

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 19-161—sHB 7140
Transportation Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATION LIFESAVER PROGRAM, TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES, PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS, THE USE OF COLORED AND FLASHING LIGHTS, ROAD AND BRIDGE DESIGNATIONS, THE ISSUANCE OF REMOVABLE WINDSHIELD PLACARDS, SNOW REMOVAL SERVICES CONTRACTS, REPORTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER TRANSPORTATION STATUTES

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§ 1 — OPERATION LIFESAVER PROGRAM

Modifies the Operation Lifesaver Program, including (1) transferring responsibility for the program's operation to DOT, (2) allowing DOT to hire a nonprofit contractor to operate the program, and (3) modifying the membership of the Operation Lifesaver Committee

Transfer of Program Operation

Existing law establishes an Operation Lifesaver Program to reduce the number of accidents at railroad crossings and increase public awareness of railroad crossing hazards. The act transfers responsibility for the program's operation from

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the Operation Lifesaver Committee to the Department of Transportation (DOT).

In doing so, the act transfers to DOT the committee's prior program responsibilities, including educating the public on how to reduce accidents, deaths, and injuries at railroad crossings and encouraging the development of engineering and safety improvements. The act additionally requires the commissioner to (1) ensure that the Operation Lifesaver Committee guides and promotes the program locally and (2) adhere to the program's goals and objectives.

Nonprofit Operator

To operate the program, the act allows the DOT commissioner to contract with any national nonprofit organization that is dedicated to increasing public safety and providing education related to railroad crossings. If he does so, the commissioner must require the organization to submit an annual report to the Operation Lifesaver Committee on the program's status and any recommendations for additional goals or objectives.

Operation Lifesaver Committee

The act reduces, from eight to three, the Operation Lifesaver Committee's membership. It does so by removing the six legislative appointees from the committee and adding the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) commissioner or her designee. It retains as committee members the DOT and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection commissioners, or their designees. The DOT commissioner or his designee continues to serve as the committee's chairperson.

The act eliminates the requirements that the committee (1) make recommendations to the legislature to implement its purpose and (2) annually review its progress and submit findings and recommendations to the Transportation Committee.

Grants

The act allows the DOT commissioner, within available federal resources, to administer grants and other funds to public and private schools to help them establish and operate an Operation Lifesaver training program. To do this, he may apply for and receive grants, gifts, and other funds from any person, political subdivision, or other governmental or private entity, including the federal government or any of its agencies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 2, 6 & 7 — TECHNICAL CHANGES

Makes technical changes, including eliminating an obsolete provision

The act makes technical changes, including eliminating an obsolete provision

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that waived certain oversize truck permit fee increases in FY 17.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 3 & 11 — TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES (TNC)

Requires that (1) TNC drivers hold a Connecticut driver's license or one from a "reciprocal state" and (2) any illuminated TNC decals be displayed on the passenger side of the vehicle

Driver Qualifications (§ 3)

The act requires that TNC (e.g., Uber and Lyft) drivers in Connecticut hold either a Connecticut driver's license or a driver's license from a "reciprocal state," instead of a driver's license from any jurisdiction as under prior law.

Under the act, a "reciprocal state" is one that allows TNC drivers who hold Connecticut driver's licenses to provide rides that originate in that state.

Illuminated Decals (§ 11)

Existing law requires TNC drivers to display a removable decal at all times when the driver is connected to the company's digital network or providing a ride. The decal must be (1) issued by the TNC; (2) large enough to be read from 50 feet away during the daytime; and (3) reflective, illuminated, or otherwise visible in darkness. The act additionally requires that any illuminated decal be displayed on the passenger side of the vehicle.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 4 — MULTIUSE TRAIL STUDY

Requires DOT to identify a route for a multiuse trail connecting Middletown to Cheshire and report related information to the Transportation Committee

The act requires the DOT commissioner, in consultation with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments, to complete and submit to the Transportation Committee a report that does the following:

1. identifies a possible route for a multiuse trail to connect the Arrigoni Bridge in Middletown to the Farmington Canal Trail in Cheshire via Meriden and the commuter rail station in Meriden;
2. recommends phases for the trail's construction and estimates each phase's costs; and
3. summarizes any public comments DOT, DEEP, or the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments receive about the report or the trail's possible route.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 5 — EXEMPTION FOR VEHICLES IN THE CUSTODY OF OFFICERS

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Specifies that officers are exempt from paying parking meters while performing their duties

Existing law exempts motor vehicles in the custody of officers from local traffic regulations and state motor vehicle laws while performing their duties, as long as the exemption is necessary to enforce state laws. The act specifies that the exemption includes regulations on paying parking meters.

By law, an “officer” includes any constable, state marshal, motor vehicle inspector, state policeman, or other official authorized to make arrests or to serve process.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 8 — COMMUTER RAIL PARKING GARAGE PLAN

Requires the DOT commissioner to develop a plan to modernize commuter rail station parking garages in Bridgeport, New Haven, and Stamford and report to the Transportation Committee by January 1, 2021

By January 1, 2021, the act requires the DOT commissioner to submit to the Transportation Committee a plan on modernizing parking garages at commuter rail stations in Bridgeport, New Haven, and Stamford.

In developing the plan, the commissioner must address the following:

1. traffic flow inside and outside the garages;
2. access to other forms of transportation at the garages, including public and private bus and shuttle services;
3. integration with any plan adopted by the municipality in which the garage is located;
4. whether interlocal agreements must be executed to modernize the parking garages;
5. pedestrian access and safety;
6. needs created by current and anticipated use of the garages by all vehicle types and pedestrians;
7. ways to incorporate new technology at the garages; and
8. ways to maximize open space around the garages.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 9 — PARKING IN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Makes it an infraction for non-electric vehicles to park at public electric vehicle charging stations

Existing law prohibits drivers of non-electric vehicles from parking in a spot equipped with a public electric vehicle charging station. The act makes doing so an infraction (see [Table on Penalties](#)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 10 — FLASHING AND COLORED LIGHTS

Limits the use of steady red and blue lights to police officers and DMV inspectors; allows DOT maintenance vehicles to use steady or flashing green lights

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State law restricts the color of lights that may be displayed on vehicles and generally prohibits using flashing lights on motor vehicles and equipment except under specified circumstances.

Steady Red and Blue Lights

The act restricts the use of steady red, blue, or red and blue lights, visible from a vehicle's front, to police officers or DMV inspectors who are operating a state or local police vehicle.

Under prior law, emergency vehicles and certain first responders (see table below) could obtain a permit to use steady or flashing red lights or steady or flashing blue lights under certain circumstances (e.g., responding to an emergency). Under the act, such vehicles may use those lights only if they are flashing.

First Responders Eligible for Steady Red or Blue Lights Under Prior Law

<i>Red Lights</i>	<i>Blue Lights</i>
Paid fire chiefs and their deputies and assistants	Active members of a volunteer fire department or company
Volunteer fire chiefs and their deputies and assistants	Active members of an organized civil preparedness auxiliary fire company
Members of the fire police on a stationary vehicle as a warning signal during traffic directing operations	
Chief executive officers of emergency medical services organizations or their first or second deputies or assistants	
Local fire marshals	
Directors of emergency management	

By law, "emergency vehicle" includes any vehicle operated by a (1) member of an emergency medical service organization responding to an emergency call, (2) fire department or any officer of a fire department responding to a fire or other emergency, or (3) police officer. It also includes maintenance vehicles and wreckers.

DOT Maintenance Vehicles

Existing law allows maintenance vehicles to use yellow and amber steady or

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flashing lights. The act allows DOT-owned and -operated maintenance vehicles to also use steady or flashing green lights, and any combination of green, yellow, or amber lights.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 12 — INVENTORY OF DOT-CONTROLLED PARCELS IN NEW HAVEN

Requires DOT to submit an inventory of certain DOT-controlled parcels in New Haven and indicate when it plans to return the parcels to the city's control

By January 1, 2020, the act requires DOT to submit to the Transportation Committee an (1) inventory of parcels in New Haven that are under DOT control in connection with the I-95 New Haven Harbor Crossing Corridor Improvement Program and (2) indication of when it intends to return the parcels to the city's control. Under the act, the inventory must exclude the parcel of land identified as Lot 900 in Block 954 of New Haven's Tax Assessor's Map 78.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 13 — POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL REPORTS

Requires DOT to submit quarterly reports to the Transportation Committee on progress made in implementing positive train control

The act requires DOT to submit to the Transportation Committee quarterly reports, beginning by August 15, 2019, on the progress made to implement positive train control (PTC) systems on passenger rail lines. It must continue the reports until PTC systems are implemented and operational on passenger rail lines state-wide.

PTC systems are technologies designed to automatically stop a train before certain accidents related to human error occur. Under federal law, PTC systems had to be installed on all passenger rail lines by December 31, 2018; rail lines that qualified for an alternative schedule, including Metro North, must fulfill the requirement as soon as possible, but no later than December 31, 2020.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 14-30, 34 & 35 — BRIDGE AND ROAD NAMING

Names various roads and bridges

The act names 10 state highway segments and 9 state highway bridges as follows:

1. Route 97 in Scotland from the northerly intersection with Route 14 to the intersection with U.S. Route 6, the "Conservation Officer James V. Spignesi, Jr. Memorial Highway" (§ 14);
2. Route 63 in Woodbridge from the intersection of Burnt Swamp Road northerly to Route 67, the "PFC Eric D. Soufrine Memorial Highway" (§ 15);

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3. Bridge 04321 on Route 69 passing over I-84 eastbound and westbound in Waterbury, the “Thomas Conway Memorial Bridge” (§ 16);
4. Route 305 in Windsor eastward from the I-91 southbound ramps to the I-91 northbound ramps, the “Windsor Volunteer Firefighter Overpass” (§ 17);
5. Bridge 01237 on Prospect Street passing over I-84 eastbound and westbound in Plantsville, the “U.S. Army SPC4 William A. Beard Memorial Bridge” (§ 18);
6. Route 615 in Colchester from the intersection of Wall Street eastward and continuing southward onto Route 85 to its access point with Route 2 westbound, the “Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company Highway” (§ 19);
7. U.S. Route 1 in Norwalk from the Darien-Norwalk town line northward to the intersection of Keeler Avenue, the “Trooper First Class Walter Greene Memorial Highway” (§ 20);
8. Bridge 05687 on U.S. Route 44 passing over I-84 and the ramps for I-291 and I-384, the “PFC Michael Sokola Memorial Bridge” (§ 21);
9. Bridge 01732 on Route 118 passing over Route 8 in Harwinton, the “State Rep. Joseph Mascetti Memorial Bridge” (§ 22);
10. Bridge 06290 on Route 3 passing I-91 in Wethersfield, the “Rocco V. Laraia, Jr. Memorial Bridge” (§ 23);
11. Bridge 03575 on Hillstown Road passing over I-384 in Manchester, the “Captain Leo Godreau Memorial Bridge” (§ 24);
12. Pedestrian Bridge 05654 passing over the I-84 eastbound off-ramp and the I-84 westbound on-ramp in Hartford, the “Lt. Col. William A. Oefinger Memorial Bridge” (§ 25);
13. Special Service Road 476 in Westport from the northbound I-95 access ramp to the southbound I-95 access ramp, the “Rachel Doran Memorial Highway” (§ 26);
14. Bridge 01117 on State Road 846 passing over the Naugatuck River in Waterbury, the “Samuel K. Beamon, Sr. Memorial Bridge” (§ 27);
15. Bridge 00023 on I-95 passing over West Avenue in Stamford, the “William S. ‘Bill’ Callion, Jr. Memorial Bridge” (§ 28);
16. Special Service Road 700 in Bridgeport from Water Street westward to the merge with Connecticut Route 130, the “Rep. Ezequiel Santiago Memorial Highway” (§ 29);
17. Route 117 in Groton, from the intersection with U.S. Route 1 northward to I-95 southbound, the “Joseph ‘Jo Jo Nice’ Gingerella Memorial Highway” (§ 30);
18. Route 372 in Berlin from the intersection of Route 71 to the intersection of Burnham Street, the “Mary Aresimowicz Memorial Highway” (§ 34); and
19. Route 10 in Avon from the Avon-Farmington town line to the intersection with U.S. Route 44, the “Avon Volunteer Fire Dept. Memorial Highway” (§ 35).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

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§§ 31-33 — SIGN INSTALLATION

Requires DOT to install signs at specified locations

The act requires DOT to install the following signs:

1. signs for Veterans Memorial Park, the Connecticut Trees of Honor Memorial, and the Greater Middletown Military Museum in Middletown on Route 66 at Old Mill Road, Route 217 at Westfield Street, and Route 3 at Fisher Road (§ 31);
2. signs for the Great Meadow Salt Marsh near I-95 in Stratford (§ 32); and
3. signs for the Strong Family Farm, the Arts Center East, the Vernon Historical Society, and the New England Civil War Museum in Vernon (§ 33).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 36 — DEALER TRADE-IN FEE

Specifies that the law does not prohibit a new or used car dealer from seeking remuneration for state vehicle trade-in fees

By law, new and used car dealers must pay to DMV a fee for each trade-in they process in conjunction with the sale of a new or used car. (PA 19-117, § 361, increases the trade-in fee from \$35 to \$100, effective October 1, 2019.)

The act specifies that the law does not prohibit a new or used car dealer from seeking remuneration for the trade-in fee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 37 — ACCESSIBLE PARKING PLACARD FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Requires DMV to issue an accessible parking placard to each parent or guardian of an eligible child, up to two per child

The law allows a parent or guardian of a child younger than age 18 with a disability to apply for an accessible parking windshield placard on the child's behalf. The act specifies that DMV must issue a placard to each parent or guardian who applies, except that it cannot issue more than two placards on behalf of an eligible child.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

§ 38 — SNOW REMOVAL AND ICE CONTROL CONTRACTS

Makes void as a matter of public policy certain indemnification requirements in certain snow removal and ice control services contracts

The act makes void as a matter of public policy certain indemnification requirements in contracts or agreements to (1) plow, shovel, or remove snow or ice; (2) provide de-icing services; or (3) perform an incidental service, such as

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operating or moving related equipment or materials (“snow removal and ice control services contracts”).

Under the act, provisions, clauses, covenants, or agreements in, or related to, these contracts are invalid if they require, or have the effect of requiring, a snow removal or ice control service provider to:

1. indemnify (i.e., protect from liability) the service recipient for acts that the provider is not required to perform or is instructed not to perform under the contract or
2. hold a service recipient harmless from liability for damages due to the recipient’s acts or omissions, or those of his or her agents or employees.

The act’s provisions apply to a snow, ice, or other mixed-precipitation event or risk that the service providers are prohibited from mitigating. They do not apply to snow removal and ice control contracts for work on municipal or state-owned roads or property.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019, and applicable to contracts entered into on and after that date.

§ 39 — DOCUMENT ENVELOPES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Requires DMV to design envelopes that (1) hold driving documents and (2) provide information on effective communication between police officers and people with autism spectrum disorder

The act requires the DMV commissioner to design and make available blue envelopes that (1) can hold a person’s driver’s license, registration, and insurance card and (2) provide, on the outside of the envelope, information and guidance on ways to enhance effective communication between police officers and individuals with autism spectrum disorder. She must do so in consultation with the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association and at least one autism spectrum disorder advocacy organization.

Beginning January 1, 2020, DMV must provide an envelope upon request by a person with autism spectrum disorder or, if the person is a minor, his or her parent or guardian.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 40-43 — REPORT CHANGES

Extends deadlines on certain DOT reports and requires the Connecticut Airport Authority to conduct a study on safety hazards related to structure height

The act extends certain DOT reporting deadlines as follows:

1. from January 1, 2015, to October 1, 2020, for a study of challenges to enter and exit at Rentschler Field in East Hartford that may result from the state-certified industrial reinvestment project authorized in the Aerospace Reinvestment Act (§ 40);
2. from January 1, 2019, to December 1, 2020, for a study on the feasibility of constructing a tunnel from Greenwich to Bridgeport (§ 41); and

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3. from January 1, 2019, to December 1, 2020, for a study on how to implement and fund a level of service from taxis and TNCs to individuals with disabilities that is substantially equivalent to the level of service provided to other members of the public (§ 42).

The act also requires the Connecticut Airport Authority to conduct a study on safety hazards related to the height of structures near general aviation airports. The authority's executive director must report the study's findings to the Transportation Committee by January 1, 2021. Prior law required DOT to conduct a similar study in 2001 (§ 43).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage