stated and appear at the time and place so fixed for such hearing,
56 in person or otherwise, with or without counsel, and submit testimony
57 and be fully heard. Any person may make application, and upon good
58 cause shown shall be allowed by the commissioner to intervene and
59 appear in such proceeding by counsel or in person. The testimony in any
60 such proceeding, including the testimony of any intervening person,
61 shall be under oath and shall either be reduced to writing by the
62 recording officer of the hearing or recorded in an audio or audiovisual
63 format. The commissioner or the commissioner's authorized
64 representatives shall have the power to require by subpoena the
65 attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of any
66 documentary material at such proceeding. If upon such hearing the
67 commissioner is of the opinion that the method of competition or the act
68 or practice in question is prohibited by this chapter, the commissioner
69 or the commissioner's designee shall issue a final decision, which may
70 include orders for such person to cease and desist from using such
71 methods of competition or such act or practice. The commissioner may
72 impose a civil penalty, in an amount not to exceed the amount set forth
73 in subsection (b) of section 42-110o, after a hearing conducted pursuant
74 to chapter 54, or, if the amount involved is less than [ten] twenty-five
75 thousand dollars per consumer, an order directing restitution, or both.
76 The commissioner may apply for the enforcement of any cease and
77 desist order, civil penalty, order directing restitution or consent order
78 issued or imposed under this chapter to the superior court for the
79 judicial district of Hartford, or to any judge thereof if the same is not in
80 session, for an order temporarily or permanently restraining and

81 enjoining any person from continuing any violation of such cease and
82 desist order, an order directing payment of any civil penalty or
83 restitution or a consent order. Such application for a temporary
84 restraining order, temporary and permanent injunction, order directing
85 payment of any civil penalty or restitution and for such other
86 appropriate decree or process shall be brought and the proceedings
87 thereon conducted by the Attorney General.

88 (e) In addition to any injunction issued pursuant to subsection (d) of
89 this section, the court may make such additional orders or judgments as
90 may be necessary to restore to any person in interest any moneys or
91 property, real or personal, which may have been acquired by means of
92 any practices prohibited by this chapter, including the appointment of a
93 receiver or the revocation of a license or certificate authorizing the
94 person subject to the order or injunction to engage in business in this
95 state, or both.

96 (f) The Commissioner of Consumer Protection or the Attorney
97 General or their employees shall disclose, in accordance with the
98 provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-
99 200, all records concerning the investigation of any alleged violation of
100 any provision of this chapter, including, but not limited to, any
101 complaint initiating an investigation and all records of the disposition
102 or settlement of a complaint. For purposes of this section, "disposition"
103 shall include the following action or nonaction with respect to any
104 complaints or investigations: (1) No action taken because of (A) a lack
105 of jurisdiction, (B) unsubstantiated allegations, or (C) a lack of sufficient
106 information to draw a conclusion, as determined by the commissioner,
107 after investigation; (2) referral to another state agency, or to a federal or
108 local agency, or to law enforcement authorities; (3) an acceptance of an
109 assurance of voluntary compliance in accordance with the provisions of
110 section 42-110j; and (4) formal action taken, including the institution of
111 administrative proceedings pursuant to subsection (d) of this section or
112 court proceedings pursuant to section 42-110m, 42-110o or 42-110p. The
113 commissioner may withhold such records from disclosure during the
114 pendency of an investigation or examination held in accordance with

115 subsection (a) of this section, but in no event shall the commissioner
116 withhold any such records [longer than a period of eighteen months
117 after the date on which the initial complaint was filed with the
118 commissioner or] after the date on which the investigation or
119 examination was [commenced, whichever is earlier] closed. Nothing
120 herein shall be deemed to affect the rights of litigants, including parties
121 to administrative proceedings, under the laws of discovery of this state.

122 Sec. 2. Section 12-863a of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes
123 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
124 *passage*):

125 (a) No person shall knowingly allow a person who is not of the legal
126 age for participation in online casino gaming, online sports wagering
127 and retail sports wagering to (1) open, maintain or use an account with
128 an online gaming operator, or (2) make or attempt to make a wager on
129 Internet games or with a sports wagering retailer.

130 (b) For purposes of this section, "online gaming operator", "Internet
131 games" and "sports wagering retailer" have the same meanings as
132 provided in section 12-850.

133 (c) Any person who violates any provision of subsection (a) of this
134 section shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

135 Sec. 3. Section 53a-127d of the general statutes is repealed and the
136 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

137 (a) A person is guilty of cheating when, in the course of playing or
138 conducting any lawful gambling game, he or she: (1) Knowingly uses
139 an altered or counterfeit chip, token, tile, pull tab, wagering slip or check
140 or knowingly marks, loads or tampers with any cards or dice or
141 substitutes for cards or dice provided by the operator of a lawfully
142 operated game of chance any cards or dice that have been marked,
143 loaded or tampered with; or (2) knowingly uses any device, instrument,
144 article or substance with intent to cheat or defraud or to alter or affect
145 the otherwise random results of any lawfully operated game of chance;

146 or (3) intentionally places, increases or attempts to increase a winning
 147 wager or decreases or attempts to decrease a losing wager after that
 148 period of time during which the rules of a lawfully operated game of
 149 chance permit a wager to be placed or after the results of the game in
 150 which the wager has been placed become known; or (4) intentionally
 151 attempts to alter the result of a betting outcome of a sports wager to
 152 advantage himself, herself or another person, through the use of a
 153 promise or offer of any advantage or benefit made or given to another
 154 person, if either the wager or the attempt to alter the result occurred in
 155 this state; or (5) solicits or accepts any advantage or benefit or the
 156 promise or the offer thereof, for himself, herself or another person, with
 157 intent to alter the result of a betting outcome of a sports wager to
 158 advantage himself, herself or another person, if either the wager or the
 159 attempt to alter the result occurred in this state.

160 (b) Cheating is a class D felony, except that a violation of subdivision
 161 (3) of subsection (a) of this section is a class B misdemeanor.

162 Sec. 4. Subsection (c) of section 12-861 of the general statutes is
 163 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
 164 *passage*):

165 (c) The Attorney General, at the request of the commissioner, is
 166 authorized to apply in the name of the state to the Superior Court for an
 167 order temporarily or permanently restraining and enjoining any person
 168 from violating any provision of sections 12-852 to 12-871, inclusive, and
 169 from offering, advertising or making available to any resident of this
 170 state any sports wagering service without a license required under this
 171 chapter and to seek such other or further relief as the court deems
 172 appropriate. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the
 173 commissioner's or the Attorney General's rights and remedies otherwise
 174 provided by law, including by chapter 735a.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	42-110d

Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	12-863a
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	53a-127d
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	12-861(c)

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Correction, Dept.; Judicial Dept. (Probation)	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill expands the crimes of cheating and allowing underage online gaming or sports wagering,¹ resulting in a potential cost to the Department of Correction and the Judicial Department for incarceration or probation and a potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines. On average, the marginal cost to the state for incarcerating an offender for the year is \$3,300² while the average marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than \$600³ each year for adults and \$450 each year for juveniles.

The bill also makes various changes to the Connecticut unfair trade

¹ Between FY 22 and FY 25, there were 8 offenses recorded and no fines collected under CGS § 53a-127d. No data is available for CGS § 12-863a in this timeframe.

² Inmate marginal cost is based on increased consumables (e.g., food, clothing, water, sewage, living supplies, etc.) This does not include a change in staffing costs or utility expenses because these expenses would only be realized if a unit or facility opened.

³ Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant. This does not include a cost for additional supervision by a probation officer unless a new offense is anticipated to result in enough additional offenders to require additional probation officers.

practice statutes resulting in no fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of violations.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 296*****AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION WITH RESPECT TO THE CONNECTICUT UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES ACT AND SPORTS WAGERING.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes several changes related to Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act (CUTPA) violations and records, the crime of cheating, and certain gaming violations.

The bill expands when the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) can require restitution after finding a CUTPA violation. Currently, DCP may do so in cases involving up to \$10,000. The bill expands this to cases involving up to \$25,000 per consumer.

It also changes how long DCP or the attorney general can withhold records about CUTPA investigations from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Currently, these records can be withheld for the lesser of 18 months from the filing of a complaint or from the start of an investigation. The bill instead permits withholding these records until the investigation closes (§ 1).

The bill expands the crime of cheating to include when a person, to gain an advantage for himself, herself, or another person:

1. intentionally attempts to change the results of a sports wager's outcome through a promise or offer of an advantage or benefit to another person or
2. solicits or accepts for himself, herself, or another person an advantage, benefit, or the promise or offer of one, with intent to change the results of a sports wager's outcome.

In both circumstances, the wager or the conduct must occur in Connecticut (§ 3). The bill makes this, as with most other forms of cheating, a class D felony (punishable by up to five years in prison, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both) (see BACKGROUND).

The bill specifies certain actions the attorney general can take related to online gaming and sports wagering at the DCP commissioner's request. Currently, the DCP commissioner can ask the attorney general to seek restraining orders and injunctions in court to stop violations of these laws. The bill also allows the attorney general, at the commissioner's request, to seek these court orders and other court relief to stop someone from offering or advertising sports wagering services to state residents without a license. The bill specifies that this does not limit the commissioner's or attorney general's rights and remedies under CUTPA (§ 4).

The bill also specifies that online gaming is online casino gaming or online sports wagering for purposes of criminal penalties for allowing an underage person to open an account or place wagers (§ 2). As under current law, a violation is a class C misdemeanor (punishable by up to three months in prison, a fine of up to \$500, or both).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the CUTPA restitution and cheating provisions are effective October 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

CUTPA

By law, CUTPA prohibits businesses from engaging in unfair and deceptive acts or practices. It allows the DCP commissioner, under specified procedures, to issue regulations defining an unfair trade practice, investigate complaints, issue cease and desist orders, order restitution in certain cases, impose civil penalties of up to \$5,000, enter into consent agreements, ask the attorney general to seek injunctive relief, and accept voluntary statements of compliance. It also allows individuals to sue. Courts may issue restraining orders; award actual and punitive damages, costs, and reasonable attorney's fees; and impose

civil penalties of up to \$5,000 for willful violations and up to \$25,000 for a restraining order violation.

Cheating

Under existing law, cheating includes:

1. knowingly using an altered or counterfeit item, or knowingly tampering with cards or dice or substituting cards or dice for ones provided by the game operator;
2. knowingly using a device or substance intending to cheat or change the random results of a game of chance; or
3. intentionally placing or changing a wager after the time permitted to place it or after the game results are known.

Cheating is a class D felony, except that placing or changing wagers after the time permitted or after results are known is a class B misdemeanor (punishable by up to six months in prison, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 41 Nay 0 (03/30/2026)