

THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2020

(On Thursday, the 23rd of July 2020, in accordance with the Call of the Governor, The House of Representatives convened in the House Chamber in the State Capital at Hartford at 11:18 o'clock a.m. in Special Session. Representative Joe Aresimowicz of the 30th District in the Chair.)

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

I first wanted to thank everybody for their absolute understanding on how we're going about session today. Obviously, the state of Connecticut is doing extremely well in this epidemic, but we want to put nothing to chance. We are going to require social distancing on the House floor, we are requiring masks on the House floor, and we will be using technology to allow the members to connect remotely from on campus but within their offices.

There may be little glitches throughout the day. There may be things that we have to adjust on the fly. I am asking for not only the patience of all of those in the Chamber, those in the LOB, the public, and the press alike. We are doing this in an effort to be as transparent as possible and keep ourselves and others safe. So, again, just please bear with us as we try out this new technology.

My plan is to now go through the rules and the other perfunctory matters that we need to do. We'll pause, double-check the system is working as it was designed to do, and at such time when the bills are ready, we'll then bring up the bills. If folks are having a problem remotely over at the LOB, my understanding is there is staff there and call sheets for you to reach out to your leaders. Please reach out to your leaders. Obviously, they have a direct line to the dais, and we will resolve any problems as they arise. Now, the incredible amount of work that went into this, I really want to thank our House clerks, our IT folks, and the maintenance

staff as a whole. I know this was a rather large undertaking, and we really appreciate it. If we can give them a round of applause, I'd like to do that [Applause].

So with that being said, will the House please come to order? Will the members, staff, and guests please rise, direct your attention to the minority leader, Representative Klarides, and she will lead us in prayer.

GUEST CHAPLAIN THEMIS KLARIDES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Creator and loving God, as our Nation and State continues to confront a global pandemic, we ask for your guidance as we attend to the needs of our State and her people. May the decisions we reach benefit the common good of all our citizens. Amen.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, madam. Would the majority leader, Representative Ritter, please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

[ALL] I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Mr. Clerk, will you please call and read the Governor's Call?

CLERK:

A PROCLAMATION FROM HIS EXCELLENCY

THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I issued a declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies, proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the State of Connecticut as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommend implementation of community mitigation strategies to slow transmission of COVID-19, including cancellation of gatherings of ten people or more and social distancing in smaller gatherings; and

WHEREAS, the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 is higher for individuals who are 60 or older and for those who have chronic health conditions; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have determined that it is possible to transmit COVID-19 even before a person shows symptoms and through aerosol transmission; and

WHEREAS, a statewide primary election is scheduled for August 11, 2020, to select candidates for various state offices and for the 2020 federal presidential election; and

WHEREAS, a statewide general election is scheduled for November 3, 2020, to select candidates for various state and Congressional offices and for the office of the President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of poll workers and volunteers are 60 or older; and

WHEREAS, because elderly registered voters consistently demonstrate the highest rate of voter turnout, providing an alternative to in-person voting could be particularly helpful in reducing the risk of transmission during voting among this population; and

WHEREAS, there is no approved vaccine to prevent or mitigate the effects of COVID-19, and there is not expected to be such a vaccine approved or widely available by November 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have indicated that persons infected with COVID-19 may not show symptoms, and transmission or "shedding" of the

coronavirus that causes COVID-19 may be most virulent before a person shows any symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has recommended that people with mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 be assumed to be infected with the disease; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have recommended that, to prevent transmission of COVID-19, and in light of the risk of asymptomatic transmission and a significant rate of false negative tests, everyone should assume they can be carrying COVID-19 even when have received a negative test result or do not have symptoms; and

WHEREAS, absentee voting offers a proven method of secure voting that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19 by allowing individuals to vote by mail and by reducing the density of in-person voting at polling places; and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2020, pursuant to my emergency powers under section 29-8(b) of the General Statutes, I issued Executive Order No. 700, which modified state statutes to permit absentee

voting for the August 11, 2020 primary by electors who are unable to appear at the polls because of the sickness of COVID-19 while there exists no federally approved and widely available vaccine; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and other state laws guarantee every person the equal protection of the law and the freedom to exercise and enjoy civil and political rights without discrimination on the basis of religion, race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut has long struggled to make that guarantee a reality, especially with respect to people of color, extending as far back as its colonial origins, through its years of legalized slavery after statehood, and continuing to the present time, during which a disproportionate number of law enforcement activities, including uses of force, are Black people and other people of color; and

WHEREAS, a Minneapolis police officer's killing of George Floyd has revealed once again the injustice and cruelty that Black people and other people of color suffer at the hands of law enforcement, and has thereby awoken the public's demand for reforms to our law enforcement agencies and progress toward a just and equitable society; and

WHEREAS, these recent events and the justifiable public anger over them once more confront us with what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called 'the fierce urgency of now'; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly passed, and in more recent instances I have signed, legislation promoting police accountability and transparency as well as broader reforms to our criminal justice system, such as Public Act 11-71, Public Act 12-74, Public Acts 15-2 and 15-4 of the June Special Session, Public Act 19-59, and Public Act 19-90, but much more work remains to be done; and

WHEREAS, immediately adopting evidence-based strategies for producing quick and visible progress will promote public safety; and

WHEREAS, implementing and codifying more restrictive use of force policies, in combination with other measures, can reduce police use of deadly force and the likelihood that police officers will be injured or killed in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare providers providing services to patients need flexibility in testing, diagnosis and treatment while supporting adequate social distancing measures, and the increased utilization of the delivery of health care or other health services through certain modes of telehealth service helps provide the needed flexibility; and

WHEREAS, insulin and other drugs, equipment and supplies are essential for many thousands of Connecticut residents who suffer from diabetes; and

WHEREAS, insulin and other drugs, equipment and supplies, though widely available and relatively

inexpensive to manufacture, have become increasingly and unjustifiably expensive and therefore unavailable to many diabetes patients who rely upon them to avoid severe illness or death;

NOW THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by the authority vested in me under Article III of the Amendments to the Constitution of Connecticut and Section 2-7 of the Connecticut General Statutes, in order to preserve orderly and decent government, do hereby:

Convene the General Assembly in a Special Session in Hartford no earlier than Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. to:

(1) enact legislation to (a) temporarily expand absentee balloting for the August 2020 primary and November 2020 general election in response to the COVID-19 pandemic so that voters may lawfully cast absentee ballots because of the sickness of COVID-19; (b) temporarily alter statutes governing the administration of elections to ensure local officials may administer such absentee balloting in

a secure and orderly manner; and (c) permit voters to register and vote on election day at more than one place per town and to do so as long as they are in line to register to vote before 8:00 p.m.; and

(2) enact legislation to promote greater transparency and accountability for law enforcement;

(3) enact legislation to (a) temporarily relax restrictions on who can provide certain telehealth services and the modes through which such services are delivered; (b) assist health care practitioners in issuing and pharmacies in transferring prescriptions; (c) temporarily make such services more available to certain publicly and privately insured patients; and

(4) enact legislation to promote more affordable access to prescription drugs, equipment, and supplies used to treat diabetes by (a) limiting the coinsurance, copayments, deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses certain insurance policies may impose on insureds for such drugs, equipment, and supplies; (b) authorizing licensed pharmacists

to prescribe and dispense emergency quantities of such drugs, equipment, and supplies; (c) establishing a working group to design certain parameters of a program referring eligible individuals who have been diagnosed with diabetes to a federally-qualified health center, and authorizing the commissioner of social services to apply for a Medicaid waiver, pursuant to Section 1115 of the Social Security Act; and (d) more closely conforming various provisions of the general statutes concerning high deductible health plans to provisions of the Internal Revenue Code concerning health savings accounts and medical savings accounts.

Given under my hand and Seal of the State at the City of Hartford, this 17th Day of July in the year two thousand and twenty.

NED LAMONT

Governor

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Clerk. I order that the Call be printed in the Journal.

CLERK:

And also, Mr. Speaker, I have House Resolution Number 101, Senate Joint Resolution Number 52, Senate Joint Resolution Number 51, and Senate Joint Resolution Number 50.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Clerk. Are there any announcements?

CLERK:

Are there any announcements?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call House Resolution 101?

CLERK:

House Resolution 101, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE JULY SPECIAL SESSION, 2020, introduced by Representative Aresimowicz, Representative Ritter, Representative Klarides.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On to adoption of the resolution.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the resolution. Will you remark?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, these are the House rules we are proposing for the Special Session. I urge adoption. They have been worked on by Republican and Democratic staff today.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The resolution is adopted. [Gavel].

Will the Clerk please call Senate Joint Resolution 52?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 52, RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE JOINT RULES FOR THE JULY SPECIAL SESSION, 2020, introduced by Senator Looney, Senator Duff, et al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the resolution.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the resolution. Will you remark, sir?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, these are the Joint Rules for the July Special Session. The Senate has adopted them, and, again, they were worked on in a bipartisan manner. Thank you. I urge adoption.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark?
Will you remark? If not, let me try your minds.
All those in favor, please signify by saying "aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, "nay." The ayes have it. The
resolution is adopted [Gavel].

Will the clerk please call Senate Joint
Resolution 51?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 51, RESOLUTION
CONCERNING THE EXPENSES OF THE JULY SPECIAL SESSION,
2020, introduced by Senator Looney, Senator Duff, et
al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the resolution, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of the resolution. Will you remark, sir?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, it is self-explanatory. I hope the Chamber will give positive feedback or reaction to the last one. I'm may be a little more giddy up here with fewer people in here, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Will you remark on the resolution before us? Would you remark on the resolution before us? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying, "Aye."

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, "nay." The ayes have it. The resolution is adopted. {Gavel} Thank you for your participation.

Will the Clerk please call Senate Joint Resolution 50?

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution 50, RESOLUTION
CONCERNING THE PRINTING OF THE JOURNALS OF THE
SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE JULY
SPECIAL SESSION, 2020, introduced by Senator Looney,
Senator Duff, et al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I move adoption of the resolution, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on adoption
of the resolution. Will you remark, sir?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

I urge adoption. It's self-explanatory.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much. Will you remark on the
resolution before us? Will you remark on the
resolution before us? If not, let me try your
minds. All those in favor, please signify by
saying, "Aye."

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, "nay." The ayes have it. The resolution is adopted. [Gavel].

Ladies and gentleman, at this point in time, we're going to verify that the technology is working in a manner that's appropriate to continue session. So, the Chamber will stand at ease. [Gavel]

The House come back to order. Again, ladies and gentlemen, both there in the Chamber and logged in from the Capitol Complex, to ensure the voting machine is going to work at the times that are appropriate when we're actually voting on measures or amendments, we are going to do a test of the House voting system. In no way, shape, or form is this meant to be any type of quorum call but rather a test for those that are currently logged in within the complex to verify that their votes could be registered. The board itself will show up on the screen. Please verify that your vote is being

registered, and reach out to either one of your leaders if for some reason the vote that has been cast remotely is not registering on the machine. There is no need if you're not logged in remotely within the complex for you to come into the Chamber and vote, but rather it's a test of the remote voting system.

With that fully explained, I would ask now that the Clerk run the test of the House voting system. And the machine will be open.

Ladies and gentlemen who are now currently voting, you should be seeing the board on your machine again. If for some reason you're attempting to vote but it is not registering, please reach out to your leader, and they will inform us. We will pause here and allow people the opportunity to double-check the system and contact their leaders.

And for clarification because the question just came, this is not a recorded vote that will count towards your record. This is truly a test of the system.

Thank you, Representative Arora of the 151st. I guess you're testing your thing to speak. Right now, we're not activating folks to speak, but rather contact your leader if you are having issues with the system.

Ladies and gentlemen, a couple representatives have reached out that they were having technical issues. We are attempting to resolve them before we move forward. {Ringing}.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you're currently not registered on the board, members of your respective caucuses are reaching out to you. We need you to respond if you're logged in and your vote is not being cast. If for some reason, you're away from your legislative office building desk or not logged into the system, just let us know that so we know we don't have to sit to wait for your vote to light up on the board. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to try to clarify also. On your CGA Intranet site under My Job, there is a tab that is emergency voting portal.

That's where you need to be signed in, and that's where you'll be able to cast your vote. You can participate and watch via the Zoom that you need to be in that portal under the CGA site My Job, emergency voting portal for your vote to go up on the board.

Ladies and gentlemen, we've also been made aware that my microphone, the minority leader and the majority leader's voices are coming through without a problem. Other voices are a little more difficult to hear. We will be testing and working on that. [Ringing]

Ladies and gentlemen, again, while we're awaiting to clear the board and make sure people can vote, we're going to test some of the microphones. So, at this time, we'll bounce around a little bit. I would ask you to send your feedback again through your leaders. Representative Rebimbas has kindly volunteered to give a test, and we'll see how the audio is coming through for her. So, with that

being said, Representative Rebimbas, you now have the floor, madam.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Testing, testing, and there is a smile under this mask, just so you know.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

We'll pause for a moment, and then we'll have her do another test. Ladies and gentlemen in the Chamber, I'd ask you just to kind of keep the noise down as we try to get the microphone volume set. Representative Rebimbas, if you would do the test once again, please.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Testing, testing, one, two, three.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, madam.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Looking out in the crowd, I will ask that Representative O'Dea, would you please push your button to request to speak, and we will now have Representative O'Dea test the microphone system. Representative O'Dea, you have the floor, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I understand it, with the ability to rule my ask when I'm speaking. Is that correct, sir?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Yes, sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

And I understand that the Rams -- the New Canaan Rams will be favored to win the State Championship this year in football. As I understand it, you've guaranteed there will be a season.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

I would like to agree to that. [Laughing].
Thank you very much, Representative.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

So, again, reach out to your leaders if you had trouble there. The next test we are going to do in a couple minutes would be having a member push the request to speak from their office and then speak as if it was a point of order that had to be a time-sensitive matter. While we're not allowing general debate from the offices, we will allow a point of order; so, we'll test that system in a couple minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, again, thank you so, so, so much for your patience. A lot of work has gone into this, which we've already recognized, and even the building itself, the Office of Legislative Management has done an amazing job. This has been a team effort.

What we're going to attempt to do now is test the remote speaking from the office. I know Representative Conley has volunteered to help. Representative Conley and all others, the way you'll go about it when you're in the system, the emergency

voting portal, you will hit the request-to-speak button. It will come up on my board. I will then activate your microphone, and at such time, you will then get a window box that will ask for your permission to unmute the microphone. At that time, click "yes," and you will be live. So, Representative Conley, will you please pick -- push the request-to-speak button? Representative Conley of the 40th District; madam, you now have the floor.
REP. CONLEY (40TH):

It's good to be here. I wanted to delay a motion -- a motion for order, point of order.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much. I see that you came in across in the Zoom. We heard you loud and clear in the Chamber. I would ask members if for some reason you could not hear Representative Conley, please let us know.

REP. CONLEY (40TH):

Mr. Speaker, I'm hearing from my colleagues that there is a delay, down the hall.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Conley, can you repeat that?
You were a little echoey; so, I want to make sure at
least the person that's on the dais can hear you.

REP. CONLEY (40TH):

I'm not hearing from you, Mr. Speaker. I'm
hearing from my colleagues down the hall that
there's a bit of a delay between when each person
speaks.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Okay. Yeah, which is probably going to happen.
I don't know that there's anything we can do for
that, and, really it'd only be utilized for points
of order. So, thank you so much, madam.

Mr. Clerk, will you please clear the board?

Again, one more test. Because we had a vote up
on the board, it did not allow Representative Conley
to appear on the board. So, what will happen is a
normal course of debate. If a representative
requests to speak, I recognize the representative
and they're at their office, it'll appear on the

board. So, Representative Conley, if you're still at your desk, will you request to speak again?

REP. CONLEY (40TH):

[inaudible - 00:42:40], Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Okay, we see you. You are in the House Chamber. You can do the full board, Georgette. Okay.

Representative Conley, please speak again at greater length.

REP. CONLEY (40TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be here tonight and see everyone tonight even if we're social distance. But it's a lovely day over in the Legislative Office Building for the rest of us.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Okay. Thank you very much, Representative.

[Ringing]. The House come back to order again. We're going to do a couple more tests, and then we're going to get started with the bill. Representative Dubitsky is on the request to speak.

It's my understanding that he wants to test his system from that end. Because we currently do not have a -- can we clear the board? Okay?

Representative Dubitsky is on my screen with the request to speak. Thank you, sir, and once I recognize you, you will be then activated on the Zoom also. Representative Dubitsky of the 47th District, you have the floor, sir.

All right. He is actually walking over. So, Georgette, I know you're looking for him in the system. I don't believe you'll find him. So, Mr. Clerk, why don't we clear the board of Representative Dubitsky? It's my understanding he's on his way over here. So while we're waiting for Representative Dubitsky to get here, we're going to test the CT-N feed of the mics other than leadership.

With that being said, Representative Rebimbas, if you'd be so kind as to assist us again, I'd would greatly appreciate it. Would we please activate

Representative Rebimbas' of the 70th District
microphone, please?

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be more than
happy to test the system for CT-N, certainly a
network that we all appreciate being able to deliver
the good work that we do in this building to all of
the public. Testing, Mr. Speaker. Was that
successful?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you so much, madam. And, again, I'm
smiling under here, too.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Same at ya.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, madam. Again, if there was
difficulty hearing the fine representative, please
continue reaching out to your leadership so they
will inform us. We've just been told CT-N is
actually working perfectly, and the voices were
heard. So, thank you for your assistance.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Testing, testing, testing. Testing, testing.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The House come back to order. Representative Dubitsky, thank you for coming over. We were going to attempt to test it, but I understanding you are now currently raising -- rising for a point of order. So, sir, please proceed.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker -- am I permitted to remove the mask while I speak? Mr. Speaker, I attempted to test the system from my office, and as you recognized when you tried to recognize me, you could not hear me because I do not have Zoom on my computer, nor does anybody in the hallway in the Legislative Office Building where my office is. So, there was no way that I could respond to you calling me.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

So, let's check into that, sir. It was my understanding that you were all given the option to

download the Zoom and be able to function in that way, but let me just clarify with the IT staff.

Thank you for raising that point.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

So, Representative Dubitsky, thank you again very much. So, until such time as you all are able to download and successfully test your Zoom system, I would ask every member to follow the debate on CT-N, which is still the live stream. They can access the emergency portal voting under My Job in the CGA Intranet. The button there to request to speak can be activated, and it will show up on my board. Until such time as you all get Zoom up and running, I will then pause the proceedings for you all to come over specifically for a point of order. So, we will rely on your staff. It is my understanding that your staff is currently working with the members to make that happen, and at such time as I am made aware that it has been fully installed and

functional, we will continue under that process. So, the request-to-speak button under the emergency voting portal at the CGA site under My Job. I would also suggest that you reach out to your respective caucus leaders who can also get me in quicker fashion if it's a point of order. So, we will be patient and move this process slowly, and Representative Dubitsky, I really appreciate you bringing it to our attention, sir. Thank you.

Will the House please come to order? Ladies and gentlemen, I believe we are prepared to start the business, but before we do, are there any announcements or introductions? Announcements or introductions? Representative McGee of the 5th District, if you'd activate your microphone, sir. You now have the floor.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

And I hope you don't mind that I removed my face mask. I got a lot of fog here on my glasses.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Fully understand, sir.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

[Laughing]. First and foremost, I want to say good morning to the entire Chamber, or good afternoon -- those of you who are in your office and those who are here in the Chamber.

Today while we are preparing ourselves to do the people's business, today is also an opportunity to reflect on the life and also the work of a leader that we all admired so dearly, that of Congressman John Lewis. I think beyond the color of our skin, beyond our politics, I think each and every person in this Chamber and in your office would agree that the life and the work of the Honorable John Lewis is to be commended, but most importantly, it's an opportunity for each of us to reflect on his work. He's best known for Bloody Sunday, and if you all remember that -- I think some of you maybe. I don't

know; got a lot of young folks in this room, Mr. Speaker. But if you had an opportunity to look throughout history, whether it be that very colorful picture of John Lewis on the floor as a result of his belief that everyone has the right to vote. Might I remind you there were Black people, white people, people from all walks of life standing, or rather walking, in solidarity with John Lewis and those who were fighting during the Civil Rights movement?

So, on today, my colleagues, all of us in this room, I would hope that as we continue to do the work of the people here in the state of Connecticut, we always remember the likes of Congressman John Lewis, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention C.T. Vivian, as well, who was also a civil rights leader and walked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King. And, so if you all would be so kind to just indulge me and all of us in this Chamber to have a moment of silence for the "good trouble" that the Honorable John Lewis committed his life to.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to each and every one of you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, Representative McGee. And if we all can have a moment of silence in honor of Congressman Lewis, his life's work, and the person he was.

[Gavel]. Thank you. Are there any other announcements or introductions? Announcements or introductions? Will the Clerk please call House Bill 6001?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification House Bill No. 6001, AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH, introduced by Representative Aresimowicz, Senator Looney, et al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Clerk. Representative Scanlon of the 98th District. Sir, you have the floor.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I move for passage of the emergency certify bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Question before the Chamber is passage of the emergency certify bill. Will you remark?

Representative Scanlon, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to everybody in the Chamber and watching beyond. These are obviously certainly different times for those of us who have been here for a while, and I would say that we are about to have an interesting day here doing what we're doing. But, the work that we are here to do today is very important, and the first bill that we are going to talk about today is one that I think almost every family in Connecticut in some way or the other, either personally or through extension, has had to deal with during this pandemic, and that is the issue of telehealth which is the practice by which you can communicate with your doctor. You can get medical advice and services through either your phone or a computer or in many cases sometimes just by talking on the

phone, without what we're thinking about with Zoom and all those technologies. And, so, today we're here to do a simple thing which is to maintain access and affordability for this very vital service until next year when all of us will hopefully be back in this building during regular session and can have a larger conversation about what the future of telehealth should be, but between now and then, we want to make sure that everyone in Connecticut who has used this service, who has appreciated it, who has benefited from it, will be able to continue to access it going forward until March 15 of next year. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move for passage.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Question before the Chamber again is on adoption of House Bill 6001. Will you remark? Will you remark? Representative Pavalock-D'Amato. You have the floor, madam.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill expands the existing telehealth bill this Chamber passed in 2015

and adds additional types of providers and allows for audio-only telehealth for in-network providers and individual on state medical assistance programs. It's not a substitute for an in-person visit and physical examination with the physician, but rather an option for patients and providers. And there's still a focus on patient care, and doctors are still bound by their oaths and duties of patient care. This bill adds a few new providers including dentists, athletic trainers, music and art therapists who are often utilized for individuals with autism, just to name a few. The bill also allows a pharmacy to transfer prescription to another pharmacy without the requirement of going back to the physician for permission, but with protections to avoid duplication when dispensing the prescription. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the proponent of this bill.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon, please prepare yourself. Representative Pavalock-D'Amato, please proceed, madam.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, sir. Will all types of health insurance coverage fall under this bill?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

This applies to fully insured health plans and the state health plans and the state Husky program.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Does this bill allow providers to collect deductibles, co-pays, and those fees that are -- they are obligated to pay under their plan?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, they can charge a co-pay and it can go -- there is -- co-insurance, co-pays, and deductibles do count for this, but they cannot limit or they cannot exceed the current cap on those co-pays. So, they cannot charge more than they would normally charge for an office visit.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And so are providers -- are they still required to conform to their scope of practice within a virtual visit and bill insurers accordingly? For example, a dentist would not be able to bill for a cavity virtually.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, they would not.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon, can you just repeat that? I had a little trouble hearing you, sir.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, they would not.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Lines 130 through 125 deal with the consent that a provider must obtain from an individual in order to do -- provide telehealth. Is there a requirement as to the form of this consent?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, there is not.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And line 210 deals with financial assistance.

What type of financial assistance is this line referring to?

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

That is not specified. That is up to the individual doctor, practices, and their respective policies, but we do not specify that in the state statute today.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Can you briefly explain the purpose of section 2 which deals with the transfer of prescriptions between pharmacies?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Basically, Section 2 allows pharmacies to transfer an unfilled prescription to another pharmacy. So, why is that? Well, I'll give you a few examples of why that might happen. Let's say that because of the pandemic you and your family have left your hometown, and you want to go stay at the lake house that you own in a different part of Connecticut. You would be able to have your normal pharmacy transfer that prescription to the CVS in Winsted or Litchfield or Bantam or wherever you would be. Another example might be that you go to your pharmacy, and because it's a very popular drug, there's a supply issue. They don't have the drug

that you need, and they want to transfer it from the CVS in Guilford to the CVS in Branford. They can now do that, and it's made easier for them to do that here, to try to make it easier for people to access the prescriptions that they need to get through this pandemic.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And is there a sunset provision for this section?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It's consistent with the rest of the bill.

It's through March 15 of 2021.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

In section 5, can you just explain the concept of parity and the purpose of this section in this bill?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So, parity is all about things being equal, obviously. That's what that word means. And, so when we're talking about parity in the context of this bill, what we're talking about is rate payer parity. Right now, prior to this executive order from the governor and prior to us passing this bill, a provider is not able to get reimbursed for telehealth in the same way that they would for in-person visit. What the governor's executive order did and what we're doing here today through March of next year is to create parity between in-person visits and telehealth visits so that providers are

compensated at the same rate that they ordinarily would be for an in-person visit, for the telehealth visit that they would be doing with any individual that applies to this plan.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Does this bill alter an insurance company's ability to review and question submitted claims?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

No, it does not.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock D-Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Is there a fiscal note?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, there is a fiscal note.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And what would that amount be?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

If I can have a moment to find that number.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Chamber, stand at ease.

House come back to order. Representative
Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sections 3 and 4 of the bill may - may result in an increased cost to the municipalities; and section 3, 4, and 5 may increase revenue to the UConn Health Department, but there is no otherwise note in this fiscal note that I received from OFA.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And is there a sunset provision for the entire bill? And what is that date.

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The sunset date is March 15 of 2021.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And so is the purpose behind the sunset date -- is that -- this is temporary -- these are temporary provisions in reflection of the needs related to the current pandemic. Is that correct?

Through you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, the intent is to get people to maintain access to this for the time that we are not in session, and when we return here, God willing, in January of next year, we can evaluate whether or not we want to continue this, make it permanent, and do all the kind of things that we usually do here during the session, but we wanted to get people to that next session, which is why we picked March 15.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

I want to thank the chairs of the committee for their hard work, and I urge my colleagues to vote in the affirmative. Thank you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, madam. Again, this is a new process, so we are going to pause. I will announce that there is nobody currently on the board. If any member would like to speak, they can activate their request-to-speak button on the CGA Intranet site under My Job, emergency voting portal, request to speak, and then come over to the Chamber. We have staff outside the Chamber that will put you into the queue to bring you into the Chamber. So, again, because we are learning new technology, I will pause to see if anybody activates the request-to-speak button. The Chamber will stand at ease.

[Gavel]

The House will come back to order. [Gavel].
Again being patient with these first bills.
Currently on the board, Representative Turco of the 27th District. We have not heard from your leaders

that it is a point of order; so, at this point in time, we would ask you to come to the Chamber, at which point, you can address the body.

[Gavel] The House will come back to order. Again, ladies and gentlemen, we are going to go very slow at first. This is, again, new technology. We want to ensure that every member has the opportunity to speak. I will remind folks as you're entering the Chamber, you enter from the caucus' side, and you exit over by the governor's side, and there will be no crossover. Just, again, keep the flow of traffic so we can maintain social distancing.

Representative Turco has arrived in the Chamber. Representative Turco of the 27th District, sir, you now have the floor.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Hello, Mr. Speaker. I'm a little out of breath.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Take your time, sir.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Hitting the button and running over here so I didn't hold up the Chamber or the business of the Chamber.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative, for you and all the other Representatives, please, there is no need to run over. We are going to move very slowly at first. You will not be denied your opportunity to speak, and I'm talking now, Representative Turco, in an effort to give you an opportunity to catch your breath. [Laughing].

REP. TURCO (27TH):

[Laughing] I'll make it through, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative, you now have the floor.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Thank you Mr. Speaker. It's really good to see you as well as many of the staff and my colleagues, actually in person for the first time in a very long time instead of over Zoom or some other, you know, on-line service.

But I want to express my strong support for AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH in this bill and thank Representative Scanlon and my great state senator, Matt Lesser who worked really hard on this legislation. I have heard from constituents even before the COVID-19 crisis that telehealth access was something very important to them, so that they were able to easily communicate with their medical providers when it was difficult to perhaps get an in-person --

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative, could you please pause for one moment please.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Sure.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The Chamber will stand at ease for one moment. I'm sorry to interrupt you.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

That's okay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative, it's just a technical glitch. We want to make sure people have the ability to hear you, and they're not able to hear you. So, if you will just bear with our IT. They are fixing our issues.

Will the Chamber come back to order?

Representative, could you please test your mic? I just received a text message from somebody watching on the outside of the building that they can hear you. So, we're just trying to figure out where the glitch is.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Testing, Madam Speaker, testing, testing. Can you hear me okay?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Okay, go ahead and resume. Representative, you may please proceed.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, we've gotten so good at doing things virtually that I think we're having difficulty remembering how to do

these things in-person. But, I want to send my strong support again for expanding access and health insurance coverage for telehealth services. I've heard from a lot of my constituents in the town of Newington that need access to telehealth services that are unable to, are worried about COVID; just, you know, have different health conditions right now where they're able to get good, adequate, sufficient treatment and talking to their medical providers through a telehealth service and don't need to go in-person right now where they're putting themselves at risk.

Also, I was a strong supporter of expanding telehealth services before the COVID-19 crisis ever occurred. I wish that this bill did not sunset right now in March 2021. I wish we continued it indefinitely. I hope that we'll revisit that next session, expand coverage, expand the type of platforms that could be used, but for today, I am proud to support this bill. Thank you again, Representative Sean Scanlon and my good State

Senator in Newington, Matt Lesser, for their work on this legislation. And I look forward to voting for it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative, and thank you for understanding the interruption.

Representative Currey.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today in support of this piece of legislation, and beyond hearing the stories from a number of constituents and residents at the public hearing recently, this became very personal for me over the last couple of weeks. As many know, not everyone, I've recently found out that I have stage 5 kidney failure and must start the transplant process immediately and have started this. The team over at Hartford Hospital was absolutely phenomenal in the fact that we had our initial 4-hour Zoom appointment, and it was one of the most personal experiences that I've been able to go through over

Zoom aside from meeting with college friends with a couple of drinks on a Friday night. But, it was absolutely no different than sitting in front of them face-to-face. You felt the emotion, you felt the care, and you knew that you were getting top-notch service from them and that this was just another part of their job, and they wanted to ensure that you were safe, you understood what was going on, and especially given my particular situation at the moment, that I was at ease and that I was fully aware of what I was about to get myself into. You know, and I have shared this with many of the members here in the legislature, and it will come as a surprise to many of the folks who may be listening at home or from their offices. But, you know, they put me at ease. This is going to be a journey for us all, but I definitely hope that all of our colleagues can support this piece of legislation today, and I am okay, and I'm going to be okay. Thank you, everyone.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. The Chamber will stand at ease. We are waiting our next representative to speak. Ladies and gentlemen who are in your offices throughout the Capitol and your legislative office, if you plan to speak, press your button and then please proceed on over so we can move the process along a little bit. We will wait for you, but at the same time, if you know that you're going to speak, please press your button and then come on over. We see the folks that are on their way over, but that way, it moves the process along a little bit.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

And, Madame Speaker, I would add to that there is plenty of room to socially distance; so, if people are going to wait until they get recognized in their House LOB office to walk over, we will be here until next Friday. So, if they could just make it over, that'd be great. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative, I think you're insinuating that we are all a little slow.

The Chamber come back to order. Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

[Ringing] Thank you, Madam Speaker. A question to the proponent of the bill.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

We have telehealth now. We're extending it through March of 2021. Why are we stopping at March and not going to June? Do we feel as though we can get back into March to extend it, if we have to, to June?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

The reasoning for March 15 is because it gets us through half the session, and at that point, hopefully, when we come back in January, we will be able to as a committee, as a legislature talk about what we want to do going forward with telehealth and actually have the hindsight of what's going on with coronavirus. Obviously, March is a long time away from here. We have no idea what's going to happen between now, here in July, and March of 2021. And, so, we wanted to just give us enough room to get us into next session, keep this going for the next seven months, and then have a conversation when we get back to regular session next year about what to do long-term with telehealth.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you. We have had this bill in Human Services, and we were not conferred on this bill

that we're talking about right now as ranking, and I just spoke with the Chair of Human Services. My concern is this is an option for people. If it's an option that runs out in March, what are the chances of us coming back into this Chamber to extend it to June when we normally aren't in this Chamber in March? We're still in the process of public hearings and hearing bills when this is an option for people to do, and it's giving the comfort of our constituency to use telehealth just a couple more months. I don't believe I've ever been in here in March in the long session, but we can -- I'm just curious as to why not June.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you Mrs. Speaker.

This was the date that we had settled on after a lot of discussion here in this building with the leaders and with the industry, and it's my

experience -- I've only been here for five years, but I have definitely been in here at some points in February and March to vote on judges and to confirm appointments of commissioners and things of the like. So, I don't think it's completely unprecedented for us to have had a session day in the earlier parts of the session, but we shall see.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think telehealth is something that's helped a lot of our people through, not only our elderly, not only our people who are concerned, but other people who have had to get to the doctor's office, and they couldn't get there during COVID. I guess I'm a little disappointed in Human Services not being part of this, as we've had the bill in front of us. I like it. I just want some assurity that if we need

to move forward with it, we have a mechanism to keep it going.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I wholly concur with the gentleman that we definitely need to be looking at this going forward. It's a very, very important tool. It is something that we have seen utilized over and over again, and I have every confidence that between insurance and Public Health and Human Services that all of us next year will definitely have a long-term conversation about what the future of telehealth should look like, whether the pandemic is getting better at that point, whether it is getting worse, or whether we've just become accustomed to using this tool more, and you certainly have a promise from me as the chair of one of those committees to have that conversation.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Case.

REP. CASE (63RD):

I thank the good chair for his answers, and just for the record, we at Human Services have had telehealth conversations for, I believe, two or three years. So, the pandemic just compounded it, and it's where we're at, what we're doing, and I thank the chair for his answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative.

We are awaiting again our next Representative to speak; so, I am going to ask the indulgence -- Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Madam Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of the amendment. I ask that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize. Oh, I'm sorry. LCO 3763.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Do you mind if he goes on?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon, could you please repeat the number?

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

3763.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you. Will the Clerk please call LCO 3763? Designated House Amendment Schedule "A."

CLERK:

LCO #3763, House Amendment Schedule "A."

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Scanlon, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This amendment is really just technical. We had been trying to draft this section of the bill and were working up until we walked in here today to

make sure that the bill was good and written correctly, and there was one thing that we had made a mistake on, and, so, this bill -- or this amendment rather, simply corrects that to make sure that when the Governor's executive powers and emergency powers expire on September 10, that we are still giving the commissioner of DPH her emergency powers from September 10 until March 15 of 2021 for he or her, whoever is the commissioner, to waive, modify, or suspend any regulatory requirements adopted by the commissioner of Public Health that the commissioner deems necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to protect public health, and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "A." Will you remark on the amendment? Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This language -- I agree with my colleague. This language was in the

original versions that I reviewed, and, so, I urge support for my colleagues. Thank you.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? If not, I try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

[Gavel].

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Dathan.

REP. DATHAN (142ND):

Thank you very much. I just wanted to remark on the bill because this is so important to so many people, and my wonderful town of Norwalk and New Canaan in the 142nd District. I have heard from

mothers, fathers, patients, and elderly people, how important telehealth has been for them over the course of the pandemic. It has allowed children to receive speech and language services. It's allowed people who are immune-compromised, who are concerned about going into their doctor's office, the ability to receive consultations whether it's for a skin ailment or other sort of ailments. It's been really great. I was disappointed to see that the date has been moved up to March 15 today in the latest legislation, but it gives us an opportunity to assess where we are with the coronavirus. So, I'm very pleased to support it, and I look forward to working on this next session with my Chairmen Lesser and Scanlon, and thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, representative. And while we're awaiting our next speaker, I would just ask again that if you are in your office, press your button and please come over to the Chamber to speak. That

would just move things along. Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for indulging me for a second time. I did have one additional question for the Chairman of the Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (5TH):

Please proceed, madam.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. I wanted to clarify is there a sunset provision for the prescription portion of the bill?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

No, there is not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. That's all.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. We will be standing at ease. [Ringing]

Will the Chamber come back to order?

Representative McGee, we have come to learn that if you are speaking with your microphone in the Chamber, folks cannot hear you because they are muffled. So, if -- that is perfect. We had a representative that was just speaking, and people didn't feel that they could hear her enough; so, for those of you who are a little bit, you know, quieter or lighter-spoken, you might need to remove the mask so you can be understood and heard in the rooms. Thank you, Representative McGee, for indulging me. Please proceed, sir.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Thank you, thank you, and I think it's always important to have our Speaker enforcing the precautions here; so, I appreciate it. I've also appreciated watching the debate from my laptop,

which is a little different and in some ways hard to track, and forgive me to the Speaker if I'm asking a question [Ringing] that's already been asked.

So, through you, Madam Speaker.

Could the fine gentleman just explain to me a little about, and maybe Case has already asked this question, but I'd like to find out whether or not we will change the date back to June. I think I heard a little bit of it, but if he could just repeat himself again. There are basically no indications that we would be out of social distancing by March; so, I'm wondering, has the good chairman of the committee considered that? And if he could just expound just a little bit more.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I can. The idea behind March was to get us into the next session so that we, in theory, are all back here.

None of us know what's going to happen between now and then, and I hope to God and pray to God that we will be in a better place, but if we're not, then I think that we would find a way to come in here and do what we're doing today, which is to make sure that nobody in our state who was relying on this service, who's been utilizing this service, whether it's for themselves or their family -- that they would be able to continue doing that if we were still in the state of emergency, and we settled on March as sort of a date in the middle of session so that it wasn't at the end, and it wasn't at the beginning. It would give us some time to figure out what we want to do long-term, know where we're going to be, but everyone that's watching today hopefully will have the confidence that for the next seven months they will be protected, their family will be protected, and they will still have access to affordable telemedicine.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative McGee.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

No more questions. I just want to make a comment. Thank you to the good Chairman, Sean Scanlon, and those in this entire Chamber who really understand the importance of telehealth and what it provides to many of our constituencies throughout the state. So, thanks again. Thank you so much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?
Will you remark further on the bill as amended? If not, will staff and guests please look at your screens? The machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.
The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board or your computer to determine if your vote has been properly cast? If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification Bill No. 6001 as amended by House "A."

Total number voting	145
Necessary for passage	73
Those voting Yea	145
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The Bill as amended is passed. [Gavel] Will the Chamber please stand at ease?

Will the Chamber please come back to order.

Will the Clerk please call Emergency Certified House Bill 6002?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification House Bill No. 6001, AN
ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING AND REPORTING OF
RESULTS AT THE 2020 STATE ELECTION AND ELECTION DAY
REGISTRATION, introduced by Representative
Aresimowicz, Senator Looney, Representative Ritter,
Senator Duff.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. FOX (148TH):

I vote for passage of the Emergency Certified
Bill 6002.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The question on passage of bill. Will you
remark? Will you remark?

REP. FOX (148TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker. Thank you. Madam Speaker, as you're aware, we are currently living in unprecedented times. What has once been normal moments for us -- graduation, summer camp, school, religious ceremonies, and so on -- have been altered and changed forever. I will add to this list the sacred act of voting. The bill before us attempts to make changes to voting procedures so that this sacred act can be maintained and carried on throughout these unprecedented times.

It makes changes in the two following areas. Absentee ballot voting for 2020 and EDR for 2020 and beyond. The bill provides in Section 1 it adds an additional exception to a reason why an individual may get an absentee ballot. Currently there are five such reasons: They are absent from the municipality in which they reside; they are ill or have a physical disability; the tenets of their religion forbid them from voting on the day of election; they are in the active service; or their duties as a primary, election, or referendum

official outside of their voting district will keep them away from all hours of voting. The language that we intend to add to the statute today provides an exception, the sickness of COVID-19. The bill then thereafter provides an individual with the ability to solicit and obtain an absentee ballot should they do so or desire to for the reason of COVID-19. [Ringling]. This extends to the fear of sickness of exposing themselves to the illness as well as being actually sick with COVID-19.

The bill makes a number of changes to the process by which absentee ballots can be solicited and obtained. It allows the secretary of state to make changes to the voting forms, the applications, and things of that nature. It provides for changes to the absentee delivery and return. By current law, an absentee ballot must be delivered -- must be issued 31 days before the next election. Once this period starts, they must mail the set within 24 hours of receiving the application. This bill makes a revision to that for 48 hours in the sense that

this will alleviate the concerns of the town clerks who had expressed to us the possibility of if they do get inundated with applications, thousands of applications, they will request more time to process the application. That section -- sections 4 and 5 of the bill address that concern.

The bill makes changes -- section 8 of the bill makes changes to the mandatory supervised absentee voting. This will allow the town clerk -- this will allow the secretary of state after a conversation with the Department of Public Health to waive the requirement that supervised voting may exist. Supervised voting is when individuals in an institution or facility are allowed to vote with the assistance of the registrar. The bill makes changes that should the pandemic come back and individuals will not be able to visit or make visits to an institution of this nature, then the secretary of state may waive this requirement so long as the secretary of state submits -- confers with the commissioner of DPH as well as submitting notice to

town clerks and registrars as well as a committee of cognizance and general assembly with a plan for alternatives as to how these individuals will vote.

The bill in sections 6 through 7 and 11 through 15 makes extension of certain deadlines and timeframes. These extensions will hopefully alleviate the pressure put on our town clerks and registrars from filing reporting procedures.

In terms of EDR changes, the bill makes essentially three changes to EDR. The changes to EDR are for 2020 and beyond. The first change is that the town municipalities will have to submit an EDR plan to the secretary of state for approval by the secretary of state. This plan will include the manner by which they will adhere to their EDR plan, the number of people that they will have working and staffing the location of the EDR -- the EDR location. The secretary of state will have to approve this plan and reply to the individual town. The second change to the EDR is that towns may apply for a second EDR location. We anticipate that this

may be limited in terms of the number of town that may apply for a second EDR location. They'd likely be in some of the major cities and urban centers and municipalities in which college and universities are located. It could be a big help in the EDR process in the sense that if towns do have more -- anticipate more individuals to vote by EDR that they will now have the ability to have a second location.

The third change will allow individuals who are in line to register by EDR at 8 p.m. Currently, under current law, if you're in line to register by EDR by 8 p.m. and not yet registered, you are no longer -- you are not allowed to register. This bill makes the change that if you were in line, you can then, thereafter, actually register. So, if you're in line to register by 8 p.m. for EDR, you can still register and vote that evening.

Madam Speaker, I want to take a minute and thank a few individuals for their assistance with this bill and the negotiation of this bill over the past many weeks. First off, Senator Mae Flexer who

has been a long-time proponent of voting rights and accessibility. It's been a big help in getting this bill to where we are today. I would like to thank the Secretary of State's Office who, again, has been a major proponent for voting accessibility and rights in our state. I'd like to thank her and her staff. The committee members, both Democrats and Republicans who have been very helpful. I'd also like to thank, in particular, Mike France, ranking member on this committee, who although he and I at times have differences of opinions on a number of issues, we find a way to work together, and I think we've done just that in this bill, and with his efforts, we are where we are today. And so I want to thank him especially for his efforts. I'd also like to thank as many as possible, Madam Speaker, of town clerks and registrars throughout the state of Connecticut. I've been cognizant of the fact that over the past several weeks, as have the members of the committee, I know that on this process, the individual at the local level will be the ones most

impacted by this bill. The municipal town clerks and local registrars will be the ones who will have to face the greatest burden and the greatest challenges when implementing these changes. I thank them for their patience and perseverance with this process and for their efforts in the days ahead. With that, Madam Speaker, I move passage.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The question is on passage of the bill. Will you remark? Will you remark? Representative Labriola.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in support of this bill, and please interrupt me if you can't hear me. I usually don't have a problem being heard. I do have a few questions.

Through you to the Chair of the GAE Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Except for the EDR provisions that you outlined, is it correct that this proposal only applies to the November 2020 state election?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That's correct, yes, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Labriola.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Is it also your understanding that there is nothing in the bill that provides for the mass mailing of absentee ballot applications to all voters as we saw during the primary season this year? Is that correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That's correct, Madam Speaker. The bill does not address that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Labriola.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I know that you articulated some of the reasons and some of the intent behind the phrase "the sickness of COVID-19," but I'm going to ask again you to please articulate that. It's my understanding that it would apply -- this bill would apply not just to people who believe that they have the sickness of COVID-19 but also for really anybody who has a concern about getting the sickness. Is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That's correct, Madam Speaker. The individual currently with COVID-19, I believe, is covered under the section of the statute that imply -- that provides an opportunity to get an absentee ballot if they are ill or have a physical disability. This language goes beyond that. It addresses -- the current illness is covered. This language implies that it covers the fear of exposure as well as the fear of exposing yourself to the risk.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Labriola.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And thank you for all those responses. I appreciate that and your clarification and your articulation of what you believe this bill intends to do, Mr. Chair.

Madam Speaker, I support this bill. I think it's a good proposal. I thank the chairs of this committee and the majority leadership as well as the fact that the chairs and the majority leadership

[Ringing] listened to the concerns of the minority leadership and the ranking member on this committee, Mike France. So, I appreciate the fact that this is a bipartisan proposal in that sense. I know so many people are going to be pleased because they are nervous about voting this November. I know my parents are concerned about that, and, so, they're going to be happy. And, so, Mom and Dad, this one's for you and all the Moms and Dads and all the aunts and uncles in this great state. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, representative. Representative Gilchrest.

REP. GILCHREST (18TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's so good to be back. I stand in strong support of this legislation. I'm very proud that Connecticut is moving this forward today. How apropos that we are here 100 years after women got the right to vote, speaking on this important issue. And that was a

hard-fought right, and, so, today I hope that we don't have to fight about this. We should all be ensuring that everyone has access to their right to express their opinion through their vote. And, in particular, during this pandemic when, as my colleagues have stated, folks are fearful for their lives and for the lives of their loved ones, we should be doing all we can to protect the public health. And, so, I strongly support this measure, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, representative. Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Madam Speaker, thank you very much. Just a few comments, and, again, I want to echo Representative Labriola's gratitude to the chair of the GAE Committee for his bipartisan work on this. I do just have a couple questions to clarify. The representative from Oxford had asked whether or not this bill addresses the mass mailing of the absentee

ballots to every individual, which is happening in the primary. I believe the Chairman said that it does not address it, but could the chairman clarify whether or not the secretary of the state would still be permitted to do that as she has done for the primary?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I thank the representative for the question. The bill does not address whether or not the secretary of state will do that. I can't speak to whether or not she will.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and that's a very fair answer to the question. I appreciate that. I

think it's very important, especially in this election, given the strange circumstances, that we do take these steps to ensure that individuals are able to vote, they're able to do it safely, and they're able to do it without fear. I think this is an important step. I think it's important that we as the legislature take this step and that this not be left to any one individual elected or otherwise. So, I think this is something valuable moving forward. I'm also very happy to see that this is for one election. God forbid we're sitting here in a year with similar circumstances. We can be back here, and we can make that -- take those same steps that we need to take. But the fact that this is finite to 2021, I think, is a very good thing. One comment I would make, though, you know, a lot of the feedback I get from town clerks. As we know, they manage much of this absentee ballot process. They've expressed a lot of concerns, especially for the primary, given the volume of absentee ballots they've received, and I know that we as a state are

trying to address that. I would just hope that we as a legislature, everybody in this building, observe very closely what happens during the primary. There is always a risk. This is the first time we've done this, and there's always a risk that things don't go well. And I would just urge that if, indeed, that happens, and hopefully it won't, but if, indeed, that happens during the primary, we're willing and aggressive in taking steps to make sure that what happens in November avoids any pitfalls that we may find in August. So, I thank you, Madam Speaker, and, again, I thank the chairman for his work on this.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, representative. Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. A couple questions to the good chair, if I may. And before that, just a statement to reiterate what my colleagues have stated. The good chairman has been

very bipartisan in all of his interactions on the committee, and that is deeply appreciated from this side of the aisle.

Specifically, my questions involve lines 106 through 111, section 5. And it addresses Connecticut General Statute section 9-140(b), the box that we're adding for people to drop it off -- the ballot off at, and my concern is that there would be the "harvesting" of ballots by those not allowed to do so. In a normal absentee ballot process, you or an immediate family member or somebody you designate properly would be able to return your absentee ballot. My hope was that the box -- all these ballot boxes would be inside the Town Clerk's Office. And in my discussions with some people, that became a concern because in the current pandemic situation, it's safer to be outside, and I agree with that. So, then my hope was, well we could put the ballot boxes right outside the clerk's office or the building where the town clerk's office is and have some mechanism,

whether it's a camera, security, or something to make sure one person, one ballot is being dropped off. And the good Speaker -- the majority leader did point out that, you know, a husband or a wife could drop off their spouse's ballot under 9-140(b). So, I guess taking a look at lines 109 to 111, it states that it can obviously be mailed as is typically done now, or for the state election of 2020, deposited in a secure drop box designated by the municipal clerk for such purpose in accordance with instructions prescribed by the Secretary.

And through you, Madam Speaker, what is foreseen as the process by which that's going to happen, or would you have a notice posted on how that's going to be allowed?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the representative for his questions and his comments.

I think two things. First off, I'd like to reiterate the comments made by the distinguished Representative Perillo a moment ago about the idea of the August primary could possibly be a testing base for many of these procedures. So, ideally, currently in August, we'll have the secure drop box available for the primary. Ideally we will be able to build off what we learn from that process to incorporate those potential changes or what strengths and weaknesses of that program into the November election.

Secondly, the secretary of state is permitted in line 111 to provide instructions for use of secure drop boxes. So, ideally, and it's a very good idea, I think, that the representative brings up, to, in fact, we have a sign that says who can deposit absentee ballots in a very clear language, who can, who can't, how many can per individual. I think that's all a fair suggestion and ideally will be followed.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I do appreciate that, and hopefully we can get some language that the Secretary could develop to make sure that only those people that are allowed to deposit these ballots will be allowed to do so. I would also hope that perhaps the town clerks, if every day they're getting -- and these are to be collected, it says, if I may, each weekday, on line 114. So, if one weekday -- if the average collection is one or two, and the one weekday they get 2000, obviously that should be a red flag that something is so out of whack with regard to what was typical on a daily basis of retrieving the ballots. Obviously, we're learning as we go, and I hope that the secretary of state is listening and ready to put together some policies and procedures and some instructions that will make it clear as to who can drop off these

ballots at the boxes that are set up. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Thank you; good work.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, representative. Representative Turco.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Hello, Madam Speaker. Good to see you there. So, take off the mask for speaking?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Nice to see you, sir. Well, we've -- if you're comfortable, we've recognized that folks are having difficulty hearing through the microphones and so --

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Okay, I will take it off for the time speaking here. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I'd like to express my strong support for this bill. I believe this bill is very important to our democracy. We all know with the COVID-19 crisis, how many people have done such a great job with socially distancing and quarantining and helping to prevent the spread of the virus throughout our great

state of Connecticut. We've done so well as a population. We are one of, if not the best state in the nation right now for combatting this virus. That does not mean we haven't had our struggles. We've lost thousands of people to deaths because of the virus. We've had thousands more sick, and a lot of people have struggled economically. But we have done a really good job, and I want it to stay that way.

And we have one of the most important elections in our country's history on November 3. It's the presidential election, which you all know is one that a lot of people want to vote in. We're all as state representatives and state senators on the ballots, and I want to make sure every single one of my constituents in Newington and every single one of your constituents throughout the state who wants to vote, does not have the fear of COVID-19, of getting -- contracting the coronavirus, which prevents them to go to the polls on November 3 and not vote. Now, individuals who are already sick or disabled or who

are out of town during an election already have had the ability to vote absentee -- by absentee ballot in our state. But this bill allows those who have the fear of being sick from COVID-19. And what have we been telling people from the beginning of this? If you don't need to go out, don't. If you can work from home, please do. Socially distance. And polling places are not necessarily great places for socially distancing. You have a lot of people jammed in, inside, trying to vote on a cold November day. So, and a lot of other states, let me remind you, are already doing this throughout the nation. I know California, Florida, and many others, where it's no-excuse absentee ballot voting. If it's just easier for you to vote by absentee because you are busy, you're working multiple jobs, you may forget on Election Day. I know the last, that seems like a very strange idea, but it happens, unfortunately. Other states have already said, "Anyone who wants to vote by absentee at any time, can," and that has helped expand their access and participation to

democracy in those states. I supported doing this before COVID-19, but now especially with COVID-19, because people have that fear of getting sick, I want to make sure that every single person can vote who wants to vote and doesn't have a fear and could participate in our democracy. So, I strongly, strongly support this bill, Mr. Speaker. I urge its adoption from all my colleague's, every single one of us today. Let's take a vote for democracy. Let's be a leader in this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Turco. Will you remark further? Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO 3767. I ask that the amendment be called, and I be granted leave by the chairman to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3767 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A"?

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A," LCO No. 3767, offered by Representative Aresimowicz, Senator Looney, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chairman to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Fox, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the underlying amendment will work to ratify the governor's Executive Order 700, dated May 20, 2020. Specifically in regard to sections 1 through 5 of the executive order, the governor has the authority to take action of this nature during a public health emergency like the one we find ourselves in now, and in my opinion, he properly uses his authority in

Executive Order 7QQ. Further, in my opinion, legislative action is always preferable, and this amendment will ratify the executive order in the statute. Mr. Speaker, when the vote be taken, I ask it be taken by roll call.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "A." Will you remark on the amendment? Will you remark, Representative Labriola, on the amendment?

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do rise in opposition to this amendment while I support the underlying bill, and I likely would support the bill even if amended with this amendment. I do think it's important that I state an objection to this amendment. I don't believe there's a need to codify or ratify the executive order by the governor that applies here because that executive order has the force of law. We don't need to ratify it or codify it. Also, the subject of this amendment is

currently being litigated at this moment. And, so, combined with the fact that the governor has a certain amount of days that he can sign this legislation were we to pass it with this amendment, and if that were to take place, it actually -- the days that elapse from today put us past the date of the primary itself. So, that's problematic. So, for all of those reasons, I ask my colleagues to oppose this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? When this, when this -- Yes, Representative Yaccarino, do you want to speak on the amendment, sir?

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Being that I'm not an attorney, but this, through you, Mr. Speaker, the executive order expires September 9. This wouldn't apply, would it? I mean, it doesn't make any sense. It doesn't make any sense to me, that's all.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

There's a question.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

That's my question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox. I believe the question--
rephrase the question, sir, please.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

So, I appreciate the intent of the good chair
of GAE. I just don't see how this applies because,
like the good representative from Oxford stated,
this will be within the 90 days or less than 90
days, and it won't apply because the executive order
technically expires September 9. So, I don't see
the reason of doing this. That's my question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. The amendment will codify the executive order which was an executive action. It will codify the executive order and put it into statute.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I appreciate that answer, but it really shouldn't apply to the general because it applies to the primary. It's just muddling the waters, I believe, for the general election. I want to support this bill. I think we all do. But I think it muddles the water. That's just my honest opinion. I don't see the necessity of it. And thanks for the good work for the chair and the ranking member and Representative Fox for it, but I think this muddles the water. I just don't see the need for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Yaccarino. On the amendment, Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I may, a question to the proponent of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, representative.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the proponent of the amendment, the amendment here is kind of brief. It's really only four lines. It just states that, "Notwithstanding any other provision within the General Statutes that the Executive Order that was issued, No. 7QQ, by Governor Ned Lamont on May 20 and that relate to the August 11, 2020 primary are ratified."

And through you, Mr. Speaker, what does the term, "ratify" actually achieve?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for his question as well as for his service to this body. It's been an honor to serve with you, and I look forward to wish you luck in the days ahead.

The word "ratified" essentially is another way of saying codify. So, it puts into statute the underlying executive order.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, because the underlying executive order does not have the same structure as state statute because it does not have the same wording, perhaps, that a state statute would have. I do recognize the fact that under a public health emergency and a civil preparedness emergency, the Governor has the ability to issue those orders and have the effect of law, but those orders are not, in fact, drafted in a similar manner

as are state statutes. The way that this amendment is drafted, Mr. Speaker, would the language that is included within that executive order be the exact language that would be codified within the law or ratified within the law?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The language in paragraphs 1 through 5 inclusive of Executive Order 7QQ will be ratified into statute.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, there will be, you know, in modern-day speech, a copy and paste, if you will, of the executive order, stripped out that exact language, and that exact language would then be placed into the statutes. I'm not sure exactly

where in the statutes. It doesn't say which statute is being modified here.

Through you Mr. Speaker, which statutes would be modified by this executive order?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

It'll be section 501 which will be a new section of the statute.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that it would be section 501 of this bill, but looking through the executive order, it actually mentions several different state statutes within those five sections of the executive order that we're looking to codify here. Are those, in fact, the state statutes that would be amended by this amendment if

we were to adopt this language that says the word
"ratified"?

Through you, Mr Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I misinterpreted the
individual's question. The answer is yes. So, for
instance, section 9-135, section 9-137, section 9-
140(g), section 9-140(b), [inaudible - 02:32:21]
subsection (c) were the sections that will be
ratified.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And with the language
of the executive order says specifically for that
August 11, 2020, primary, and by ratifying that,
would then the statute also only say "for August 11,

2020," or would it be changing that statute for other future primaries?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will just relate to the August 11, 2020, primary.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the answers of the kind gentleman. I'll be honest; I wasn't sure that we were -- that this [Ringing] amendment was necessary, as the previous speaker had noted that the executive order by the governor carries the weight of law under the civil preparedness statutes -- the emergency declaration statutes, should I say. So, I'll have to contemplate whether or not I'll be supporting this

amendment here today, certainly one that I take very seriously and I believe was the right thing to do, to allow for absentee ballots. I'm not exactly sure the process of mailing out the applications to everybody was the proper thing to do or handled correctly, but I'll contemplate the impacts of this amendment and will listen to any further debate upon it. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Davis, were you finished? Thank you sir, and just for a point of clarification, anyone that pushes their button at this point from here on out will be deemed to be speaking on the amendment. So, if you're just wanting to speak on the underlying bill, wait until we have a vote on the amendment. I believe Representative Dubitsky would like to speak on the amendment. So, we'll hold off a little bit for Representative Dubitsky.

The Chamber will stand at ease while we wait for Representative Dubitsky to arrive. [Ring]

The House will come back to order, and speaking on the amendment, Representative Dubitsky of the 47th District.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a couple quick questions for the proponent of the amendment, if I may.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

When was this amendment posted to the system so everybody could see it?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the actual amendment was posted recently at around the time the debate began, I believe, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Mr. Speaker, this amendment codifies an executive order, and this amendment just went on the system. The people of this state have no way to know what we're voting on. There's nobody at home that has any idea what this amendment does. This amendment codifies an executive order, but it wasn't on the system [Ringing] until just recently. None of the bills that we have been voting on today or that we will be voting on today were on the system at all until we got here. I was trying to discuss these bills including this one that is the subject of this debate all week. Nobody had a copy of them. It wasn't posted on the Judicial website. There was barely even mention of the special session on the Judicial website. When you went to the Judicial

website, Mr. Speaker, the only mention of special session at all was a calendar entry.

The people of this state deserve better. They deserve open government. They deserve not to be hit with an amendment like this which codifies an executive order. They deserve to be able to see what their representatives are voting on. I don't off the top of my head even know what's in 7QQ, and I bet you virtually nobody that's watching on CT-N today knows either. They have no idea what we're about to vote on. This is not how government should be run. This is emergency. This has to happen immediately. Well, clearly somebody thought in advance that we were going to be codifying an executive order. Wouldn't it have been nice to let us all know in advance? Right now we're working under a very, very trying situation here, very trying circumstances. This room is virtually empty. All of the legislators are sequestered in their offices. It takes 10 minutes for somebody who wants to come speak to come from the other building,

through the tunnel to this building in order to speak. It's a very difficult situation, and I think that hitting the legislature at the last minute with an amendment like this is taking advantage of a difficult situation. I think the people of this state deserve better, and I think everybody should be voting against this amendment because I don't think anybody even knows what's in it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Dubitsky. Just a point of clarification, when the vote is taken on the amendment, it will be taken by roll. So, the amendment will be taken by roll call. Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House? No? Representative Candelora. You caught me quick.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate just being recognized briefly. I think to just piggyback off of Representative Dubitsky's comments, one of my concerns about this amendment that none of us had seen until just before the start of session is, in fact, that we do have pending litigation over this primary matter. So what this amendment is actually doing, it's affecting individuals that have brought suit in the courts in order to seek redress. And everybody has a right whether you agree to a lawsuit or not -- they do have a right to seek redress in the judiciary on an issue that they believe they've been harmed over. This amendment is attempting to frustrate that. But what I find even more alarming is it's my understanding that our attorney general's office, in defending of this lawsuit, had filed a brief anticipating that this amendment would be filed in the legislature in order to frustrate that piece of legislation. And we are all separate co-equal branches of government, but I just don't think that we should be operating this way where we are

actually assisting the executive branch in disposing of legislation that is properly before the courts that should be adjudicated through the courts. I think this is just a philosophical dangerous precedent that we're embarking on, and regardless of how I feel about the merits of that lawsuit, because I do plan to vote for the underlying bill, like many of us, I believe it is important that people are able to vote via absentee ballot, I think that this amendment is a bridge too far, a dangerous precedent, and we shouldn't be doing it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Candelora. Again, if anyone would like to speak on the amendment, please press your button now. I don't see anyone else -- yes, sir. Mr. Majority Leader.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Just to wrap up on the amendment because I know folks are watching in different spheres, if you will, on what we're debating right here. We are

trying to ratify the Executive Order as it related to the primary to allow people to vote by absentee ballot because of the COVID-19 situation. Okay? The reason why I support this amendment, okay, is because, yes, every judge before whom this issue has come has said that the governor did not exceed his executive authority. There's no judge that has entertained any of the lawsuits that are out there. We also are on July 24 today -- sorry, July 23 today, and ballots are already going out. So, this notion that the legislature should not do everything it can in its power to further protect the integrity of this primary and the process that has occurred, I don't understand. So, the argument is, well, it's been before a court, why do this? Because we have to do everything we can to make sure that the primary goes off and people can vote. That's all we're doing. We're not ratifying some crazy action or some Executive Order that doesn't have wide support or isolates certain persons versus others. It applies to everybody equally to vote. So, the

opposition to this amendment, I just don't understand. All we are doing is saying to folks, "Don't you worry. When the results come out in August, there will be no court challenges." We've double-guaranteed it. We have judges that agree and a legislature that agrees with that executive order. A "no" vote is -- to me, is tempting in your own mind or hoping that somehow, someone says, "You shouldn't be allowed to vote by absentee ballot." Well, I don't agree with that. We all should agree that you should be allowed to vote by absentee ballot. So, I would urge everyone in my caucus to support this amendment to make sure that our primary goes off the same way we know it's going to go off in November. You can vote safely. You can make your own choice about how you want to vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ritter. Seeing no more comments. No, hold on. Chamber will stand at ease.

The House will come back to order. Will you remark further. Representative O'Dea of the 125th.
REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just a point of clarification, if I may briefly, to make a point. I misunderstood the good majority leader's comments. There was one Executive Order 7E on the gun-permitting process that a district court judge did find exceeded his authority, was unconstitutional, but the majority leader is correct there has been no court that has ruled that any of the voting executive orders have been ruled unconstitutional. But I just wanted to clarify that at least one of the executive orders was found to be exceeding his constitutional authority.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You're welcome. Thank you, Representative O'Dea. Representative Ritter.
REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, I do not disagree with that clarification, and, so, that is correct. One of the executive orders was deemed unconstitutional. The Governor is batting 99.99 percent.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You're welcome, Representative Ritter. Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Will you remark further. If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the house or your offices at the Legislative Office Building, and the machine will be open [Gavel] {Ringing, ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? So, just so you know, I'm going to lock the machine, and then I'm going to recognize

because of the situation we're in now, some of us like myself have our laptops logged in at the LOB and would like to vote here. So, I will lock the machine, and then I will call on you. Thank you. So, at this point, I would like to, as the Speaker, have my vote cast in the affirmative, please.

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have my vote recognized in the negative. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Fishbein.

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to have my vote cast in the negative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Way in the Bob Uecker seats, Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also wish to have my vote recorded in the negative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Anyone else. Will the Clerk please take the tally?

Will the Clerk please read the tally?

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A"

Total Number Voting	145
Necessary for Adoption	73
Those voting Yea	93
Those voting Nay	52
Absent and not voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The amendment has passed. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you remark further? We have Representative Mastrofrancesco. She's in transit. Representative Aurora. Chamber stand at ease.

Chamber come back to order. Again, those of you that are at the LOB, if you have your -- if you

want to speak, push your button and then please take a stroll over. We do, you know, want to keep this moving as best as we can in these difficult times. So, Representative Yaccarino, would you like to speak, sir. Thank you.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak on the underlying bill. A question to the proponent.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a couple concerns. I speak to, like probably most of us, our town clerk pretty much every day about this. If the 87th District does not want to solicit a third-party vendor, could they pass on that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just in-house people send their own -- request their own ballots.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I just want it for legislative intent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox. Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. I believe in looking at the bill, section -- lines 92 to 102; I believe it provides that the -- line 96, "shall be mailed within 48 hours of the application and may be mailed by a third-party mailing vendor approved by the secretary of state for use of the clerk for such a purpose." So, I believe -- my understanding and interpretation is that the mailing of the vendors would be done -- the mailing of the application would be done by the vendor if that's what the secretary of state deems appropriate.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the answer. I just want to be clear, though, if a clerk would prefer the method of the voter

requesting their own ballot, that method is set up, and I think they would prefer that method more than just a third-party vendor mailing out ballots. It's a greater cost. Who's going to pay for that? So, that's my question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the representative for the question and the clarification. I believe he is correct in his assessment in the fact that the language in the statute indicates that the -- "shall be mailed within 48 hours after the application for absentee voting set is received by the municipal clerk," and line 96, "may be mailed by a third-party mailing vendor." So, the use [inaudible - 03:00:52] is "may" not "shall." So, that's my understanding.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I appreciate the answer, and that's the way I read it. I just wanted to make sure for legislative intent because this is something new that, you know, it's going to be thousands and thousands of ballots, and I still have faith in our system, and I have faith in our town clerks. But one thing I don't think people realize is that most town clerks work by themselves. They have small offices. I plan on supporting the bill, but I just want to also protect them. If you want to bring people in there, because of COVID, you have to watch out that they're going to watch in a small territory. So, one last question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

So, is it my understanding that the secretary of state will not be mailing out absentee ballots for the general election, November 3, 2020? They'll strictly be what's this language today, that you

could request one, you could use a third-party vendor if the town so chooses?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, the secretary of state does not mail out ballots anyway. So, this bill does not address whether or not the secretary of state can mail out the ballots or not.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the good chair. I feel more comfortable. I just wanted to get that for legislative intent because we have to remember our clerks do a very good job and it's very important, and it's going to be totally different than we've experienced. And if you have 13,000 ballots in one town, it's a lot of ballots.

So, thank you again, and I plan on supporting the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative Yaccarino. The Chamber will stand at ease.

The Chamber will come back to order. Will you remark further on the bill as amended?
Representative Smith, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SMITH (48TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in support of the bill. The bill as it is provides an important service to the voters of Connecticut, ensuring their right to vote safely and securely this fall. I urge all my colleagues to support the bill, and I would submit that we still have work to do and that in the future we should look to further broadening access to voting throughout the state. Thank you, and, again, I do urge support of the bill [Ringing] and appreciate on behalf of all the voters the opportunity to vote by absentee this fall.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative Smith. Will you remark further? The Chamber will stand at ease.

The House will come back to order.
Representative Davis of the 57th District.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did have a question about a section of the bill that was discussed a little bit earlier by the Representative from New Canaan, and if I could, a few questions to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in that section of the bill, section 5, I believe the line numbers were 106 through 111, talks about the necessary setup of a secure drop box for the ability to put the absentee ballots into them. And in the language of the bill, it says that it's designated by the municipal clerk in a manner that's designated by them and in accordance with instructions

prescribed by the secretary of state is who is refers to, of the state. And Mr. Speaker, if a town wanted to have a drop box that was different than the drop box designed and delivered by the secretary of state's office. For instance, the town of Vernon recently installed a very secure lockbox into the side of their building that looks like, you know, a fortress. It's a brownstone town hall. They put in a lockbox on the side of that building directly into the town clerk's office. The town clerk or her staff or his staff could reach in and pull out those ballots as they were delivered or once a day or however it's prescribed in this bill without any kind of challenge of anybody vandalizing it, anybody tampering with it. Most likely, they're not going to be able to spill a liquid or something else into these drop boxes like you could on an outside one that perhaps does not have the best protections or security cameras or whatnot. And instead, they were challenged by the secretary of state's office. They were told that this was not appropriate, this was

not secure, and this was not the way it should be done. They can't be allowed to do this. You're not allowed to do anything other than what we tell you, which I find quite troubling, quite personally, but also I find that it is kind of incorrect because, if anything, what the Town of Vernon is doing seems to be much, much better and much, much safer, and much more secure in the ability for the town clerk to actually control those ballots in a much safer way, in which they were intended and very much similar to if you hand-delivered it to them or if you put it into the mail to them, perhaps. And there is currently a back-and-forth with the secretary of state's office about that.

And through you, Mr. Speaker, with that scenario described which is playing out in real-time right now, in time for this primary and perhaps for this November election. With the language of this bill here today, would a lockbox similar to the one disallowed if, in fact, the instructions which are unknown to us at this time on this day, voting here

today, that are to be prescribed by the secretary of state's office -- if those instructions, in fact, say that that cannot be done, you have to use a less secure, a less safe lockbox outside. Granted this one has access from the outside; that's the whole point of it; outside of the building, drop it right in. Would they then not be allowed to use this more secure lockbox because it is not what was, in fact, the instructions prescribed by the secretary of the State?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. I will refer the representative, in line 111 makes reference to instructions prescribed by the secretary. If we then line that up with section 9-3 subsection (a) of the statutes which indicate the secretary of state, which indicated "the Secretary of State by virtue of

the office shall be the Commissioner of Elections of the state with such powers and duties relating to the conduct of elections as are prescribed by law, and unless otherwise provided by state statute, the Secretary's regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions, and opinions, if in written form, and any order issued under subsection (b) of this section shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections and primaries under this title."

So, with the use of the word "instructions" in line 111, then aligned with the use of the word "instructions" in Section 9-3(a) of the state statutes, my interpretation of this is that the instructions as prescribed by the secretary are to be followed. So, if that were, in fact, to mean a less secure voting, a less secure location for a lockbox, then my interpretation is then those instructions are to be followed, although I will say my belief that if the lockbox is, in fact, in a secure location, I'm inclined to believe, and for

what it's worth, may not -- it's obvious it doesn't carry the weight of the law, but my impression would be that the secretary of state would obviously be most interested in election security and in things of that nature. But, for the purpose of the question and the use of the word "instructions" in line 111, I refer the gentleman to section 9-3(a) which indicates that the instructions as prescribed by the secretary of state are to be followed.

Through you, Mister Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you. Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS (57TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate that answer, and that's kind of what I feared here. We have the blessing in a sense of the state of Connecticut, in which we have 169 separate municipalities with separate town clerks, separate municipal buildings perhaps, different opportunities for people across our state to be able to place their ballots into secure lockboxes for this

terrible situation that we're in, in a public health emergency. And I fear that with this language here today, although I agree with the kind Chairman of the committee that the secretary of state's office, I'm sure, is trying to have the highest integrity for this election as possible and do it in the safest and healthiest way as possible, but I also fear that that could also lead to less, if you will, innovation.

The town of Vernon also, which I do not represent but it is right near -- next door to the district that I do represent -- the town of Vernon had a very successful drive-by voting before the executive orders went into place, in which they had their municipal votes through a drive-by process. It was very secure, very healthy. Nobody got sick from it. It allowed direct public participation. It was something that was very successful. Similarly, a fire district, which I do represent, did a very similar voting process of a drive-by voting, and it went off very well, and people were

able to directly participate. And then they were told they can no longer do those types of things through executive orders, through mandates from the secretary of state's office.

So, when you have something innovative, something smart, something perhaps even more secure like the town of Vernon is attempting to do, and then they're being told, "No, you can't do that; that's not a good idea. You have to follow our rules, or there's no rules at all. You gotta put that lockbox." Literally, he could place this lockbox directly -- the town of Vernon could place this lockbox directly in front of the lockbox -- secure box that they have right now. They could do that. They could put it right there, right in front of it on the sidewalk. It would make no difference, right? Other than the fact that now it's outside, now it's open to weather, now it's open to vandalism. Now it's open to all these things, where if they, you know, went a few inches over and opened the lockbox behind it and put the ballot in there,

that ballot would go directly into the town clerk's office. The town clerk or their staff would be able to directly take that ballot out and have it in a secure place secured within the lock mechanism in the vault of that town. To me, Mr. Speaker, that seems logical, seems right, and I don't know; there's back and forth. I'm just reading a recent article that, I think, came out a day or two. Maybe they've resolved it. Maybe the secretary of state's office said, "You know what, Vernon, great job. You figured this out. You did something better than what we came up with." I don't know if they're going to determine that. Maybe they will. But, with this language here today, it says you can't because you have to do it by the instructions prescribed by the secretary.

I think that that's kind of giving a lot of authority to somebody to make that decision when, in fact, there could be other options that are, in some people's minds, may be even better than what was prescribed. Statewide, every single town has to do

it this way. When there're some towns that can do it a better way. So that gives me a little bit of pause.

Overall, I agree with this bill. I will be voting for it, but I fear that by giving [Ringling] that much power to be able to manipulate something that is so new. The secure drop box is something that we haven't really had here in the State of Connecticut before. We don't know how it's going to play out. As it was mentioned before in the last debate over the amendment that this is going to be where we have a primary in a few weeks in kind of a test for that. I hope it goes very smoothly. I hope it goes very well. But if it does not, and something like this happens as I've described -- vandalism, a weather-related issue with the box. You know, anything could go wrong. Somebody could drive into the box. I don't know. Knock it over, ballots fall out, fall into a puddle, and now those people are disenfranchised.

But to say that it can only be done one way across the entire state of Connecticut when there is innovative and secure and smart ways to do it in different towns, I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, it that's the best way to do it, but I think it is important for us to allow people to have the access to absentee ballots this fall. So, I'll be voting for the bill, but I'm going to vote with some concern about the specific section and how much power is going to be given to one individual here in the state to have all the towns do it the same way when, in fact, some towns can do it better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you [Ringing] remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Mastrofrancesco. You have the floor, Madam.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

You may proceed.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you. Question on, through you, Mr. Speaker, there's a section in the bill that talks about a third party company mailing out applications at the request of a town clerk. Normally the town clerk, when they receive an application, they need to send out that ballot within 24 hours. Can you please clarify to me, through you, Mr. Speaker, is it still 24 hours? I thought I saw something in the bill that it is now 48 hours.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. I will point the representative's attention to line 82 of the bill

which makes this current law, currently, if a town clerk receives an application, there are 24 hours within which to process that application and send out the ballot. Line 92 to 102 revise that section; notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section and provide that to be mailed within a 48-hour window. Also line 95 mentions the 48-hour period. My understanding, state representative, is whether there may be further changes to that section coming.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, thank you for that answer. You had mentioned that there possibly will be changes coming to that section. Would that be something that we would be discussing today, or is it something later after this bill is passed?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I anticipate an amendment to the bill today further clarifying lines 92 to 102, so that it will be forthcoming today.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you. And, through you, Mr. Speaker, on lines 109 and 111 (and I apologize; I came in at the tail-end of the discussion with Representative Davis), it specifically talks in there about the secretary of state's instructions regarding lines 109, 110, and 111. Where -- what are the instructions that they are referring to in that section?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. The instructions for the November election, as I understand, have not yet been released or issued. So, the instructions for the August primary, I believe, have been released. The instructions for the November election have not yet been distributed to the towns, but I anticipate they will be forthcoming at some point.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry; could you repeat what's coming, what will be forthcoming at some point?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the instructions will be -- should this bill pass and become law, I believe instructions will be forthcoming, but the bill is not yet law, so the instructions have not yet been issued. So any instructions concerning the November election pursuant to this underlying legislation have not yet been issued because this bill is not yet law.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Wouldn't those instructions be inserted into this bill so we know exactly what we're voting on?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I don't believe so. I believe typically how it works it the secretary can issue instructions or rulings or regulations of that nature as in opinions as time goes on. So, the instructions have not yet been issued, which is why they are not yet in the bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

A couple of questions regarding the ballot boxes in this bill. I am struggling to figure out and maybe certainly you can answer this question for me. I believe the purpose of this whole bill, and I don't think anybody in this room would disagree, is that we want everybody to go out and vote. We want to give them every opportunity. We understand that COVID is an issue, and we don't want to suppress anybody's vote, and I think everybody is in favor of that. I would love to see that, as well.

But what I am really concerned about is the process. We already have a process in place for voting absentee ballot for sickness. I understand we want to include COVID with that, but we have a process. You call your town clerk. They send you an application. You fill it out, you send it back. They send you a ballot. It goes right back into either the post office, or you can drop it off at your town. Very, very safe. What I'm struggling with to understand is what the ballot boxes that we have distributed throughout 169 towns has to do with COVID and keeping somebody safe. We already have that process through the post office.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. I know this was an issue brought up during the listening session on Tuesday. I think the ballot boxes are just another

opportunity for individuals to deposit their ballot. Ideally the ballot boxes will be somewhere located in an open-air location similar to a mailbox, and the representative raised the issue the other day about, well, if we've got mailboxes, why do we need the secure ballot boxes? I appreciate the point and value her opinion, as always, but I think the ballot boxes are just another opportunity, another position or location for individuals to deposit the absentee ballots. And also the further point, if an individual has an absentee ballot and deposits it on Election Day in a mailbox, it's likely not going to be received by the town that day and count. With the secure voting boxes, if an individual has an absentee ballot and deposits it in the secure voting box, it'll be received by the clerk and counted for that day.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is there any provision in here -- I understand your concern if somebody wants to vote that day. Is there any provision in here requiring town halls or town clerks to be open the last three days prior to an election; so, if somebody wants to come into their town hall and place that ballot, they can do that? Is there any provision in this bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill does not address that.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Going back to the ballot boxes, I have a lot of concerns with the ballot boxes. Back in 2019, the

United States Postal Service started changing all the mailboxes in the state of Connecticut and a lot of the states in the Northeast because of what they call mail phishing. They've taken that drop-down handle, and they've done away with it, and they've come up with mailboxes that have a very thin slot in it for you to put one mail in it, to prevent anybody tampering with the mailboxes because it was a very serious problem. If it was not a serious problem, they would have never changed those mailboxes.

What concerns me about these ballot boxes is there's no security on them. The hole to put the ballot in is quite large. Anybody could throw a bottle of water in there. Anybody could put something in there to try to take ballots out. Now, I understand, based on the language of this bill, those ballots are to be taken out of that box on a daily basis, and according to the language in here, a police escort would have to escort the town clerk over there to take the ballots out. But what happens in the middle of the night when somebody

goes to that box and they pour some water in there?
What if it's raining -- we have a storm and it's
raining? Is there any protection in that box
because that hole is so built that no water is going
to get in there from the rain from the night before?
And is there any way to open up that ballot box
every morning prior to that to make sure that
there's nothing in there, there's no damage in that
box? Is there any provision in this bill that
states that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The bill does not speak as to the makeup of the
actual boxes. My understanding is they are similar
to a mailbox. In the sense that a mailbox is able
to keep the rain and elements out, the secure ballot
box will be the same -- do the same.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

The mailboxes we have now correctly are protected because of the slot to put your mail in is very, very small; in these particular ones, they are not. So, thank you for clarifying. I wanted to make sure that -- is there anything in here that you can tell me that would guarantee that none of these boxes or any of these ballot boxes would get damaged throughout the day or in the evening or somebody can't just pick one up? I mean, are they bolted to the cement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The instructions as to the ballot boxes have not yet been issued by the Secretary of State for

the November election; so, I can't speak as to what those may or may not indicate. I will say that in the same sense that a mailbox, I guess, could be picked up in the middle of the night by anyone, which may, in fact, contain absentee ballots, I suppose a secure voting box may be, as well. So, in the sense that if we're concerned about security of the mailboxes and the voting drop-off boxes, that's, you know, one and the same pretty much, Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for that answer, and I agree. It's an offense if you pick up the ballot box and you try to damage it. But once that happens -- I truly believe that we need to take every bit of precaution right now to protect those boxes because, yes, anything could happen. Somebody -- the town could certainly have a camera on there, but the damage is already done. Once one of those ballots is

destroyed, whether through by accident or through rain or somebody damaging the box, one ballot has jeopardized the whole election. You have compromised the integrity of an election even if it's one ballot. And there's no way to recover that. There's no way to find out who that person was that put that ballot in there. So that, Mr. Speaker, is certainly a concern of mine.

The question on, and through you, Mr. Speaker -
- I heard the question asked to your earlier about the secretary of state not being able to mail out absentee ballot applications. Is there --- if you wouldn't mind clarifying, through you, Mr. Speaker, is there anything in this bill that would prevent the secretary of state mailing out applications to voters?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill does not address whether or not the secretary of state has the authority to mail out applications. The bill does not speak to that point.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

So would this bill -- would the secretary of state technically be allowed to, since she did this already -- would she be -- because it is not addressed in this bill -- would she be allowed to send out ballot applications, applications for an absentee ballot because it is not addressed in here?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not trying to be snide, representative. The bill does not speak to

whether or not the secretary has the authority to do so. I will say refer back to section 9-3 of the General Statutes which does indicate the secretary is the Commissioner of Elections and has the authority to regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions, and opinions if in written form, and any other order issued under this subsection shall be presumed as correctly interpreting and effectuating the administration of elections. She has the authority to administer the elections under 9-3(a), and, so, while I am not -- the bill does not address whether or not she has the authority to send out applications, but 9-3 does provide her the authority to issue declaratory rulings, instructions, and opinions as to the running of elections.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

f I understand that correctly; so, if the bill does not address that situation, is it correct to say that it can be done?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

The Representative asked if it can or can't be done?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Can be done.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

I apologize. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

And again, I'm not trying to be snide. The bill does not address whether or not she can do it; so, I can't speak to whether or not. The bill doesn't address whether or not the secretary can

send out applications, but I will point the representative, again, to section 9-3(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, which indicate that she's the Commissioner of Elections and has the authority to do what is necessary to interpret and effectuate the administration of elections and primaries in the state of Connecticut.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Just a couple more questions. Thank you very much. The part in the bill that talks about EDR. Can you -- I guess we're obviously very much concerned that people do not get infected. We want to make sure that they have a safe and secure way of voting, which is why we give them the opportunity to vote by absentee ballots simply just by calling up the phone. You don't even need this bill technically, in my mind. You could just simply call

up your town clerk and just say, "I need an absentee ballot," as they do all the time. What I'm concerned about is that because of COVID, we have people waiting in line at 8 o'clock at night to register to vote. The whole purpose of this bill is to prevent anybody from getting sick, to make sure that there's social distancing when they're going to vote, but, yet, we're okay with letting people wait in line at 8 o'clock at night.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

At that point, will they be required to stand six feet away when they are waiting in line even if the line is out the door, around the corner? Will there be somebody there at each polling place making sure that they are six feet apart? Because overall the purpose of this bill is because of COVID. So, we want to make sure that somebody will be safeguarding that process.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you, representative, for the question. Should the current restrictions in place having to do with social distancing still be in place and in effect in November, November 3 of Election Day, individuals will be expected to adhere to those guidelines, the six-foot distance. I will point the representative's attention to the fact that it's a valid concern of hers. We, in fact, are going to have EDR, we're going to expect groups of people in large cities and municipalities to come together and be waiting in line for hours on end to register to vote. Ideally the -- the change to the EDR section will hopefully address that point and the fact that towns now have to submit plans for approval to the Secretary of State detailing their plans for EDR, where they're going to be held, how many to help with the staffing, the location of these facilities, and then they'll have to get approval by the secretary of state. If the plan submitted is not

sufficient or is not deemed sufficient by the secretary of state, they'll have to revise the plan or submit another plan. Additionally, municipalities where we anticipate EDR to be fairly significant whether university towns such as Mansfield; cities Bridgeport, Stamford, Waterbury, New Haven, New London, and things of that nature. Those towns will have the ability, and any other town in the state of Connecticut, will have the ability to request an opportunity to have a second EDR location, ideally alleviating and eliminating the bottlenecks at some of these locations on election night.

So, through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you very much. Thank you for answering my question.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Going back to the topic of EDR, again I'm going to reiterate the purpose of this whole bill is for safety, and we want people to be able to go out and vote and give them other alternative options. Can you explain to me what EDR has to do with COVID?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. EDR is just another means by which we can hopefully make the voting process and registration process a little more efficient.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess truly if we really wanted to keep people safe, I think EDR would be the last thing that we want to certainly try to promote. But,

through you, Mr. Speaker, EDR that goes past this election and is put in this bill as a permanent law or policy -- public policy -- what does that portion of that bill that extends way past -- that it's just there -- it does not only affect it for this election, but it is going forward, have to do with COVID that we should put that in there at this time?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. It is a valid inquiry. I think what it has to do with COVID, as I said earlier, it makes -- hopefully, ideally, it will make the voting and the registration process on Election Day a little more efficient. I will say of the issues contained within this bill, the EDR section -- those three components of the EDR section are the parts that have been vetted and heard in public hearings a number of times, as recently as

this past February. All this EDR [inaudible - 03:31:34] language was heard in a public hearing this past February, was before the Committee, the GAE Committee in each of my four years as chair of that committee; so, this is an issue that has been vetted and processed [Ringing] through this Chamber many times before.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, can you please explain to me why this portion of the bill, the EDR, is not only effective for this election only? What is the reason for making it a permanent statute?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think part of the reason is that once these procedures are in place, should the bill pass, it is much easier then to have this process be implemented long-term in addition to the fact that, mentioned earlier, you have the EDR changes that have been mentioned have been through public hearing processes each of the past four years, I believe, and, so, these are issues that have been vetted out, and once these issues become put in place, it'd be much easier to have them implemented over long-term as opposed to just one time through.

I guess on the counter of that question, we can look at it the other way. Why then do we not just implement the absentee ballot voting regulation long-term, as well?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative. Mastrofrancesco.

REP. MASTROFRANCESCO (80TH):

Thank you, and through you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for that answer. I'm just concerned that that section of the language really has nothing to do with EDR. It has maybe to do with this particular election in 2020, but anything beyond that, I see no reason why that issue cannot be addressed --excuse me -- during a full session and that there's an emergency.

Thank you for answering my questions, and just a few comments before I close. I don't think there's anybody in this room that wants to not have people certainly come out and vote. We want to make it safe for them. We encourage voting. We have that place in process. My concern with this bill is one, the EDR. There is absolutely no reason why that is in this bill to go beyond this election. Number two is the ballot boxes. Does anybody not see a problem with those ballot boxes? They could be damaged very easily. It is not necessary to have those ballot boxes. Applications; they can call the town clerk, request an application for an absentee ballot. It could be mailed to them, and they can

put it in the post office box. If they cannot, they certainly -- we should be requiring that town halls are open for those three days prior to an election so people can do their business, and they can certainly do it safely. What I'm very fearful is this is a good intentioned bill to certainly allow people to vote by absentee ballot, which I believe they should, has turned into a political agenda to put other things in there that really in my mind are not related to COVID. Meaning, the ballot boxes are not secure. They are just not secure. Mailboxes are far more secure than the ballot boxes, as far as the EDR extending out that way. So, my concern is that this bill is taking another turn to something that is really unrelated; kind of more like let's take advantage of a situation and put all this other stuff in there. My intention on this in the beginning was absolutely I believe people have the right to vote. I want them to vote by absentee ballot if that's an option for them. But in my mind, this bill has taken a whole other turn, and I

have very much concerns with it. It's not that I don't support people voting by absentee, but I do not support the way the bill is written at this time. So, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, good Representative Fox. I appreciate your answers to my questions. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Madam. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Arora of the 151st, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand here in support of the idea and the bill that our seniors and anyone who fears COVID sickness should have the opportunity to vote in absentee. This is my first year, and I'm so glad to see the two bills so far are going quite bipartisan, and I really like that idea. Now to enable folks to vote without fear requires two things: (1) giving them the option, just as we are under this bill, to vote absentee,

and (2) to communicate effectively to them the process because a very large number of those in our community have never voted absentee and do not know the process. And in speaking to our town officials, our registrar or town clerk and others, we are all working on that. But guess, a problem happened. What was the problem? An absentee application form showed up in the mail in an envelope, and nobody knew what it was. There was no explanation. Nothing it said; it was just a form. And the amount of confusion that it has sowed -- the amount of confusion it has created has really worked to reduce the efficacy or the ability of people to really work with knowing the process. In an informal poll I've done, we realized many people thought that this was the ballot for the -- this was the application form for the November election. Actually many thought -- not many, sorry. A few thought that this was the actual ballot; they had changed it because they had never voted absentee. So, this degree of confusion is not what we want to create. So, for that reason,

I know this question has been asked before: Can we ensure that such confusion is not created again because we still have some time to manage the fallout from this really bad idea where we have not communicated to the public how the process works? As a matter of fact, despite this millions of dollars spent on mailing these forms, you do not even find one single schematic or some process flow on the website to show how this works. I know for all in this room and many others, it's very apparent; it's very clear. You call the town hall, they send it to you, they send an application form to you, and you mail it in. I know many -- to many of us who are -- who have -- who understand the process, it's obvious. But I have some news that for a majority of people living in Connecticut, it is not obvious because they have never voted this way. And I think it is important to focus on education and to make sure everybody understands the process by doing -- not spending millions and millions of dollars but just by putting one single

schematic out there, a small explanation on the website. And so I ask for -- may I have permission to ask the proponent of the bill a question?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

You may proceed, sir.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Does this bill actually do anything to stop this confusion, and does the committee recognize that this confusion exists?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you Mr. Speaker. I thank the good representative for the question. The bill -- the individual asked me if the bill addresses whether or not the committee or this body will take action, I guess, to advocate or advertise the fact that absentee ballots are available and the process by which they are to be used. The bill does not speak to that. I will say, I think, to piggyback off the

comments made by Representative O'Dea and Representative Perillo earlier, the fact that we have the August primary will hopefully work to our favor. We can see what works and what doesn't work. I agree with the representative. There have been individuals in my district who received an application and were a little confused by what do I do, what is this for, who sent it to me? I agree with this. It is a very good point the representative brings up. I think the fact that we are all here today, making, hopefully -- ideally, making these changes to the absentee ballot voting through this legislation will also put the burden on us as individuals and as elected officials to make sure our constituents are aware of these changes, are aware of these new methods of voting, and then it's our responsibility as much as anyone else to make sure that this information is made available to the public.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Arora.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Point of order, please, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

I recognize the majority leader, who is our Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

The chairman answered that question. We just got to remember we don't ask questions of opinion. We ask questions of fact. So, a question that says, "Do you think x, y, or z is happening?" is a question of opinion. So, we need to limit the questions to facts and the four corners of the bill. Chairman, I appreciate you answering that question, but we don't go down the road of opinions in this Chamber. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader. Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Mr. Speaker, thank you, and may I ask, through you, the question that does this bill provide for reducing confusion and improving the capacity and the ability for our communities and our state to vote?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr Speaker, I have to object again. The question cannot start with, "Does this bill eliminate confusion." There's no assumption of a fact that there is confusion. So, the question can limit to the bill, but these are questions that are not allowed under our rules, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.
Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, majority leader for the clarification there. I am a freshman; so, I am learning the parliamentary

procedure or the procedure to participate. Thank you.

So, let me ask you a question, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the proponent of the bill. That does this bill, a factual, provide for any education of the process of absentee voting?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The bill does not include that language.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Does this bill provide for any benefit or any help to the towns in cleaning the machinery available there because that is another problem which we think -- which our towns are facing?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the representative. The bill does not address the cleaning of the voting location.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, once again. Now, I would like to close with a few comments. I think it is important that we make sure that this bill achieves the purpose which is to enable more of our voters to participate without any fear. I think, as written, the fact that it does not include any education, that it does not include some kind of a prohibition, or some kind of an idea that we do not need to create more confusion, which already has been done, reduces the efficacy of this bill. And I ask this body to really focus on the purpose and write a bill and put a bill -- pass a bill which helps our

citizens, helps everyone vote without fear and also explains this to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Haddad of the mighty 54th district. You have the floor, sir.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's good to be here today. I'm glad to be a member of his branch of government, and I'm glad to see us back in action.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Good to see you.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

I rise, Mr. Speaker, to support the passage of the bill. It's a very important bill, and I'd like to thank Representative Fox for his leadership in bringing this bill before us today. As well, I'd like to thank Senator Flexer and our Secretary of

State, Denise Merrill, who have been working very hard with Representative Fox to craft this language in front of us, to make sure that in these extraordinary times people can exercise their right to vote without fearing getting sick or injuring -- and bringing that sickness back to their families. Obviously, the provisions in this bill that allow voters to access absentee balloting in this time and age, is very important. I can't think of another issue that my inbox -- my email inbox has been hit with more. People in my district have been contacting me, very frequently about making sure that they can exercise their vote, to vote by absentee ballot safely and securely from their homes rather than voting in person, and I'm glad to see this legislation in front of us. I also wanted to thank Representative Fox for including sections 9 and 10 in the bill, which are the Election Day registration portion -- provisions of this bill. I did have a question or two for Representative Fox,

the proponent of the bill and would ask permission to pose those questions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

You may proceed, sir.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

Yes, through you, Mr. Speaker, then.

I just wanted to -- I understand that the current law prohibits municipalities from establishing more than one site for Election Day registration. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

That's correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Haddad.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

And this legislation lifts that restriction, but I'm curious to know if it puts in place any

additional restriction on the number of sites that can be designated as Election Day registration sites in a municipality.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the representative for the question. I'll refer the representative to line 367 of the bill. It does not limit the number of EDR locations a municipality may have. It just seeks that any additional location for the completion and processing of Election Day registration applications must be submitted. So if a municipality wants to have more than one more than two, they have to submit an application; more than two, they must submit two applications. So, it does not limit to one or two; it just says any additional location must be submitted for approval to the secretary of state's Office.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Haddad.

REP. HADDAD (54TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's all for questions. I just wanted to clarify that because I think that what's important for folks to understand is that this permits us to divide the people who are likely to vote by Election Day registration to different sites. In my community of Mansfield, that's actually very important. We are the host community for the University of Connecticut, and on Election Day, we register -- in the last few elections, we've registered hundreds if not thousands of new students -- students to register to vote in our community who then move on to vote. This legislation would allow us to establish Election Day registration sites that would provide that opportunity to those students to get in more than just one line at town hall. That turns out to be important for us to sort of divide the workload

and enable us to work through those lines more efficiently and with more people by creating additional sites. It's also important to note that this legislation allows folks in line at 8 o'clock but not yet completed -- who have not yet completed the voter registration process, to complete that process and to vote. That is an expansion of our abilities to serve those constituents. On Election Day, college students don't eschew their normal patterns. They arrive late, and on Election Day in Mansfield two years ago, we had 200 students who arrived well before 8 o'clock but who had not yet completed the Election Day registration prior to, you know, 7:45. We had to work in less than desirable ways to ensure that they could vote, and I think that what this allows us to do is to ensure that we can work methodically and carefully through the list -- the line to ensure that folks who have arrived before 8 o'clock can register to vote and can exercise their vote. To me, that's what's really most important here is that we have residents

and citizens of this state and our country and our municipalities who want to vote and exercise that essential and fundamental right of citizenship, and this takes action to ensure that we can do so safely and that we can do so efficiently on Election Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker for allowing me the opportunity to express my support for the bill and, again, just thank Representative Fox, Senator Flexer, and our Secretary of State, Denise Merrill, for their leadership in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on this bill as amended? Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Winkler of the 56th. You have the floor, sir.

REP. WINKLER (56TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am in favor of the bill. I'm strongly in favor of the provisions concerning ballot boxes. There was some discussion about ballot boxes. My district is a single-town

district, and that town is Vernon, CT. And in Vernon, we have a ballot box since we rejected the secretary of state's box that is not open 24 hours a day. It is only open when the town clerk's office is open, and that is true of other towns -- at least one other town I know in this state. And the problem with that is that people who are working near minimum wage can't afford to take time off from work to go to a ballot box that's only open when they're at work. And you need it. People get sick, people forget, but they still should be allowed to vote. So, I'm going to be blunt to be brief. It's not a question of whether a window-mount box or a sidewalk box is more secure. The critical factor here is having ballot boxes that are only open during working hours is a form of voter suppression against working poor people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you remark

further on the bill as amended? Representative Fishbein of the 90th. You have the floor, sir.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Good afternoon.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of talk about the arbitrary sending out by our secretary of state of unsolicited absentee ballot applications, and I know there's been a lot of talk about the costs of that. What I've heard in relation to that is it's been close to a million dollars, but the Feds have had to pay for it; so, it's not coming from us. Well, you know, that money still comes from the taxpayers. So, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an amendment; it's 6002. No, it's LCO 3777.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3777 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "B."

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "B" LCO No. 3777
offered by Representative Candelora, Representative
France, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The representative seeks leave of the Chamber
to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to
summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none,
Representative Fishbein, you may proceed.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All this amendment
does is it merely adds a section on that precludes a
secretary of state from mailing unsolicited
applications for absentee ballots to any person.
Therefore, we would be saving ultimately the
taxpayers' money. In fact, the fiscal note reflects
that not mailing these applications will result in a
savings to the State of Connecticut. They're unable
to quantify that based upon we don't know how many
they would mail out. We know with this current
round that alledgedly every registered voter in the

state of Connecticut got an absentee ballot application. We also know that people that are not even alive got those absentee ballot applications. We know that people that have moved have gotten those absentee ballot applications. I don't know anybody in the state of Connecticut could find that to be a fiscally prudent action by its government. You know, unfortunately when you have the checkbook and you can do whatever you want, sometimes you don't always balance that checkbook. So, Your Honor, I would hope that everyone supports the amendment, and that is all that I have.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "B." Will you remark on the amendment? Will you remark on the amendment? The Chamber will stand at ease.

The Chamber will come back to order. The Speaker recognizes Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that when this vote be taken, it be taken by roll call vote. I know we have small numbers in the Chamber and people may sort of forget that because it would be natural to do a roll call vote since nobody's in here, but I'll just ask for it formally, but the assumption should be that all votes will be roll call vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you. When the vote is taken, it will be taken via roll call. Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? If not, I will try your minds. Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just -- receiving the amendment a moment ago and reviewing it, I ask my colleagues to not support the amendment. I think it's a policy decision in which -- one which I do not support or agree with and, therefore, ask the amendment be rejected.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

If not, will staff and guests please come to the -- Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Sorry, Mr. Speaker. Just for folks watching in their offices, this, again, to clarify what Chairman Fox said. The amendment would prohibit the secretary of state from mailing applications out, which has already happened for the August primary; so, I assume it applies to November. I am asking the Democratic caucus to vote against the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, representative. Will staff and guests please come to the well of the House? Will the members please take your seats? The machine will be open. [Gavel] {Ringing, ringing, ringing}.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of

Representative is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH): [Ringing] Have all the members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast? If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Chair recognizes Representative Dubitsky.
Representative Dubitsky.

REP. DUBITSKY (47TH):

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my vote be registered in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The Clerk will record your vote in the affirmative. Mr. Clerk, please call Representative Rosario in the negative. Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the indulgence. I ask that my vote be recorded in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Will the Clerk recognize the vote?

Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH):

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my vote be recorded in the negative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask that my vote be registered in the affirmative. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, sir. Are there any other votes in the Chamber that need to be acknowledged?

Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY (85TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My computer threw me off the voting. I would like to vote in the negative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "B."

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Adoption	74
Those voting Yea	55
Those voting Nay	91
Absent and not voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The amendment fails. [Gavel]. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Will you remark further on the bill as amended? Representative Currey of the 11th District. You have the floor, sir.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for a question for the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

You may proceed.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you. I'm looking to see if he can clarify a conversation he had with the good representative from the 87th around the ability to use third-party vendors for absentee ballot applications.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the representative for the question. I do want to just clarify a conversation I had earlier with Representative Yaccarino, who I've since talked about this issue with. Following his line of questioning, I was inquired of a few number of questions by Representative Davis concerning the secretary of state's authority to implement instructions or [inaudible - 04:11:24] to Representative Davis, and my conversation

specifically centered on the word "instructions."

And in my mind, a lightbulb went off, and I referred back to section 9-3(a) of the General Statutes which does give the secretary some authority over elections to enforce regulations, declaratory rulings, instructions, and opinions. I wanted to clarify [inaudible - 04:11:41] my response to Representative Yaccarino concerning the town clerk's requirement to use the vendor. Although the statute does indicate in line 96 that they "may" be mailed by a third-party vendor and not "shall," for clarification of the purpose, I want to indicate that the secretary can use her authority under 9-3 to mandate that the mail house be used. She hasn't done so. I have no indication she's going to, but she does have the authority to do so, and, so, I wanted to be more accurate in my previous answer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Currey.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just a reminder to my colleagues. Please mask up; wear to care. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you. Will you remark further on this bill as amended? Will you remark further on the bill amended? The Chamber will stand at ease.

The Chamber will come back to order.

Representative Perillo of the 113th. You have the floor, sir.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the discussion that's going on with this Bill and I know a number of Amendments have been proposed. But I do think we need to look at not just the practical application and implementation of much of what is in the Bill, but also in terms of how money is spent. And with that, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment. It is LCO No. 3783. I ask that he please call it and I be given leave to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3783, which will be designated as House Amendment Schedule "C".

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "C" (LCO No. 3783), offered by Representative Candelora and Representative Perillo.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The Representatives seek leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection to summarization? Hearing none, Representative Perillo you may proceed to summarization.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we know, the Federal Government is allocating sums of money to the Secretary of the State for implementation of many of the changes and -- and for assistance during COVID-19 for the upcoming elections. This Amendment makes it very clear and would require the Secretary of the State's Office to spend that federal money,

first and foremost, to ensure safe and secure opportunities for in-person voting, and secondarily, to reimburse municipalities for costs incurred by them in doing so during this COVID crisis. As it stands right now, the Secretary of the State's Office can more or less spend federal dollars in any way that office sees fit. This would ensure that those funds actually go toward municipalities in making sure that individuals can vote safely in-person.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Questions for the Chamber's adoption of House Amendment Schedule "C" We will work on the Amendment. Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Representative for his thoughts and energy put in the Amendment. I'm going to have to ask my colleagues to oppose the Amendment. I don't want to hamstring the Secretary of State in any shape or

form from the manner by which to distributing funds. Ideally the funds will be used in the right manner and the right purposes, but I fear as though that this -- this type of amendment might hamstring the Secretary of that Office from using the funds as -- as she deems appropriate. So, I ask my colleagues to not support the Amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

[off mic] mic is on right now. Let me tell [off mic]. Will you remark further? Representative --

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Candelora.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

-- Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of this Amendment. And similar to the previous Amendment that we saw, which was seeking to prohibit the mailing of absentee ballots

to every resident in the state of Connecticut. I think the issue that we have seen, in my opinion, out of the Secretary of State's Office is, while she certainly does have the ability to set priorities on how the money is spent, during this crisis the federal money that's come in has sort of circumvented the budgetary process, and it's gone directly to the Executive Branch with very little input -- or no input from the legislature.

And what I hear time and again from my town clerks and my registrars is the growing concern of having the ability to administer these elections in -- in very difficult times. And so, while I know there was contracts that are put out for the cleaning of polling places after the election occurs in November, while the Secretary of State might find that to be a priority, when I talk to the town clerks and the registrars, you know, their priorities are concerned about being able to process these ballots even on election day, to be able to process the -- the hundreds and thousands of

anticipated absentee ballot votes that may be coming in. How do they do that? Do they have the machines? Do you have the bodies? Do they even have the space? And then, hiring poll workers, are we going to have enough to provide for the social distancing?

And so, today as we inch along toward election day, I don't believe those priorities for our towns and cities are being met. And I think at the very least this is an important Amendment for us as a legislature to say this what we believe is important that we should embarking on. And we could figure out some of the other items later on. But the most important thing is to make sure that every vote is counted, every vote has the ability to be casted, and that is the spirit of the Amendment. And of course, I support it. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative

Yaccarino of the 87th. You have the floor, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank -- thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the Amendment, for many of the reasons that Representative Candelora said. But I -- I had asked the good Chair of GA earlier that these town clerks and registrars they work in small confined areas, and those areas have to be cleaned, really every day, I would think. So, it's going to be a mandate. It's a good mandate, because we need everybody to vote, though everybody -- everybody -- everybody's vote counts. But I think this federal money should go toward either cleaning or extra staff or safety -- safety precautions. So, I don't see how you wouldn't support this.

I would hope our Secretary of State, if we do get federal dollars, does -- does support this. But in a bill like this, that I think most of us are going to vote for, why not support this now, put it in -- in language that any federal dollars allocated for general election, which is our most precious

right is voting, go towards safety for our clerks, our registers, and the people to go vote in the -- in the precincts. So, I stand in strong support of this. It's logical. It's not excessive. It makes sense and it's money that's spent for safety.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask when the vote be taken, it be taken by roll. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. The vote will be taken by roll. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just encourage democratic caucus to oppose this Amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members, the machine will be opened. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote was properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk -- the machine -- the machine will be locked.

If there's anyone who wishes to acknowledge or change their vote, please we'll recognize you. Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Mr. Speaker, in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Perillo.

REP. PERILLO (113TH):

Yeah. In the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, sir. Will the Clerk recognize -- myself -- Representative Rosario in the negative. Representative Frey of the 111th.

REP. FREY (111TH):

In the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Any other members? Please waive your hand. Any other members? Please bear with us while we deal with technical. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "C".

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Adoption	74
Those Voting Yea	55

Those Voting Nay 91

Absent not Voting 5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Amendment fails. [Gavel] Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Simmons. You have the floor, ma'am.

REP. SIMMONS (144TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation which is critical to protecting our democracy and ensuring that everyone has the right to vote this November. No one should have to choose between their health and their fundamental right to vote in this election. And this legislation will protect that sacred right for all of our residents.

And I think this Bill is especially important to continuing to flatten the curve in Connecticut, because one of the reasons we're doing so well compared to other states is because of the precautions we've been taking and because of the

enormous sacrifices that all of our residents, our first responders, our essential workers, our teachers, our students of families have collectively taken over these past several months. And this legislation is essential to continuing that effort to help continue to reopen our economy, to help get our workforce back to work, and protect the health and safety of all of our residents.

So, again, I want to stand in -- in strong support of this legislation today, to ensure that everyone can vote in this critical election. I think there's much more work we need to continue to do to modernize our election process and to expand access to the polls. But this is an essential bill for this year, for this once in a century pandemic to really protect the health and safety of our residents and ensure that everyone can participate in the democratic process and exercise their fundamental right to vote.

I want to especially thank Chairman Fox for his amazing leadership and work on this legislation. I

also want to thank all of my constituents and advocates in Stamford and advocates across the state who have been fighting for our democracy and our right to vote. And with that, I urge passage of this Bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Candelora of the 86th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do have an -- an Amendment that I -- I want to call that we are waiting on. And I thought I would just take this opportunity to just speak a little bit on the underlying Bill, while that Amendment is being prepared. You know, I think overall we -- we support the concept of what we're trying to accomplish here. You know, we for a number -- well over a decade, we have struggled with how to expand our constitution to allow for a more robust absentee ballot process. Because currently, obviously, it's

been limited to just voting if you are -- are sick or out of state. And I think given the -- the pandemic, it's given us a new challenge of trying to figure out a way to keep the -- uphold the framework of our constitution, at the same time, allow for voting in this manner.

And I think -- and I appreciate the work that the Chairs and the Ranking Members have done on this Bill to honor the -- those provisions of our constitution and to -- to accomplish that goal of allowing people to vote by the absentee ballot.

You know, one area of the Bill that I am just generally concerned with, are the drop boxes that we did hear so much about, you know. And it's not about voter suppression as I heard before. It really is about making sure that every vote is counted. As we all know, the absentee ballot process is not as simple when you engage in it. And -- so, to remove essentially the -- the town clerk interaction, and I understand why, because people are concerned with -- with social distancing

from that application process, many of these are filled out incorrectly, and so utilizing the drop box, I am pretty confident we're going to have a number of ballots that are probably going to be done incorrectly and those votes will be disenfranchised. But importantly, these boxes aren't all that secure. And I think the nature of these boxes are very different than a mailbox.

You know, the mailbox has federal protections, but the same interest, you know, is not necessarily there with -- with tampering or with vandalizing those boxes as -- as we may see during election season, especially given the -- over the last month, the different vandals that we -- we have seen, I think elections are going to be just as emotionally charged and I am concerned about the security of these lockboxes.

And in particular, I was concerned again with the position of our Secretary of State's Office. One of the towns that I represent, the town of Wallingford has made every attempt to secure those

boxes. And so, the Mayor had moved it into the -- the townhall, into the -- the -- the -- like the vestibule in order for it to be a more secure location. And that was met very swiftly by the Secretary of State demanding that that box be moved outside.

And I think, that is sort of the -- the crux of the problem that I have with this legislation. And I -- I think the legislature, as a whole, you know, is trying to improve the security of these lockboxes by allowing for somebody -- or -- or requiring that somebody empty out the ballots every day.

But I think to the point of what Wallingford is trying to accomplish is that if -- if the purpose of these boxes is to allow for a ballot to be dropped off as opposed to entering into an office space, in an enclosed area, and giving it to the town clerk and being registered, there's no reason why -- that we have that process from 9:00 to 5:00 in a secure location. And I think that's what the town of Wallingford was trying to get at.

And yet what -- what it seems as if our Secretary of State wants to get at is -- is putting these on every sidewalk, like being in replacement of the US mail. And I don't think that that's what the intention of these boxes were. The intention of these boxes were for allowing for the ballot to be dropped off during town hall hours so you don't need to go inside the building.

And so, I -- I -- I'm a little bit, you know, I -- I guess I'm not happy that we weren't able to really focus in on -- on this piece of legislation. I'm glad that we're having these boxes only for the November 2020 election as opposed to extending it out into all of our elections, because we really need to see, how this process is going to work.

I'm hopeful these boxes don't get vandalized. I'm hopeful that every ballot is counted. I'm hopeful that there isn't damage or forms aren't filled out incorrectly where they could have been maybe more timely corrected. But, you know, time will tell. And I think the legislation was at least

drafted in that manner to address it.

And I think that every town should be afforded the ability to make these boxes as secure as possible for their communities and to accomplish that goal of allowing people to vote in that form of dropping them in those boxes in that way. And so, I am hopeful that a town like Wallingford would be given that freedom to allow for it, because we also cannot forget that people are still allowed to mail them into the town clerk's office, which is a -- a more secure process because there's a chain of command through the federal mail system.

The other part of the Bill, I guess I could speak to now, is sort of addressing an area that I -- I think the Chairs and Ranking Members have done a good job on doing, but I think we need to try to take this a little -- little bit further to button up is -- is -- is the mail vendor system.

You know, right now we have a -- a law in the state of Connecticut where the town clerks are required, once they process a valid, you know, duly

verified application, that that application would then give rise to producing, giving out a ballot. And -- and I think those ballots are released, if I'm correct, 21 days before the election and the -- the -- the town clerks are required to release that ballot within 24 hours. And I know we're going to see a -- a greater increase with absentee ballots potentially in this November election.

And as I'm reading this, and I guess I could just ask the Chair, as part of this legislation, are we expanding the 24-hour turnaround for the town clerk to issue a ballot to 48 hours? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The intent of the legislation is to do just that, to provide the town clerks with additional time for the November 2020 election. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And would that be only for the 2020 election? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, State line 93, for the state election of 2020 is limited to just this open election. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I -- I -- I think that is a, you know, helpful change. And in addition the -- the provisions are allowing for a mail vendor that could be procured through the Secretary of State, and is that mail vendor for each town that may need it, is it a local option to decide whether or not they want to process their absentee ballot applications through a mail vendor? Do they have the option of doing it on their own?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This follows up a question through Representative Yaccarino earlier I spent clarification. The statute, the proposed language indicates in line 96 that they may be mailed by a third-party mailing vendor, but to clarify, I'd like to point that the Secretary recording 9-3A commanding that the mail [inaudible 04:34:35] used, she hasn't done so yet. I -- I don't know when she's going to do it, but she has the authority to do so. [Inaudible 04:34:40].

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, who -- would the state of Connecticut pay for that mail vendor, is it presumed? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that that's my assumption. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't see any requirements in the Bill that the state of Connecticut would pick up that tab. And I think getting back to the original point of Representative Perillo's Amendment that he called, I think that was, again, one reason why we want to see the type of assurance. And I'm hopeful that we would see that that contract would be paid through with at least the federal dollars that we've received through the COVID efforts. And I would assume -- I -- I would assume that that would be done, because I'm also not sure, I guess, how we would portion it -- each towns', you know, financial liability to

the contract as a base per population per ballot. And -- and so I just hope it's not something that we're going to see borne onto our municipalities if it is done.

And I think right now, under this current legislation, we've had a lot of discussion over the complications of the mail vendor. And right now, as the legislation currently reads, unlike the town clerk where they would have the 48-hour requirement to turn over a ballot, this provision doesn't necessarily make that requirement. And -- and I guess provides for that -- to give them a little bit more latitude and could the -- the good Chairman just, I guess, talk about the Amendment passage and -- and how we want to make sure that mail vendor would be sending out those ballots. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the

question. The -- the intent of passage is that as currently drafted, line 100, that any vendor shall require that such vendor use "best" efforts to mail [inaudible 04:37:09] ballots up to 48 hours. That was language [inaudible 04:37:13] discussed [inaudible 04:37:15] and clarify [inaudible 04:37:18] to insure [inaudible 04:37:21]. The best efforts [inaudible 04:37:31] was that -- just that [inaudible 04:37:33] best efforts [inaudible 04:37:35]. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I -- I -- I don't have any further questions. I -- I guess I'm hopeful that the Amendment will be filed soon, because I am out of questions [laughing] and I'm out of issues, I guess, to address with this underlying Bill that -- that hasn't already been said.

But I think, you know, overall, I think everyone has worked very hard on this legislation

and has tried to achieve the intent of allowing people to vote in this pandemic. You know, the state of Connecticut has done a phenomenal job and I think we really owe it to the residents for being one of the only states to be meeting all of its metrics and goals. And I'm hopeful by the time November does come, we will see a much more -- more normalized voting process and a lot of these provisions might not even be necessary in that people would be allowed to vote in person. But I certainly -- we don't have a crystal ball. And so, given where we are in -- in time right now, I certainly understand why we need to do this legislation.

And I am also just grateful that the legislation is limited to the 2020 election cycle, because I do believe that we should be looking toward next session as opposed to this session, if we are going to make any type of permanent changes in the way that we vote in the state of Connecticut. And certainly after we go through this November

election, I think we are going to find, you know, I predict a lot of issues that we are going to need work in this process. And so, with that, I think I'm out of -- out of questions and comments to make. And so, I'll just hopefully wait for this Amendment to come very shortly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on the Amendment? Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Reyes of the 75th oh, on the Bill. Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the good Chair for answering a lot of these questions but in some of his answers, particularly about whether the towns or the clerks are going to be reimbursed for the expenses, I believe he said he -- he presumes it's going to be done, but nobody has really been clear. There's one thing I've learned in -- in General Assembly, is it's highly dangerous and risky to assume something as opposed to you expect it to

happen. So, could the good Chairman tell me what the towns and cities are supposed to do should they not be able to recoup 100 percent of their expenses related to this election? Through you, Mr. Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Representative Betts for the questions. As I reflect back upon Representative Candelora's line of questioning earlier, as to the obligations of the states in terms of who will be responsible for these payments, reflecting on line -- line 99 of the underlying legislation, it indicates that the contract between the vendor -- will be between the vendor and the Secretary of State.

So, it states, it may be mailed by a third-party mailing vendor approved and selected by the Secretary of the State for use by the Clerk for such purpose to provide any contract between the Secretary of State and any such vendor. So, the --

the -- the -- the body -- the two parties to the contract will be the vendor and the Secretary of the State of Connecticut.

So, that language, in my mind and my interpretation implies that the towns will not be responsible for the financial burdens so long as a vendor is used. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you. Thank you for that answer. And I also have that same understanding. But we can also just sit here and say, we asked about it, we all thought it was going to happen. But what I'm asking the good Chairman is, what recourse does any town or city have if they don't get a 100 percent reimbursement, any reimbursement or they have to wait for a very long period of time when they have a problem with cashflow, where are they going to get money or what's going to happen as a result of that. And that's not what we're predicting.

But we want to be able to make sure, they're going to have a tough enough job as it is, the last thing the towns and cities need now is to have another unfunded mandate on them in which they'll not get any money. And that would be a real travesty in my mind. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thanks for the good conversation between Representative Betts and Chairman Fox. I guess folks are unable to hear Representative Betts on either Zoom or CTN, so unless there's a -- a real opposition to it, I think we should just pause the debate. Let the IT folks fix it. If that's okay? Does that work?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Okay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The Chamber will stand at ease.

[Gavel]

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The House will come back to order. Will you
remark further on the Bill as amended?

REP. RITTER (1ST):

No, Representative Betts.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Good afternoon, Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you Mr. Speaker. Good to see you. I'm
just going to briefly backtrack where everybody lost
Representative Fox and I debating this Bill. So,
I'll -- I'll briefly summarize it. Through you, Mr.
Speaker, I heard the Chairman as well as
Representative Perillo and Candelora, and I think
most of us are operating under the assumption or the
presumption that the local towns and municipalities
are going to be reimbursed for their expenses.

And I'm asking the Chairman, how do we know
that? And then, what happens to them in particular

if they do not receive monies, who's going to cover those expenses? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the Representative for the question. The Bill provides no funding mechanism as to how funds would be distributed to towns. The hope is that the funds that will be used from -- ideally received from the federal government will in fact will be directed to towns. The Bill -- the Bill underlying legislation [inaudible 05:39:15]. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you. And thanks to the good Chairman for that answer. But he started off his remarks by saying the hope. And I really feel for these people who are going to be taking on the responsibility, a huge one, of counting the votes, not only int he

primary but in particular for the general election. And I just got a call from somebody who said the last three or four major elections, they only had maybe about 1,500 -- 1,500 absentee ballots. As of now, and we're not even at the primary date, she says they received over 4,000. That's more than -- more than double it --

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Excuse me, Representative Betts, the Chamber will stand at ease. Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I'm sorry, Representative Betts. It's not working, is my understanding, so I don't want to do that to you. It's just not fair for you and the constituents you represent. So, I think, at your point, we're going to stand at ease. I just wanted to explain why. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

The Chamber will stand at ease. Thank you.
[Gavel]

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

House come back to order. Again, we apologize for the inconvenience. It seems as though we've worked out the technical difficulties. Representative Betts, you did have the floor. Sir, please proceed.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Third times a charm. So, I'd like to direct a question through you, Mr. Speaker, to Representative Fox. Earlier on in this debate, it was mentioned by you, by Representative Perillo, Representative Candelora, and a number of people, that we assumed and we presumed that the local communities are going to be reimbursed for the increased expenses they're going to have pertaining to the primary and to the upcoming election. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

What assurance do they have if the unfortunate or the unlikely thing happens in which the state or the federal government is unable to give them their funds for reimbursement or if there's a lengthy

delay, in receiving funds which would put a cash flow problem on the local budget? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative for the question. There is no funding mechanism in the Bill, so I am -- appreciate the gentleman's question and concern for towns and municipalities. I must say there's no funding -- funding mechanism in the Bill, so therefore no guarantee. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you for that answer. And I'm going to be very quick, but I just wanted to share with the good Chairman and the Chamber a text I just received from one of the clerks in Bristol. And it said that this is -- this is from her statement, she said,

Connecticut is not equipped to hand or count the number of absentee ballots that will result from her mass mailings, 2016 Bristol processed 1,601 absentee ballots. It took until midnight to get the results. Here, we're talking -- and she's just received close to 4,000 pertaining to the primary.

And the question in my mind is, are we really able and capable of being able to do this under this scenario? And if so, could the good Chairman explain to me or not to me but the registrars who's supposed to be doing, how they're going to be able to meet this challenge, because her fear is, we are going to be on national news and embarrassed.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. It's a fair question of valid concern. And it's one -- one, it's a concern that I've been very cognizant of this entire process.

I realize that come election day and the weeks leading up to it, even there, and more importantly the day after election day, individuals won't look at me, Dan Fox, if something goes wrong, they'll look at the local town clerks and local registrars. They'll -- they'll be the ones whose face is here on the front of the newspapers. I've been aware of that, and myself and other members are very cognizant of that fact in trying to plan this legislation to make sure that that doesn't happen.

I can say there is mechanisms within this Bill that I think will be very helpful in the counting process. For starters, currently under current law, town clerks can begin organizing the ballots seven days in advance; this Bill allows them 14 days in advance. Another mechanism, I think will be helpful, currently -- under current law, an individual can walk into the town clerk's office and withdraw their absentee ballot up to 10:00 a.m. on election day; this Bill provides that at 5:00 -- 5:00 p.m. the day before election day, which will

allow town clerks more time to begin organizing the process.

Under current law, the registrars and town clerks can begin counting ballots as of 11:00 a.m. on election. This Bill provides them 6:00 a.m. on election day when they can begin the process. Admittedly, it's only a few hours, but ideally those types of mechanism changes will put a little more time -- lead time for these individuals to begin the process. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Betts.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I thank you for that answer. I've got to confess that this is a monumental undertaking that we're doing right now. And just as we have discovered here, despite the best efforts and advanced planning on being able to speak in the Chamber so the public can hear us, we've encountered problems and people are doing their very best to keep up with them and repair

them. I feel very strongly that the registrars are going to be overwhelmed by numbers. And nobody can come back and say we were surprised, we didn't know about it. They made it perfectly loud and clear. And I know you've done your best to address those.

But I tell you, I -- I wouldn't want to be a registrar for all the money in the world now, because when they start getting these absentee ballots, they are really going to be overwhelmed and we're not going to be getting any quick results at the end of it.

If Bristol had 1600 votes on election day and it took 'em until midnight and they have 4,000 now, it's pretty obvious that we're going to have a real problem getting a timely result from the elections.

So, I thank the good gentleman. I do want people to vote, but I don't want it to be a painful or embarrassing experience for us. And I pray that the good gentleman's comments will happen. Thank you very much, Mr. -- Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Betts. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? From the 75th District, Representative Reyes.

REP. REYES (75TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of House Bill 6002 as amended, and just like to share some reasons why I'm for any type of absentee ballot application process that's going to help to increase the voter turnout. Voter participation has been on decline in many of the municipalities, and especially the area that I represent. And I have been a proponent of whatever it's going to take to make it easier to get people to vote.

And I understand that there is always concern on the other side when it comes to voter fraud. And I think that, at the end of day, we -- we throw out the word voter fraud, but we really don't have the materials to substantiate it. And I think that I -- my constituents, the people that I represent, need a -- all the opportunities that they can to vote, and I think that this Bill will get us there. We're

using COVID-19 as one of the reasons which is one -- one of the reasons that the Secretary of State put this on the -- on the Bill.

And I think that this is something that we should be looking at beyond this Bill in going forward, as a state, that we need to look at why voter participation is on a decline. And it is -- I think it's very important that this Bill continue beyond what we have today. And if I could, through the Chair, ask a question of the proponent of the Bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. REYES (75TH):

In -- Representative, in section 4, there is a -- a piece that talks about going to the actual poll on election day. And my question is, the reason we put the COVID-19 explanation on there as a reason for not putting it on there, do we not -- are we not really discouraging people from coming to the registrar's office, number one? And number two,

there could be townhalls that are actually not open at all at that time, it's a possibility. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative for the question. I believe what the Representative is -- is seeking is whether not individuals will be able to still vote in person at the town clerk's office. This Bill does not address that issue. The individuals will still be able to go vote in person at the town clerk's office, it's a valid concern one of which we're aware, one of which Representative and I have discussed. The Bill does not address whether or not individuals will be permitted or not permitted to vote in the town clerk's office the -- the -- as of November, they still will be allowed to do so. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Reyes.

REP. REYES (75TH):

Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I'd like to thank the proponent for that explanation. The -- I just received in my -- at my home yesterday, a change of location, just a few weeks away from the primaries and just three months away from a presidential election. And this is news that I actually -- it was news to me. So, this is one more reason why I believe that every opportunity should be given to every voter to be able to do this through absentee -- through the absentee ballot application because of changes like this. Voters get confused when there's a repetitive polling place, when you start changing the polling places, it just gets even more confusing.

So, I -- I can't stress enough how important it is for -- for me to support this House Bill 6002 as amended. And I'd like to thank the Chair on this Bill. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Reyes. You all set?
Will you remark further on the Bill as amended?
Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've heard some discussions about, you know, securing the -- the votes, making sure that this is done in orderly fashion. And in the -- the legislation in the Bill, we have language in here that allows for a third-party mailing vendor to help our cities and towns potentially distribute the absentee ballots. One of our concerns in our discussions in trying to address this language is making sure that that mail vendor would have the same obligations that a town clerk would have, that being, timely distributing the ballots once they have received a request for one.

And so, we had some discussions to make sure that happens. And so, with that the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO 3802, I ask that it be called and be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3802 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "D".

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "D" LCO 3802 offered by Representative Candelora and Representative Fox.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Candelora, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what this Bill -- this Amendment does is, there is a provision in the underlying Bill that requires that the town clerks mail out the ballot within 48 hours upon receipt of an application, we're giving them an extra day. The Amendment also allows for the -- or -- or requires now that the mail clerk would have a similar obligation to mail out a ballot within 72

hours of receiving that request should we use a third-party mail vendor. And with that, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "D". Will you remark on the Amendment? Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (148TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the Representative for his efforts on -- in making clarifying this language. It's a friendly Amendment and I ask my colleagues to support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Fox. If anyone would like to speak on this Schedule Amendment "D", please press your button. And I'll -- I'll give people a little bit of time in the LOB. [Gavel]

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you for your patience. Seeing none, will you remark further? If not, I will try your minds.

All those in favor, please signify by saying Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

[All] Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Those opposed, Nay? The Ayes have it. [Gavel]
The Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further
on the Bill as amended? Will you remark -- will you
remark further on the Bill as amended?

Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, based on the
decisions that have been made prior, for this
Amendment Schedule "D", I will be requesting a roll
call vote. I'm sorry for any inconvenience. So,
staff and guests of the well of the House, please
take your seats. The machine will be opened.

[Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.
The machine is now open. The House of
Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is
now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Members, please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked.

At -- at this time, there are some people that are in the Chamber that have not had an opportunity to vote because of the -- the -- the system we're in with our computers and LOB, so, please raise your hand and your vote will be tallied. Representative Walker.

REP. WALKER (93RD):

Good -- good -- good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.
Good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good afternoon.

REP. WALKER (93RD):

I'd like to be recorded in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Voted in

affirmative for Representative Walker.

Representative Cook.

REP. COOK (65TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I would like to be cast in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

So, noted. Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see you up there. I'm sorry, I won't see you up there again next year. I'd like to be recorded in the affirmative, please, on the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you. Please note that. And the -- the Speaker on the dais would like to be noted in the affirmative as well. The machine is locked. Will the Clerk please take a tally? Clerk, please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "D".

Total Number Voting

146

Necessary for Adoption	74
Those Voting Yea	146
Those Voting Nay	0
Absent not Voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Bill as amended is passed. [Gavel] The Chamber will stand at ease. Excuse me ladies and gentlemen, just to be clear, that was the Amendment, not the Bill. I was getting a little excited about that. [Laughing] The House will come back to order. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Exum.

REP. EXUM (19TH):

I rise today in support of this Bill. As a member of the GAE Committee, I've had an opportunity to receive quite a bit of email, some phone calls, and people really want to participate. And they have said over and over, through the listening session that we had earlier this week, that no one should have to choose between their health and their vote. And I know we've heard that a lot. But it's

not trite. And I just really want to stand in support of that for, not just my constituents, but I hope that everyone will participate. This is a very important election that we have coming our way.

In addition, the same reason that we have for keeping -- making this as easy as possible to be safe, to be distanced, is the reason that I really believe strongly the ballot boxes should be accessible outside where people are able to make it as easy and touchless as possible to participate without extra barriers. So, I just wanted to state that and thank you so much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Exum. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? The distinguished Representative Klarides.

REP. KLARIDES (114TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to have that off my face. We are here today in special session. As we know, special sessions are for things that we

believe are so important, are so urgent, that they cannot wait until a regular session. And the four items on the agenda today, I think fit into that category. Three of them, this Bill, the Insulin Bill, and the Telehealth Bill, certainly fit into a category of actual public health, right?

The Absentee Ballot Bill, which I plan on supporting, because people have fear and concern about going to a polling place. That makes sense to me and that is certainly something that should be a subject of special session, insulin, similar and telehealth, similar. For telling people, as public policy as leaders, that we want them to stay home, if possible, and work from home, if possible, then we certainly have to give them the ability to do so in a safe and financially acceptable way.

And the Police Accountability Bill certainly has its own emergent needs and characteristics and that is something else that I understand why we're doing today. But something to me about this special session is concerning because it seems like we are

picking and choosing the things that are affecting the state of Connecticut. And what I mean by that is, I just mentioned these last three things and -- and I'm agreeing with those three things, but there are other things going on in that -- the state right now that are so important.

We have over 700,000 people that have filed unemployment. We have businesses that have closed that haven't opened again and will never open again. We have businesses that have opened and may not last. We have people out of work. We have lost family members. We have lost friends. These are health, economic, business concerns, and that is horrible. But I am proud of what we've done as a state.

You know, we have the Governor who has executive authority that's very broad, he's used that in a lot of these circumstances to help people of the state. But what concerns me is the inconsistency in regards to that, Mr. Speaker. These bills were chosen. Why weren't other bills

chosen that also could have helped 3.5 million people in this state?

On July 1st we saw as, an example, a \$300 million dollar raise increase for one group of people in this state. Now, this isn't a conversation about good or bad. But what I know is this, we are doing an Insulin Bill. We are doing a Telehealth Bill. We are doing an Absentee Ballot Bill, because we know people are struggling. We know people are struggling.

The Governor has chosen to put landlords and tenants and owners on the hook and behind to help renters. He has chosen to close businesses. And all of these are for public health reasons. Well, we have a financial crisis in this state now. If the Governor was not willing to do it, this legislature should have been willing to do it.

This caucus stands behind ready, willing, and able when the majority party in this building and the Governor is ready to address these issues, we should have been addressing that in special session

today. Because if we really care and are genuine about what our citizens are struggling with, private businesses are struggling. Private individuals are struggling. We cannot pick winners and losers. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Our Majority Leader, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to Chairman Fox and Representative Labriola who did a -- a -- a nice job pinch hitting for a Representative who is out today and -- and appreciate their work on this Bill with the Secretary of the State and the State Senate.

Look, I -- I just -- I don't know of anything that surpasses, in my mind, the importunateness -- how important it is to be allowed to vote in this country. Maybe things tie or come close, but generally speaking all the things that we talk about that you could have added to the special session

flow from having elections and sending people up here. So, the 151 people who sit here can't vote on any bill if they aren't elected. And so, having fair, safe elections to me, is the cornerstone of our democracy.

And yeah, next year we're going to have a lot of debates on election stuff because we need to amend our constitution to make it easier to vote. I've stood up here on many times and I said, I actually think it's currently unconstitutional how restrictive we are to vote. You work two jobs in the same city and never leave the city for that day and you work from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and you vote by absentee ballot, you're violating Connecticut law. It makes no sense.

So, that time is coming to amend the constitution. I can't wait to be a big part of that and be a big supporter. And I hope it was bipartisan on some of the amendments that we did last year in this Chamber and I hope it continues that way. But this obsession over the COVID-19

changes, I'm just confused.

I intellectually sat here today, and just trying to go through some of the points that I heard, one was that we should stop the Secretary of State from mailing applications. Not ballots, people made a common mistake on this floor. People would confuse application with ballot. They are very different. You can't mail somebody a ballot. That is against state law. But you can mail 'em an application. You can go online and download an application and print it. You can go to Town Hall and sign out applications and bring them to your friends and your neighbors and say, I know, Ms. Smith that you tend to vote by absentee ballot because you're very frail and elderly and that's how you tend to vote. And you can make sure that they get their ballot. All common things that we see in the state of Connecticut.

So, some people though, because of COVID-19, don't want to go to city hall and do that. They don't know somebody who brings them an application

and they don't have a computer. So, what is the harm in mailing somebody a piece of paper, an application the federal government is paying for? They passed the law to encourage people to vote by absentee ballot so it was easier and safer. I don't understand.

So, people say, oh, my goodness, they are mailing applications. They are not mailing ballots. They're mailing applications that you can download on the -- on the -- on your computer and print. Not everybody has that option. So, all we're doing is trying to make it easier for people to exercise their constitutional rights to vote. I don't understand the bruhaha with mailing the applications.

The next one, that drew the ire of some was EDR, election day registration. Let's play it out. Let's play out a scenario. Jimmy Smith is a 19-year-old young man who has never voted in an election. Jimmy Smith sits there on election day and goes, oh, boy. It's election day. I forgot to

register to vote. If Jimmy Smith at seven o'clock at night drives to Town Hall, and you pick the town, Morinville, okay, I'll make up a town with the speaker's name. And he goes, it's going to be a potential long line in Morinville that day, and so what happened to people two years ago and four years ago is they were unable to vote, because the lines were too backed up.

So, let me get this straight. He is an American citizen who says I want to vote, he drives to Town Hall on election day, and he has every right to do that under current law. All this says is that if he's still in line at eight o'clock, his vote counts. Now, if you're registered to vote and you go to your polling place and you're in line at eight o'clock, does your vote count? Yes, of course it does. You wait in line and you may vote at 10:30. But if you're in line, you can vote. All this says is, if you're in line to register, you can vote. Someone said that will violate COVID-19 norms. People will be six feet apart. People of

Connecticut have shown self-restraint and self-responsibility and are wearing masks.

So, you're telling me that you'd rather say to that person, sorry, you can't register to vote and somehow that's related to COVID? Makes no sense. Why would we tell Jimmy Smith his vote doesn't count? And then, ask yourself this, how many people like Jimmy are driving down to -- to Town Hall at 7:30 on election day to do this. Not many ladies and gentlemen, not many. I bet you have a couple hundred people who do it, who are then willing to wait in line for hours.

Let the kid vote. I don't care if he votes Republican, Democrat. Let him vote. In this country, let people vote. We enfranchise. We do not disenfranchise. Our laws are aimed to enfranchise and people stood here and made EDR sound like a conspiracy theory from another country to infiltrate elections. It makes no sense.

The boxes, I had Corey from my staff Google mailboxes. Someone said the mailboxes are so much

safer, that these ballot boxes are weak and fraudulent, and you can do things and dump poison and all kinds of crazy stuff. In 2019, these are the stats, there were 54 convictions in America for burglary related to mail. There was mail theft 2,067 convictions. There was nonmailable restricted matter, which means people mailed firearms, weapons, intoxicants, and miscellaneous matter. I'd love to know what that is, on 67 occasions they were convicted. This is not even the cases that initiated arrest. This is convicted. Okay?

And then suspicious items was 24. Hundreds of instances where people did crazy things with a mailbox, stole it, mailed a bomb. Seriously. That happens in a mailbox. So, I don't disagree that mailboxes and -- and ballot boxes have vulnerabilities. They're -- they're not bomb shelters built in a mountain in West Virginia.

So, when I vote by absentee ballot, right, I've done it a couple of times, I like to go to town, I like to go to my polling place and see folks. All

right? I got my ballot in the mail and I mailed it back. That ballot went into a mailbox in Hartford in the west end. Okay? It was grabbed by a mailperson, who by the way, there are a -- a couple of dozens of mail -- of convictions where people assaulting mail carriers, right? So, he picks up the ballot.

There's a -- the chance he could, because people have been convicted of it, assault him and take the ballot and run away with it or take the mail. The mail could be stolen because people get convicted of that. It could rain, it could get wet. Then it's got to go to City Hall. It's got to get opened. A lot of things happen, ladies and gentlemen with our mail every day. And you know what happens? Miraculously, the mail arrives and the ballot counts. Despite all the threats that you could do to a mailbox and the -- the crazy thoughts we have that you could do to a mailbox, these votes tend to count.

So, now we assume that this ballot box that's

sitting there, is like this target of people that there's these criminals sitting there and going tonight, I get my revenge. I will destroy the ballot box, and I will deprive 11 people in the town of Coventry the right to vote. It doesn't happen. And if it does happen, it could happen to a mailbox, too. That's all I'm saying. So, don't invent theories that this box is different than a mailbox, because it's not. The same threats exist. And it's at Town Hall, which has cameras and is more secure, and they're both federal offenses.

The last thing I would say, is that this pandemic has clearly had an impact on folks frankly who, if you look at the statistics, have certain underlying conditions and it has effected African American Hispanic persons more than white individuals.

In this country, for a long time, we had poll taxes, where you had to pay a fee to vote. And that was deemed unconstitutional and we changed the laws. If you don't let people vote by absentee ballot for

any reason they want, that is a healthcare tax. The difference is instead of paying with money, you're paying with your life. It's not a joke.

In Wisconsin, when they went to vote, they had huge outbreaks of Coronavirus. So, everybody who talks about fraud and all these things, I talk about death. I talk about infection rates. In a perfect world, everybody could vote by absentee ballot in November. It is serious business.

What's not serious business is to say that we're going to have fraud and lose our elections. I don't know of a vote that is easier than this vote. This is the easiest vote we've certainly taken this year because we've done two bills. But it was the easiest vote I have ever taken in my life in the Connecticut General Assembly is this one. It's life or death to exercise your constitutional American rights.

I'm going to hit the green button easily and correctly. There is not one argument or one comment that intellectually contradicts how silly it would

be to deprive someone the right to vote by absentee ballot in the first global pandemic in 100 years in this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Ritter. Will you remark further? Remark further on the Bill as amended? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House? Will the members please take your seats. The machine will be opened.

[Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked. Again, as we've done before, due to how everything

is going, I will call on people that are in the Chambers now that don't have the ability to vote. So, we'll start with Representative Cook.

REP. COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening again. I would like to cast my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you. You vote in the affirmative. Representative Scanlon of the 98th district.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I wish to cast my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please note that. Representative McGee of the 5th district.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to cast my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. His vote will be cast in the affirmative. Representative D'Agostino.

REP. D'AGOSTINO (91ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please record my vote enthusiastically in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Exum from the 19th.

REP. EXUM (19TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to vote my -- I would like to vote in the affirmative. I'm very enthusiastic about doing that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

[Laughing] Representative Exum in the -- in the affirmative. And the Speaker on the dais would -- would like to be noted in the affirmative as well. Would the Clerk please take a tally? Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

E-CERT House Bill 6002 as amended by House "A" and "D".

Total Number Voting	145
Necessary for Passage	73

Those Voting Yea	144
Those Voting Nay	2
Absent not Voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. The Bill as amended is passed.
[Gavel] The Chamber will stand at ease. The Chamber come back to order. Will the Clerk please call Emergency Certified House Bill No. 6003?

CLERK:

Emergency Certification Bill No. 6003, AN ACT CONCERNING DIABETES AND HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS, introduced by Representative Aresimowicz, Senator Looney, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I move passage of the Emergency Certified Bill 6003.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question is on passage of the Bill. Will you remark?

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good evening everybody. We're here tonight talking about insulin because the costs of it is skyrocketing. The costs of the four most commonly prescribed insulins in this state, in this country, have tripled in the last 10 years. Spending by the patients that have Type-1 diabetes on insulin has doubled between 2012 and 2016, increasing from \$2,900 dollars to \$5,700 dollars in just the course of four years.

And yet, anyone who knows anything about insulin, just scratches their head and asks themselves why that is. Because they know the history of insulin, which is that in 1923 the guy who discovered it, decided to sell the patent for it for \$1 dollar because he wanted it to remain accessible.

And yet, 100 years later, we are living in a world in which it costs the top three makers of this drug just \$6 dollars on average to create a vile of this drug, and yet they sell it in this state today

for anywhere between \$300 and \$450 dollars. And to me, Mr. Speaker, that raises some red flags.

And when you look further at what's been happening with the cost of insulin, you start to see some concerning patterns. You start to see that drugs that are made by these three companies are surprisingly similarly priced. It's in -- in fact known as something called shadow pricing in which, in normal industries, you see competition creating competition, lower prices. In the case of the three makers of insulin, you do not see that. And I just want to give a few examples here, Mr. Speaker.

Sanofi's long-acting insulin is called Lantus. It first hit the US market in 2001. It costs \$34.80. By 2014, it was \$248.51. That's a 600 percent increase.

Novo Nordisk's long-acting insulin called Levemir, hit the market at \$66.96 in 2006 and by 2016 it was \$269 dollars. Those are long-acting -- long-acting insulins. But the same thing is happening with the short-acting insulin.

Lilly, a company that's based here in the United States, Humalog costs \$20.82 in 1996. I'm demasking so you can hear me. Eli Lilly, they have a product called Humalog. It's a very popular drug. It debuted in 1996 for \$20.82. And today, it goes for \$255.40, which is an increase of 1,200 percent over the course of 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, letting this continue, is just negligence, as far as I'm concerned. And we cannot rely on these companies to regulate themselves and their prices. And so, what we're here to do today is to say to the people of Connecticut, we know you are hurting, we know that you're looking for relief. And hopefully, tonight, if my colleagues in this Chamber agree, we will start to give them that relief that they deserve.

One in four people, according to a recent study, that are Type-1 diabetic that literally need to take insulin to survive every day, are now saying they have to ration this because they can't afford it.

We had a young man named Campbell from Ridgefield who testified in our public hearing two days ago that he spends more money every year on his insulin than it does to go to West Conn in Danbury.

We had a grandmother named Bunny who said that she started taking one of her insulins in 1995. It cost her \$29 dollars. The exact same insulin that has taken every day of her life since 1995, now costs her \$550 dollars.

The system is broken. We need to fix it. And we hope to do that tonight in three keyways.

First, we want to cap the cost of insulin per month at \$25 dollars. That would make us the lowest cap in the United States of America of the eight states that have passed it previously. We want to go beyond that and cap the cost of supplies and the devices that go along with insulin at \$100 dollars a month. We'd be the first state in the nation to do that.

Second, we want to set up an emergency insulin program. And we're doing this in the name of a

young man named Kevin Houdeshell, who was a 36-year-old guy who lived in Ohio and he had a big problem. He had an expired prescription over the New Year's Eve holiday. Wasn't able to get ahold of his doctor. Went to a pharmacy, couldn't get insulin, and died a couple of days later of diabetic ketoacidosis. His father, Danny, testified at our public hearing, talked about his son, Kevin, and talked about why he has used the tragic death of his son to travel this country and pass a law known as Kevin's Law.

And if we, Mr. Speaker, pass this Provision and this Bill tonight, we will become the 20th state in the United States that passed a law to make sure that nobody ever has to suffer the same indignity that Kevin did by making sure that if you have less than seven days' worth of supply in this state, you can walk into any pharmacy in Connecticut and the pharmacist can make sure that you do have less than that, that you're in serious danger, and they can prescribe you a 30-day supply of this drug to make

sure that you can stay alive until you can correct whatever problem was causing you to not be able to fill your normal prescription.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, what this Bill does is to set up a long-term strategy for us to be able to tell our constituents who are uninsured or underinsured or just hurting because of the costs of this, that we will have a program for them that will allow them to get access to affordable insulin.

And the way that we do that is by asking the DSS Commissioner over the course of the next year and a half in consultation with a group of experts to come up with a game plan starting in 2022 to allow people who meet certain criteria, again of being uninsured or underinsured, the working poor, the people who can't qualify for Medicaid but they're just scrapping by to pay their bills week by week. The hard working people that all of us represent and talk to all the time. That they can access affordable insulin through a program that's a federal program, called the 3040B program at a

federally qualified community health center.

If we do all of these three things, Mr. Speaker, we will not solve the problem that I hear about all the time from constituents and I'm sure you do too about the fact that these drug prices are out of control. But I believe that we will have passed the toughest law in the nation and the best law in the nation when it comes to insuring access to affordability for this lifesaving drug that if you do not take it, you literally die.

And I think if we can do that tonight, Mr. Speaker, and the Senate does it next week, and the Governor signs it, I think that all of us will know at least one person, perhaps two or three, that will be breathing a huge sigh of relief because we finally acted to get this under control. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move passage.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further? Representative Pavalock-D'Amato. No? Oh, Representative -- Representative [inaudible]. Chamber will come back

to order. [Laughing] Representative Pavalock-D'Amato. I'm sorry. Please proceed.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Sorry about that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Bill gives us an opportunity to help thousands of individuals who have a condition, through no fault of their own, as a result of the unaffordability of the Affordable Care Act. People are spending hundreds of dollars a month on medication in addition to the cost of supplies to administer the drug, in addition to the cost of their healthcare plan. Now, today I know -- I have no doubt that some people will talk in opposition to this Bill. And I've heard the argument that this Bill limits the free market. But currently there are three companies who produce the world's supply of insulin; three who have a monopoly on the market, as far as I'm concerned.

We've been waiting for years for other companies to produce alternatives. But thanks to actions like Pay-to-Play, where companies are paid

not to release their product, we are still waiting. This Bill doesn't stop another company from producing a less expensive alternative. But Mr. Speaker, I do have a few questions for the proponent of the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon, please prepare yourself. Please proceed, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. The first section is the working group as you briefly described. It sets up a working group for the purpose of finding low -- lower cost options for diabetes through the federally qualified health centers, through Section 34-B. And that's a Public Health Service Act 42 USC 256 B. Can you explain briefly the 340-B as it relates to this Bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, the 340-B Program was passed in Congress in 1992 because we were having a similar problem then as we are now. Drugs prices were just as unaffordable. They've gotten worse, but they were still unaffordable at that point. And so, Congress decided to pass this law that basically created a program in which individuals could access cheap prescription drugs at either pharmacies inside of federally qualified health centers or in hospitals. Those exist today. Most hospitals in our state have a pharmacy within them. And that is a 340-B pharmacy that can dispense cheaper drugs.

We heard in the public hearing today or a -- a couple of days ago as you may, you know, as folks may recall, that the average price of some of these insulins is just a few dollars per vial compared to hundreds of dollars per vial on the private insurance market. And so, what this taskforce hopes to do is to figure out a way that we can expand access to that program, the 340-B program, in a

responsible way that allows these people who are hurting to access the drugs that they need to survive through a 340-B pharmacy program. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I think you did explain what the working group will do but just to clarify, will the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services be required to accept the recommendations of the working group? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. If the Commissioner does not like the outcome of the working group -- excuse me, there are two situations in which this does not automatically happen. The first of which is the working group says, don't do this. The second of which, is the Commissioner evaluates the

working group's report that is due to us next year, and he or she says, I think there's a better way to do this, and that better way would be to leverage a Medicaid 11-15 waiver that would be required to be approved by the federal government. That's a second possibility for us to do this. And those are the two triggers, Mr. Speaker, that prevent this from automatically happening.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And -- and so, will the Commissioner be required to act either way? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

If the Commissioner accepts the recommendation in the affirmative of the working group that this is a good idea, and he or she does not think that the Medicaid idea is better, the Commissioner may proceed. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And is this likely to have a fiscal note?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

There is a fiscal note on the Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And at this time, do we know what that -- can you estimate what that fiscal note will be or shall I say, have you been given any numbers as to what that fiscal note could be? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Only preliminary numbers from OFA. Through you, Mr. --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Is that --

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

-- Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Go -- go -- proceed, sir.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And can I have that number? Through you.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

[Laughing] Through you, Mr. Speaker, the fiscal note for FY-21 is \$12,000 dollars for the Department of Consumer Protection, up to \$50,000 dollars also for the Department of Consumer Protection, and none to the Department of Social Services in FY-21. In FY-22, it's up to \$15,000 dollars for DCP and \$100,000 dollars for the Department of Social Services. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And -- and I apologize, Mr. Speaker. That I assume would be the fiscal note for the working group. And what I was working for was the fiscal note for the findings or from the -- the options for the Commissioner of Department of Social Services?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have an estimate on that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. Will the decision of the Commissioner be voted upon by the Insurance Committee? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

They will review the Commissioner's report and the working group's report, but they will not have

to vote affirmatively or negatively before this was to take effect. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And will the legislature vote on the findings that are brought forward from the working group before it's implemented? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, no they will not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We can move to the next section. I'm going to move to actually Section 3, which is the emergency supply of insulin. Can you summarize what this section seeks to do? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. This is the Kevin's Law provision of the Bill and the goal of this is to set up an emergency program for individuals for whatever reason, for a myriad of reasons they run into some sort of problem when it comes to getting their insulin. It could be that their doctor's office isn't open, which was the case with Mr. Houdeshell in Ohio. It could be that they had an expired prescription and they go to the same pharmacy every month, but there's something technically wrong with it and they can't get their prescription there.

The goal here is that if, in dire emergency, and dire emergency here is defined as less than seven-days' supply or in the pharmacist's judgment that the person will suffer immediate physical harm if they don't get the supply, the pharmacist can do a number of things like check the prescription drug monitoring program to make sure that they hadn't

been prescribed a same dosage in the last few days or at -- at all in the -- in the last year on emergency basis; call the person's doctor and try to figure out what's going on; call the person's pharmacist if that's not their actual pharmacy and try to figure out what's going on.

And after all of those attempts, if they cannot figure out what's going on, we are giving the pharmacist the prescriptive authority to write a 30-days' prescription for insulin so that individual can go home and figure out what's wrong and talk to their doctor on a Monday, if it's on a Saturday night and not have to worry about suffering the same indignity that Kevin Houdeshell did by dying alone in his apartment because he was unable to get insulin at a pharmacy. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And this allows up to a 30-days' supply of insulin. Is that correct? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, once per year.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And you answered my next question. Thank you.

In this -- these next couple of questions, just to establish legislative intent, will the individual's doctor be notified by the pharmacist? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

[Laughing] Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, yes they will.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And does this Bill specify how the pharmacist is to notify the physician? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

One moment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Of course.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

It does not. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And is there a requirement that the notification be received or verified? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

No, there is not. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And I'm going to move now just to a couple of questions about the cash price being charged to individuals without insurance, which is lines 339 to 344. And I understand that this definition actually

references some regulations by the Department of Social Services. Is that correct? As far as the -- sorry, the definition which is usual customary charge to the public.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Through you, Representative --

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

-- Scanlon. [Laughing]

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

[Laughing] Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is correct. That is a DSS regulation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Now, in that definition, it -- it talks about a patient group accounting. Who is the patient group accounting for the largest number of prescriptions as referenced in that paragraph?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

If the -- my good friend would --

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Through you.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

-- rephrase her question I would appreciate that. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please rephrase, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

The -- in -- under the definition of usual customary charge to the public, it says, means a charge for a particular prescription made by a provider to the patient group accounting for the largest number of prescriptions not covered by Medicaid. So, it refers to a specific group that accounts for the largest or a largest amount of people. But I am not sure by this definition who that actually is. So, if you could clarify, if you

know the answer. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the answer is that it's whatever it -- whether it's self-insured or fully insured within that -- within that particular group or grouping or sampling. But I do not know for sure. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. And line 342, it then excludes any charges made to third party payers. And I was wondering if you could give an example as to what those charges to third party payers are or an example of one through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not familiar

with what those are.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And the last line references special discounts offered to individuals, including but limited, to senior -- senior citizen -- senior citizens. So, is it your understanding that the amount being charged to the individual without insurance would be an amount, by this industry standard, that excludes sometimes certain coupons or discounts given to other individuals? Through you.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And could this price vary from pharmacy to pharmacy? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it could.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And will there be oversight or any tracking of what people are being charged throughout the state? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, there will not.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

I would now like to move to the Section 13, which is, establishes -- which establishes the caps

for co-pays. And I don't think -- don't know if you went over the -- the three various caps and what those numbers are and briefly what they cover. So, if you could just go over that. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. There is three kinds of caps in the Bill. The first one is \$25 dollars a month for insulin. The second one is \$25 dollars a month for non-insulin drugs, which people who have Type-1 diabetes often take in addition to insulin. And the third is a \$100 dollar cap on supplies and devices. Those are the things that you think of like needles and monitors that people need in tandem to the lifesaving drug that they're already taking in order to be able to have that work in their body. And those are the three caps. Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. Thank you. Did the State's health Insurance Exchange have any concerns about this Bill? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. They had concerns about the date of implementation. Which is why we move the date from January 1st of 2021 to January 1st of 2022. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you. And the ACA holds insurers to strict standards. Are we sure it won't impact the ability of consumers to access any federal subsidies? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

I do not believe it will. Through you, Mr.

Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

And -- and do we know what the fiscal note is for states and municipalities? Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

State. Sorry.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. There is none for municipalities.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, on my way to the chamber today I was stopped by my neighbor. He flagged me down as I was driving and told me how his daughter rations her insulin. This is a grown man veteran and he was reduced to tears right in front

of me today.

And I don't think all of us realize just how many people this effects. You know, a lot of times we don't know it, we don't see it. But I am always amazed how many people have come forward and have talked to me about just how important this Bill is and literally how it will save their life. I know going forward, we do have a couple of amendments, so I will wait any final remarks until after the amendments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.
Will you remark further? Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Clerk is in possession of Amendment LCO 3784. I ask that I be granted leave of the Chamber to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3784 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A".

CLERK:

LCO No. 3784 designated House Amendment Schedule "A", and offered by Representative Scanlon and Senator Lesser.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize their Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Scanlon, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Amendment is technical in nature. It simply strikes the word provider from the section of the Bill that allows the pharmacist to charge a rate to those who aren't insured. And the reason for that is because that person is not a provider. They're not paying the rate based on a provider because they are not a provider, they are a pharmacist. And I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption on

House Amendment Schedule "A". Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you -- thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have read the Amendment and have no concerns. And I urge my colleagues to support it. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further on the Amendment? Now, we have many names on the board. I -- I -- they were on here before as the -- the underlying Bill. So, if someone would like to speak on the Amendment, please push your button now. If you are in the LOB, I encourage anyone that would like to speak to please start making their way over on the underlying Bill.

So, again, pardon me, I will ask if there are any remarks on the Amendment before us. If there are no more remarks on the Amendment before us, it -- it will not be a voice call. I will call for a roll call at this time. I would ask would the

members please be seated, come to the well of the house, and the machine will be opened. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Your machines are open for voting. The House of Representatives is -- is voting by roll. Your machines are open for voting.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast? If the members have voted, the machine will be locked. At this time now, just raise your hand and I will call on people that need to vote here. Representative Labriola.

REP. LABRIOLA (131ST):

Mr. Speaker, could my vote be cast in the affirmative?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. And Representative Labriola in the affirmative. Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cast my vote in the affirmative also.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

I cast my vote in the affirmative as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

You're quite welcome. Representative Dathan.

REP. DATAHN (142ND):

Speaker, I wanted to also vote -- put my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cook.

REP. COOK (65TH):

I cast -- I cast my vote in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Cook in the affirmative. Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Mr. -- Mr. Speaker, I cast my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. It shall be noted. And last but not least, on the Dais, I would like my vote cast in the affirmative. Thank you. And the Clerk will take a tally, please. Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

CLERK:

House Amendment "A".

Total Number Voting	145
Necessary for Adoption	73
Those Voting Yea	145
Those Voting Nay	0
Absent not Voting	6

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Amendment is adopted. [Gavel] Will you remark further on as the Bill as amended?

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Mr. -- sorry -- Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment, LCO No. 3805. I ask that you call it and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO 3805, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "B"?

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "B" LCO No. 3805, offered by Representative Pavalock-D'Amato and Representative Scanlon, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the Amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Mr. Speaker, this Amendment actually clarifies the role of the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health that is from the other Bill, Telehealth, that we voted on. Mr. Speaker, I move

adoption of the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption on House Amendment Schedule "B". Will you remark further on the Amendment? Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Amendment is friendly and I do support it. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Please rephrase that. I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

The Amendment is friendly, Mr. Speaker, and I support it. Through you --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you --

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

-- Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Pavalock-

D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Amendment clarifies a portion of the underlying Telehealth Bill to establish that the Department of Public Health Commissioner has the ability to modify, wave, or suspend regularity requirements adopted by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health under the chapters listed in the Amendment for the sole purpose of providing residents of Connecticut with telehealth services from out-of-state practitioners. Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the Amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

I think we've done that. Is there anyone that would --

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Sorry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

-- like to speak? Now, I do have some names on the board. If there's anyone that would like to

speaking on this Amendment, on the Schedule "B", please
-- Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to, I guess clarify the intent in the Amendment, when the Telehealth Bill was passed, there was some discussion over allowing for the Commissioner to extend a particular executive order that allows for Connecticut residents to receive telehealth services from out-of-state licensed healthcare workers.

And so, what this Amendment is doing is, to clarify the fact that the powers of the Commissioner modify or change any statutes or regulations solely pertain to providing services via telehealth to Connecticut residents from out-of-state doctors. So, this amendment would be clarifying that the -- that the extension to March 15th is limited to that power. And I just want to confirm that. Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Pavalock-D'Amato.

REP. PAVALOCK-D'AMATO (77TH):

Yes, that is correct. Yes, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, madam.

REP. CANDELORA (86TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

My pleasure, Representative Candelora. So, I do have some names on the board. I -- thinking they are for the underlying Bill. If you would like to speak and you're on the board, raise your hand and I'll call on you. Anyone else, if you would like to speak on this Amendment, please push your button now. All right.

Will you remark further on the Amendment before us? If not, will staff and guests, please come to the well of the House. Will the members please take your seats. And the machine will be opened.

[Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked. All right. At this time, if you have -- we'll go through this again -- we're voting on the Amendment. Representative Cook.

REP. COOK (65TH):

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to be voted in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Cook in the affirmative.
Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Mr. Speaker, I ask to be voted in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon in the affirmative.

Thank you. Representative Gibson.

REP. GIBSON (15TH):

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to be represented in the affirmative, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Gibson in the affirmative.

Thank you, sir. Representative Delnicki.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I vote in the affirmative also.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you. Representative Delnicki in the affirmative. Representative Dathan.

REP. DATAHN (142ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also will be in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dathan in the affirmative.

Representative Arora of the famous 151st. Wait.

Wait. Wait. We'll try that -- hold on, we'll get

you. We -- I don't think they heard you,
Representative. Try it again.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Mr. Speaker, I would like to vote in the
affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

That's better. Thank you, sir. Representative
-- Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also be shown
in the affirmative. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Fishbein in the affirmative.
Have I missed anyone? Just myself. The Speaker
would like to be notified -- noticed as in the
affirmative. Thank you, sir. And the Clerk will
now take a tally. Will the Clerk please announce
the tally?

CLERK:

House Amendment "B", Schedule "B".

Total Number Voting

144

Necessary for Adoption	73
Those Voting Yea	144
Those Voting Nay	0
Absent not Voting	7

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Amendment passes. [Gavel] Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Representative Cheeseman of the 37th District. You have the floor, madam.

REP. CHEESEMAN (37TH):

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a feeling that anyone who serves on the Real Estate and Insurance Committee is going to think this is Groundhog Day because they have heard me speak on this Bill at least twice already. I testified at the original public hearing. I participated in the listening session. I was one of the early co-sponsors because I am passionate about this.

I know only too well the terrible toll uncontrolled diabetes takes on a person and a

family, because I watched my late husband suffer the complications. He was so afraid when he served in the military of losing his sight or losing a limb. And yet, he said it was the ultimate irony that he developed a disease where those are two of the most common complications. And before he died, he was losing his sight. Thank God he never lost a limb. But he suffered from terrible diabetic neuropathy which is like walking on knives. He was in end-stage renal disease.

I heard Representative Currey talk about being in end-stage renal disease. That is one of the most common complications of diabetes. He,, too was on the transplant list at Hartford Hospital. They were terrific. Unfortunately, he died before he could receive a kidney.

So, this disease takes a terrible toll and the way you stop these complications, the way you prevent the blindness and the amputations and the kidney failure, is by having that insulin that preserves your kidneys and your eyes and your limbs

and stops the heart disease.

So, the idea that this drug, this -- sorry, not a drug, this hormone that was discovered in terms of being able to treat diabetes almost 100 years ago, and Fredrick Banting who discovered it, felt this should be available to everyone. That we have seen the cost skyrocket for an effect, the same drug that families have to watch, as my good friend, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato, see family members ration their use of this drug, when it doesn't have to happen.

I've heard conversations about well if we do this, insurance companies will just pass the cost on to other people. We do this every time we mandate that something be covered. When we mandate that an infant receives a -- some sort of diagnostic procedure that will prevent terrible complications down the road, like PKU, we accept that preserving the health and welfare of other people in our society may incrementally affect others in terms of cost. But we don't fail to do it.

And the savings we will have in terms of human suffering, in terms of increased life -- my husband had numerous laser treatments for his eyes at \$500 dollars a pop. He had two vitrectomies at \$15,000 dollars a pop. You could go on and on about the cost of treating these complications and the -- that cost will dwarf the amount that we'll have to spend to cover the cost of insulin for these people. So, this is an investment in saving life, in preserving health, and at the end of the day, and saving money for the state and the national government.

So, I am in strong support of this Bill. I want to thank the leadership of the Committee. I want to thank the leadership on both sides of the aisle. I want to thank the Governor for calling this in special session, because until you've experienced this, until you've seen someone suffer the complications and lose everything that he loved in life, then I don't think you can understand this. And I urge everyone in this Chamber to support this Bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, Representative Cheeseman. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? My neighbor from the 27th district, Representative Turco.

REP. TURCO (27TH):

Mr. Speaker -- Mr. Speaker, it's very good to see you on the Dais. I rise in strong support of this legislation. We've heard so many heartbreaking stories today from my colleagues about how people have lost their lives or have gotten, you know, really sick because they have not had access to affordable insulin and medications to manage diabetes. And my heart goes out to my colleagues and their families who have suffered from not being able to have access to this affordable, vital medication.

And I became a legislator because I wanted to help people. I wanted to help my community of Newington and our state become a better place. And when I was going around campaigning originally two years ago to be elected for the first time here

as -- as state representative for Newington, I couldn't believe the amount of families that I heard that were struggling because of this.

The astronomical cost, having deductibles in the thousands, and then having to pay hundreds, if not thousands, every month in cost sharing, in co-pays trying to meet that deductible for insulin, which as we've heard here today, its cost so little to be manufactured but is so expensive to actually purchase. The amount of price gouging that's gone on with insulin is -- is -- is just inexcusable.

So, medication, supplies for diabetics that they need, test strips and syringes and things like that, it's just heartbreaking the stories that I heard. And I went to Representative Sean Scanlon and Senator Matt Lesser, and I said, I'm a member of the Insurance Committee and I said we really need to do something about this, can you help?

And I was very happy to hear that they both said, oh, we're on it. We are working on it. We've got legislation that we are going to be introducing

into the Insurance Committee, and get ready for it, because it is going to be one of the top priorities this year.

And I had a constituent of mine, Teresa Sanderson [phonetic], who came and she testified in the Insurance Committee on behalf of her daughter, Leah, who is a diabetic and is suffering because of the high cost of this medication and the possibility of having to ration. And I've heard from others that have rationed.

And I was so happy to hear that this was going to be the top priority. And then, when the regular session, ended I told those constituents, I'm really sorry, we had the COVID-19 crisis hit, we're going to have to potentially take this up next year.

And I am so grateful to my state Senator Matt Lesser, Governor Ned Lamont, Representative Sean Scanlon, all of the advocates for Insulin For All, and my good friend, John Orofino, and others that pushed and said this cannot wait until the 20/21 session. There are diabetics that are suffering and

dying now. Here's an opportunity where you can pass legislation, pushing the green button, and actually save lives.

And -- and that's all something we want to be able to do as legislators, help our constituents. And if we can vote on something that actually saves lives, that is an amazing thing to be able to do.

So, I understand this Bill has limitations. It's only going to really help those on insurance plans that are covered by state policy and -- and not federally covered but there's other things in this Bill that are important, too, like the emergency provision of insulin, which I think we'll be able to help everyone.

And I'm hoping that this encourages other states to follow along. Perhaps create a national movement and we have legislation in Congress that will cover both federal and state policies.

And again, I'd just like to thank everybody for working on this, making sure it happened during the Special Session. Again, my -- I'd like to urge my

colleagues to support this, vote for it today.

Let's pass it. And for my constituent, Leah and all the constituents suffering through this, I'll be voting today. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Turco. Will you remark further? From the 87th District, Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Good evening, Mr. Speaker. Good to see you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Good evening, sir.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

I -- I support this Bill. I -- like I think, most of us here, I've co-sponsored this Bill. I spoke to a Ranking Member and our -- the Chair of Insurance when we were in session. But I do have a couple of questions because I think it's such an urgent Bill. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the good Chair of Insurance.

I'm reading through the Bill and it's --

there's a working group and a taskforce. When, to the person that needs insulin, and we all know people that need insulin, when could they actually take advantage of this legislation? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The co-pay caps go into effect on January 1st of 2022. And the Insulin Affordability Program, that somebody can use through the 340-B Program, that would also take effect no later than January 1st of 2022. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I read that. That's how I read it. I'm disappointed, honestly, because it should be sooner than that. This is a dire situation. And I don't know why we're waiting a

year and a half. And not just -- through you, Mr. Speaker, I -- I think we should do it much sooner than that. We've all been sympathetic to certain things. And this is something that I think is very important. And if it's that -- and it is that dire of a need.

I have a friend on dialysis, he goes three times a week. Another family member that -- that takes insulin. I just don't see why it's going to take so long. So, that's -- that's my pitch. And I want to see if the good Chair has an answer for me.
DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Yaccarino.
Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I would love this Bill to take effect tonight. And the people of Connecticut need this Bill to take effect tonight. But we have to be cognizant of the fact that, in Connecticut, and in all states in the country, carriers have to file their rates for review.

They've already done all of the actuarial work that goes into calculating what those premiums are. And those take effect in 100 days.

And so, we had hoped to pass this Bill during the regular session, but obviously, the world had other plans for us. And so, we're here tonight, on July 22nd, trying to pass this instead of perhaps in June, when they would have had an extra month and a half to adjust those actuarial associations and calculations and come up with a way that they can spread this out within their premiums and make this work on their end. And because we weren't able to pass this earlier, we have to wait until 2022, because plans are already in motion for the 2021 plan year. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Yaccarino.

REP. YACCARINO (87TH):

Thank you for that answer and I -- I understand it. I just wish we could have -- obviously, we all wish we could do it sooner, and hopefully we can do

something about it. That's all I have to say. I do support it. I think we all support this Bill. It's very important for -- for lives and -- and -- and money. But at the end of the day, it's about peoples' health and life and wellbeing. So, thank you all. Good night.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Yaccarino. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? From the 142nd District, Representative Dathan.

REP. DATHAN (142ND):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I stand in strong support for this Bill. As Vice-Chair of Insurance and Real Estate, this is an initiative. I assisted my Chair -- Chairman over here, Representative Scanlon and Senator Lessor with. And I'm so pleased to see it hopefully pass in a bipartisan basis, as we've seen so much bipartisan support in our committee.

One of the things that Coronavirus has shared with us over the last few months is we've seen how

many people with diabetes are at further risk for developing strong complications as a result of having COVID-19. So, we can really see that this Bill is an important step to make sure that people are getting their medications, people are taking their insulin, and they can do that affordably, and they can help control any complications that they would have.

Like my good friend, Representative Turco, I knocked on a lot of doors during 2018 and last summer. And one of the things that I learned at these doors, that many of my constituents, even in, you know, affluent towns like New Canon and in Norwalk, were many people are rationing their medications, including insulin, and not taking them as their doctor prescribed. Not taking these as their doctor prescribed can lead to greater complications and, in some cases, death. And that's one of the things that we heard about in our committee this year, in our listening session last week, as well as in committee this year.

So, this is a -- a huge initiative. And I, too, like my friend over in the 87th, that wish this could take effect sooner. But better late than never. And I'm in strong support. And I ask all of my colleagues to please support this Bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? From the 151st, Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am strong -- a strong supporter of this Bill and the idea behind it. Healthcare costs are too high in our state. Insurance premiums are too high and they are unaffordable. Deductibles are too high. Those who are not insured, it's a catastrophe.

I support any steps our legislative body here can take to curtail and reduce healthcare costs. And I'm in favor of legislation which tackles this problem for insulin products, as well as other drugs. This is a real problem and it requires real

solutions.

Now, the question I ask is, who is being most hurt at this point? It is the uninsured. For them, it's thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars, a thousand dollars a month. If you are talking about the latest insulin, because insulin also comes in a number of grades. It comes in thousand dollars a month.

Yeah, they may get it from Canada or do things, but it's still very expensive. This Bill hardly does anything. It's lip sympathy for them by referring it to committee and providing a cost plus, and that cost is still going to be more than what you can get in Canada, by the way. Who does it hurt the most, I ask? High deductible? Those with high deductible plans? It hurts them really bad. What do we do here in this Bill? Really, not too much. High deductibles, oh, well, you know, these people have high deductible, leave them alone. No. We need to address them as well because they are -- they're the hurt the most, the second most.

So, I find doing a Bill which does not address something comprehensively when we have the opportunity as in some sense for me an advocacy of my responsibility of our responsibility. That's why our rights to speak, why don't we address it for them in a more tangible banner rather than just punted forward to a taskforce?

Finally, who are we going to help here? Those who are in their regular insurance programs, they have good insurance. But even the good insurance is not good enough. That's the state in our -- in -- in -- in -- in our land of opportunity. The good insurance is good -- not good enough that we have to come up with a Bill.

But my question there is, how much does it help them and from when? And the answer is January '22. Again, unacceptable. If it is January '22, why can't we wait until March of next year or early next session to really put something comprehensive.

Now, the problem here which we are saying is, who pays for this Bill? That's the question to ask.

And may I ask the question from the proponent of this Bill, who do you think -- we do believe this is going to help some people.

I -- I am -- I'm not agreeable that we -- it's helping all the people who really need the help. The most -- those who need the most help are not being helped. But let me ask the question, who is paying for whatever help is being provided to those who are going to be helped? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the gentleman to perhaps point to specific sections of the Bill as to which sections he's asking, because it's different answers for different sections of the Bill. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question to the proponent of the Bill is, who does the restriction on co-pays, who ends up paying for it finally?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. As with any kind of insurance or form of insurance, the risk is spread out amongst all the population. And I would add that we heard testimony at the public hearing the other day about the astronomical costs that everybody pays when someone goes into ketoacidosis, when they don't manage their diabetes properly and have to wind up in the hospital or in a community health center, or in any number of places that people who have trouble affording these drugs wind up, and then all of us, as people who have insurance, pay for those costs.

And so, as with every Bill that we do, the risks and the costs is spread out among all of the

insurance in a specific policy or plan. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you, Mr. Committee Chair. So, the answer here is that it's going to spread out and paid by others in our community. And I just heard you say earlier, Mr. -- Mr. Chair say earlier that the firms that tri-oligopoly -- the three firms which dominate this market are really charging \$400 dollars, \$500 dollars for something where they make for \$6 dollars? That's what I heard -- heard you say?

So, really what we're saying is we're not going to really address that, why they're untouchable? We can't touch them? We can't even ask them, hey, listen, can you really make it more affordable? No we can't. Why can't we? Because we just don't elect to. We want to just spread it on others within the community.

So, the real problem lies is that because of

the structure of the market, they are charging too much, and everybody recognizes that. And we are going to pass a Bill which is going to give them a pass. Let that -- that be on the record. That the writers of this Bill are giving the guys -- or giving the firms which are charging \$400 dollars, you said, \$400, dollars, \$500 dollars for something which is \$6 dollars for uninsured, and people who can't afford they're going to give them a pass. And I do not agree with that. I think it should be paid for by those who are making profits, which are not commensurate with the risks and the efforts they are taking.

The second thing I would like to ask is, what is the cost to the state? Through you, Mr. Speaker, can I ask the proponents of the Bill what is the costs to our state?

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I find the idea that

this Bill does nothing to go after the folks that raise the prices of these drugs by astronomical prices as not happening in here. I'm confused by that.

And so, I think that I just would like to take a moment to explain what the Bill does, which is, for the first time in any state in this country, the taskforce is to study an idea that we say is destined to happen unless they deem otherwise. And if that doesn't happen, another thing happens in this Bill and there's a trigger. That's the first state in the nation to do that. And by doing so, the uninsured people of the state, the uninsured -- underinsured people of the state, and anybody who can't qualify for HUSKY or is not on Tricare or can't afford the drugs that they can get, would be able to access cheap drugs, that for some people costs \$5 dollars or \$6 dollars, the same cost it costs to make it through the program.

So, I just want to make sure that people are aware of what is actually in this Bill. As for the

costs to the state, it was \$100,000 dollars for the DSS Commissioner to oversee this work and to study this program. And \$15,000 dollars from DCP to enforce the Bill. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, what you're saying is that the increase in price of insurance as a result of this, as we all know that this is going to be resulting in increased insurance prices. There is no -- there is no way the producer -- we -- we are putting no pressure. We are putting no constraint. We are putting no ask of the producer of the drug who's making a lot of money, and who has a structure of the market where there are only two or three players.

We're going to say, well, you can make your \$10 dollars or \$100 billion dollars, whatever you make, that's fine. What we're going to do, is we're going

to take some more out of the hard paying people of Connecticut. Because you know what, you're going to be very nice because it's your fellow citizens and we should. We should.

But nevertheless, there is another possibility here. And by the way, this will lead to increased insurance. We all agree. And the state of Connecticut and the municipalities of Connecticut pay insurance for a very large number of people. As a matter of fact, the healthcare costs for our state are one of the most difficult -- difficult issues. And as a result of this particular issue or this particular addition, I would safely assume that it's going to be one or two percent. So, I don't know, we pay a few hundred million dollars, you can add those two percents. It's going to be far more than \$100,000 dollars. I think it's going to run into millions.

And that -- why? Because we are not ready to ask the right hard questions. Now, let me also ask another question, which is, are there other ways for

us to address this problem other than spreading this cost amongst other hard paying citizens? Can I ask the proponent --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Excuse me, what I was --

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Arora, what I would prefer is that you stick to the specifics of this Bill. I -- I think that would be more appropriate.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Okay. Let me -- let me ask this question. There are several other ways to reduce costs. The easiest amongst them is that we can allow importation from Canada. I think it gets a very visceral response from the industry, I understand that. But it has the price. One has the price for everyone. And half is maybe a -- a generous thing it sometime -- you know, for some categories it will be even more. But my problem with this is that this

is not being included in this Bill again.

So, I would like to conclude here by saying that I am going to support this Bill because it does something. But that something, let it be known and be on the record, is extremely little and insufficient because -- because -- and it's delayed. January '22, we have the time between now and March to have a much more robust Bill which will actually take those who are going to make billions of dollars responsible. But today, it's a sad day that we're going to let them go by.

And to -- to the earlier point being made, the taskforce being set up, to look into those issues for the -- those who are underinsured or uninsured is something is what they -- what they call a tiger without teeth. It has very little teeth at this point. At this point, the real teeth in this Bill is that it will socialize the costs for nice plans and Cadillac plans over all people, all hardworking people of Connecticut, especially hard hit will be those who are under the Affordable Care Act.

Because for them, the cost may go up by a thousand dollars.

So, instead of us doing a -- a strong, robust program to negotiate concessions or to reduce costs in a way which is more effective, I think let it be known here, that we have chosen the easy route of putting it on hardworking citizens of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Will you remark further? Representative Delnicki. Boy, somebody didn't like that. It -- it took -- it took a clap of thunder and a bolt of lightning, but it's on.

REP. DELNICKI (14TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I rise to speak in support of the Bill. My -- my mom was diagnosed as a Type-2 diabetic in the '60s. And she passed on in '84 just before Christmas. And when I listen to the testimony, both when we had the testimony here at the LOB and they had the testimony again on the virtual meeting, it brought back all those bad

memories I had of the times where she went to the hospital, and that was being able to have a regular supply of insulin at that point covered by insurance that did not have a deductible. It was another time. But nonetheless, she dealt with the ravages of diabetes. And she wasn't rationing her insulin.

I can only imagine what it must be like for a family where they have a loved one that is having to ration their insulin. Because I know the troubles and the problems and the -- the holidays that were effected by her Type-2 diabetes. And I can only imagine how much more compounded it is with someone with Type-1.

This is not the end all and be all. I look at it as a step in the right direction. And I look at it that we are helping some people not to have to make that tough decision and not to have to deal with a loved one going to the hospital, having a stroke, having ketoacidosis, and succumbing.

Because these are all bad memories I wish I didn't have. And -- and I certainly don't want to

see anyone else have those kind of memories. Because watching a loved one go downhill from whether it be Type-1 or Type-2 is a tragedy in the making and something that, when those memories were rekindled, are like it just happened yesterday to me.

So, I thank the leadership, the Ranking Members for bringing this forward. And I see this as a beginning. And it's not the end all be all and -- and we've got more work to do on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Delnicki. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended?
Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we have some work left to do tonight, so I'll be brief in this. But I just want to make sure that folks understand. And I want to give people some context, because perhaps not everyone has been around for some of the

things that we've been doing, and I think it's important that we set the record straight.

Not -- a year ago, I stood up in this Chamber and led passage of a Bill to import drugs from Canada. We have passed price transparency laws to make sure that when companies egregiously raise the prices of drugs, that is a transparent process and that law took effect earlier this year, and for the first time just a few weeks ago, we finally got some of that data. No one bill is going to solve every problem.

This Bill will certainly not solve the problem of unaffordability of insulin. What it will do though, Mr. Speaker, is to set us on a path towards doing that. This Bill does not have everything that I wanted in it. There's a lot more that we plan to do in January when we come back for the full session.

But tonight, is a night, that I think all of us should be proud of, because for the first time we are taking on an issue that has been unimpeded in

terms of the amount of money that it's costing the people of this state. The price of these drugs have in some cases tripled in just 10 years. One in four of our neighbors in Connecticut is rationing their insulin because they can't afford it.

And if any of us think that by doing, even the best we can do, which tonight is these three very important things that that's somehow is not good enough, then I would ask you to ask the people who testified in our committee what they would think if we were able to lower their cost by what we're doing tonight and give them the hope that they will one day be able to afford this drug completely, and they would tell you that they would be deeply grateful for that.

And for that, I am grateful for us to finally take action tonight on a Bill that we have been working on for over two years. And I ask all my colleagues to join us in support of this Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Thank you, Representative Scanlon. Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? Will you remark further on the Bill as amended? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the house? Members please take your seats. The machine will be opened. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast? If all members have voted, the machine will be locked. Okay. We'll go through this again to get some -- get people that would like to vote in the Chambers. Representative Scanlon.

REP. SCANLON (98TH):

Mr. Speaker, I request to vote in the

affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Scanlon in the affirmative.

Representative Dathan. Dathan.

REP. DATHAN (142ND):

Oh, sorry. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to vote in
the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Dathan in the affirmative.

Thank you.

REP. DATHAN (142ND):

I thought you said --

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative --

REP. DATHAN (142ND):

-- Delnicki.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

-- Delnicki.

REP. DELNICK (14TH):

In the affirmative. In the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Delnicki in the affirmative.

Representative Arora.

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Mr. Speaker, I would like to vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

Representative Arora --

REP. ARORA (151ST):

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

-- in the affirmative. And the Speaker would like to be counted in the affirmative. I believe that's all. Will the Clerk please take a tally? Will the Clerk please call the tally?

CLERK:

House Bill 6003 as amended by House "A" and B".

Total Number Voting	146
Necessary for Passage	74
Those Voting Yea	142
Those Voting Nay	4
Absent not Voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

The Bill as amended has passed. [Gavel]
Representative Currey. For what purpose do you
rise, sir?

REP. CURREY (11TH):

Thank you, Mr. -- thank you, Mr. Speaker.
[Laughing] I move that we recess after the call of
the Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER MORIN (28TH):

If there is no objection, so ordered. [Gavel]

(On motion of Representative Currey of the 11th
District, the House recessed at 8:19 o'clock p.m.,
to reconvene at the Call of the Chair.)

(The House reconvened at 1:19 o'clock a.m.,
Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore Godfrey in the Chair.)

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

[Gavel] The House will come back to order. Mr.
Clerk, will you kindly call emergency certified bill
6004?

CLERK:

Emergency certification bill No. 6004, AN ACT
CONCERNING POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY, introduced by
Representative Aresimowicz, Senator Looney,
Representative Ritter, Senator Duff.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

The distinguished chairman of the Judiciary
Committee, Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Good morning.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I move passage of the emergency
certified bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Question is on passage. Will you explain the
bill, Representative?

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we are living in
unprecedented times and the State of Connecticut,

like many states and cities around the country, is trying to respond to this moment. The Black Lives Matter movement has swept our state as it has the nation as a whole. We are paying attention and we know that the public is demanding that we rethink about how we do policing here in the State of Connecticut. Over the last several weeks, I've had the privilege of working with my Senate co-chair, Senator Winfield, as well as the ranking members on the Committee to put together and work through various ideas and proposals that have come from a number of sources. The package before us in this bill is a robust one. It responds not just to an incident that happened in Minnesota, a murder of a man, but as I'm sure we'll hear tonight, it also is about stories and issues and concerns here in our home state. This bill gives our police, towns, and police chiefs an enhanced opportunity to work collaboratively with their unions, with us as a legislature and with their citizens to address the issues of police accountability and transparency.

We create for the first time in the state's history an Office of the Inspector General who would provide an independent prosecutorial authority to investigate and where necessary, prosecute excess use of force cases. We provide a process by which an officer could be decertified for abusing his authority or engaging in conduct unbecoming of his officer. We provide more training, more mental health screenings, and mandatory body cameras. We address police tactics and allow municipalities to create citizen review boards to flush out and vet issues within their own police departments.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is not anti-cop. We understand that change is hard, but oftentimes, change is also necessary. We've heard the concerns of the public and of law enforcement over the past few weeks and have tried to address those concerns in as many ways as we can. We will hear tonight quite a bit about the issue of qualified immunity, a federal doctrine enshrined in the law over the last few decades related to civil

rights claims. We understood and heard the concerns and have tried to strike the right balance on that issue in the current language before us. We heard the concern that the initial draft of this bill seemed like the mental health assessments called for were too punitive. We've worked to rectify that and make sure that officers who need behavioral health treatment can get it. We've worked to clarify the use of force, deadly use of force standard in the State of Connecticut and bring our state more in line with what the federal standard is, and we've pushed out the effective date of that section until April to allow law enforcement the time they need to begin to understand and appreciate the changes encompassed in that section of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the gravity of this moment we're in and the debate that is likely to ensue on this very important issue and topic. Again, I thank all of those who have come forward and weighed in on this process, who have suggested language changes or provided significant written

testimony and specific edits to the Committee. With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. The distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good morning.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Good morning.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Mr. Speaker, it's not lost that it's 1:20 in the morning. Certainly it's an hour in which a very important proposal before us should certainly have the decency of being brought out much sooner, but with that said, just as my good colleague indicated, this is a very important issue and one that needs to certainly be addressed. With that said, Mr. Speaker, I stand here with many others acknowledging and knowing that some of the most horrific events have taken place and as the good Chairman indicated,

a murder that we all witnessed on videotape, that has brought national attention to incidents where some individuals who at that time were called law enforcement individuals, did the unspeakable. And I say that they called themselves at that time law enforcement individuals because that's not the law enforcement that we know and that we honor. That was a murder that we witnessed. Now we're certainly not blind that at times, whether in the law enforcement or in other professions, there are always individuals that may make the mass look bad. We have a duty, a responsibility to self-reflect. The nation has asked for that. The residents of the State of Connecticut have asked for that. We don't take that duty or responsibility lightly. I'm proud to say that in a bipartisan manner, we took that responsibility, we met, we discussed, and unfortunately, there was a time where then we did have to part ways and we were not able to reach an agreement even though we had made all attempts to do so, engaged leadership and certainly I want to thank

also the Governor's office for making themselves available and also providing suggested language. But again, despite all good efforts, we have not reached a bipartisan proposal. We had a very robust listening session on this topic, but unfortunately, it was not the typical process that we expect from our democracy, which is a public hearing at which every individual in the public that wants to be heard would have the opportunity to be heard. That was impossible. Certainly we live within the restrictions we face and the virus had something to do with that. We acknowledge that. So we made a good effort to have that public hearing. We also received hundreds of testimonies and made the best efforts to go through that testimony and I think it's important that those individuals who took the time to participate in the listening session and submit that testimony, that we would have taken the time, especially those with the profession and experience and the departments that we directly impact and/or create in the proposal that's before

us, and that we incorporate whenever possible to make sure that the legislation that we're moving forward is the best we can possibly do. As much as making sure that there are no unintended consequences or maybe even importantly, that people actually understand what we're about to vote on. There's been many reiterations of the proposal. Not everyone has had adequate time to know exactly what was gonna be in there and certainly that's part of the system. It happens often. This is not the first that time that we've received language late in the process. It's not the first time, but once again, it's a very important a proposal and it's a necessity that we give it time.

We heard the urgency. We took action, but the proposal before us, we have been informed from a variety of different avenues that it's not the best. Maybe it didn't go far enough and we'll hear that this evening. Maybe it went too far or quite frankly, there's still a lot of questions. That is concerning. We also have coincidentally a task

force that is examining these very same issues that is incorporated with a variety of different professionals opining, researching, gathering information, working collaboratively to address some of the issues that we have here. We find ourselves now, even with all good faith efforts, rushed. Rushed to do something, albeit important, but just as important to make sure that we get it right. We're gonna go through the proposal and make sure that we know what we're voting on here today because it is concerning that I am still hearing from a profession, a most noble one, of which many times we have said and we can confidently say in the State of Connecticut, law enforcement is and will always be our heroes. These are the individuals that we ask every day of their lives to leave their families, parents, siblings, spouses, children, to report to work never knowing what they'll see, what they'll encounter, what will happen or whether or not they'll return home. Those are the individuals that keep our society safe. That protect us. We should

be proud to call them our law enforcement and heroes, but at the same time, we should not even for a moment hesitate to call out the ones who disgustingly tarnish that name, and that's what we're here to do in order to protect every individual equally and fairly in our society because they are our neighbors, our friends, our family. What we want for ourselves is exactly what we should want for every other individual and I hope and pray that everyone who comes up here, we all have that same intention and I believe we do. We wouldn't put ourselves through this process otherwise. But just as importantly, just as we started wanting to come together, we have enough riffs in society, we should come together to produce the best product. As I stand here these wee hours of the morning, I'm not confident that we have that best product. I'm sad to say that. I think we could get there. Actually, let me correct that. I know we could get there. We can. What we lacked was time. What we lacked then is the ability to pull in the individuals, to make

sure we were united around a table with social distancing, of course, and safe measures, but we're able to really articulate what we need, what would be necessary, how to implement it, and make sure that we've got the best product that we can go out into the public and say we did this together for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I still believe we've got the opportunity. I don't know if it's this morning, if it's tomorrow, next week, or in September. I know we can do better than this. We've been told from CCM. We've been told from law enforcement. We've been told from the State's Chief Attorney's office. We've been told even from the Governor's office. There's questions, there's concerns, there's unintended consequences. We've heard from advocates. This doesn't address the issue and I'm looking forward to during this debate, I'm gonna highlight some of those and I hope others do too cause it's not in here. It's really not and despite our best efforts, we need to make sure that what we

intended to do is exactly what we're planning to do. It's not here, but because of the late hour, I think it's important that we know what is here and we don't just talk about it, but we actually have a dialogue about it.

So through you, Mr. Speaker, a few questions to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Proceed.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, through you, and certainly I'm going to ask the good Chairman for patience because of all of the different iterations, my notes were on several versions before and I know we have a new one so as much as possible I'll highlight the sections, but it might be a little challenging to actually do the line numbers, but specifically starting in section 1, through you, Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that we now are also incorporating the State Police in the requirements for training and certification under POST. Is that

correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom, do you care to respond?

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That's correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, taking the good Chairman's attention to section 2 of the proposal, we are asking that the State Police, there's a criteria that after graduation and before they become sworn that they would then have to obtain a certification through POST, which is an acronym for the Police Officer's Standard and Training Council and in this proposal, even though we say after graduation and before they're sworn in, later in that section they say that they have to go

through the certification and be certified one year before becoming sworn members of the division, so if the good Chairman could just clarify what I believe is a contradiction there, where later on in the section they have up to one year before being sworn, but then at the top of the section it has to be before they are sworn.

So through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I disagree. I see the "and" in line 23 as disjunctive. I think the first requirement is that they receive a high school diploma within the initial time frame the ranking member identified, and then there is a new secondary requirement that they must receive their post-certification within one year of becoming a sworn member of the Division.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank the good Chairman for that clarification. So are we asking that new recruits to the academy that are looking forward to becoming state police officers would have to be certified through POST?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, yes, they need to obtain the post-certification within one year of becoming a sworn member of the Division.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, why is it now that we're requesting that the State Police be certified through POST?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, so that we have one standard of training supervision and certification throughout the State of Connecticut and that the State Police are treated in a manner similar to how our municipal police department is so they can hopefully work better in conjunction with each other with the same level of training.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker, was the State Police training inadequate?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I did not say that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't make the representation that the good Chairman made that statement. I'm inquiring of the good Chairman if he believes that the training that the State Police was receiving was inadequate?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I have no opinion on that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr.

Speaker, are we requiring current State Police Officers to go back to POST and be, or not back because they've never been to POST, but are we asking the current sworn State Police Officers to be certified through POST?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Mr. Speaker, we're grandfathering those folks in. They will only need to go for re-certification every three years.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, and the re-certification, nonetheless, that would be for the new recruits; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that's correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So that in and of itself is a little confusing to me because if we're requiring now new recruits as State Police to go through POST certification because it's important that we have uniform training, uniform supervision, uniform renewal of training, but we're not requiring it of our State Police that are currently serving, it's a little shocking.

Moving on, through you, Mr. Speaker, what are the costs associated with having the State Police new recruits go through POST?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would direct the

ranking member to the fiscal note. I don't have any additional information beyond what's represented there.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, regarding the fiscal note, what are the additional costs for having these new recruits go through the academy?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I know that there is a \$50 drug test fee. I'm not seeing where there's an additional cost outlined. If the ranking member would like to point to a particular section.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would they be subjected to a psychological evaluation or a polygraph?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe so.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, who would be paying for that now for the new recruits that want to become State Police Officers?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe the

Division of State Police would.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker, do we know how many State Police, well they're not State Police yet, but candidates in the academy that may exist or will be expected?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is there is a current class in the academy. I'm not sure of the exact size.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well once again, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the items that is concerning

regarding the fact that it is a mandate once again on the State of Connecticut, albeit very important because it is training, but something that certainly needs to be paid. Through you, Mr. Speaker, regarding the training that the State Police currently has in place, are we looking at the post-certification will now be in lieu of any requirements for training that they were doing through the normal course of the State Police training?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is POST sets a minimum standard. If the Division would like to provide additional training over and above what's required by POST, they certainly would be able to do so.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker, does the good Chairman know whether the State Police has any minimum requirements currently right now that they have to adhere to outside of POST?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, I suspect they do, but I'm not familiar with the exact ins and outs of those.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's the reason I'm concerned. That's exactly the reason I'm concerned. We received testimony from the State Police Officers. We have heard certainly from their state lobbyists and activists. We don't know this

information, but yet we're making a major shift decision to tell them you now need to be certified through POST. We can't tell you whether or not the training is better, different, because we don't know. I don't understand how we can propose legislation without having common conversations with the individuals that this will impact. I certainly would never ask someone to go to inferior training. I don't know if POST is inferior to what they're currently doing and then I was looking for uniform, then one would think that you would have to have the existing State Police officers go through POST. But then even more concerning, what if the State Police have their own training requirements that they have to do now to be certified as State Police officers and now we're tacking on POST? How many hours are we talking about? Why aren't we having the municipal police who go through POST be obligated to go through the training that State Police then have to do? There hasn't been a conversation to compare the two. If the intent is to make sure we've got

the best law enforcement officials patrolling our highways and our neighborhoods, you have to have the conversation before you make a drastic change in requirements, financial investment, the decency.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the psychological evaluation, I believe it's still in section 3, as the good Chairman had indicated, there is a drug test and actual I'll do the drug test first. There is a drug test requirement and we have added new substances that need to be included in the drug testing that was already previously being done. If the good Chairman can highlight what the additions are?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it's controlled substances and anabolic steroids.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, who pays for these drug tests?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

The law enforcement agency.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, certainly I see that the language allows for non-prescribed, so if something comes up positive, so long as it was appropriately prescribed by a medical professional to the law enforcement official, it wouldn't be a violation; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That's correct.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And how does the officer prove that it's a prescribed substance that they're taking that came up positive?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

By presenting their prescription.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Is that a requirement that they would have to do before the drug test or after the drug test?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, presumably after when that substance shows up on the tox screen.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you, if the individual let's say was on no prescribed drugs when the test was taken, but later on during the time that the individual was hired, would they have to then later on disclose that they are taking those substances prescribed?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And where is that requirement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that's the type of thing we would generally put in statute. I think that would be the regulations and policy of the law enforcement unit.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is that an actual policy that any law enforcement official that gets prescribed medication would have to disclose it immediately or is that something that the good

Chairman believes, but doesn't know?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I completely understand the question, but to the extent I do, I think what we put in statute is what the requirements are for certification in terms of how one will prove their eligibility for certification, that's to be established by the law enforcement unit and/or POST itself.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, is the drug testing still going to be randomly administered?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, what is discussed here is merely drug testing that's required in connection with certification, which I understand occurs every three years. Any other drug testing by the Department of Law Enforcement Unit would not be affected by the language that the ranking member is referring to.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, going to the section regarding accreditation, we have here that the requirement does not take place until December 31, 2024. If the good Chairman could highlight what exactly are accreditation standards?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a conforming change that the ranking member is pointing out that really is made in connection with section 44 of the bill, which requires that law enforcement units seek a certain level of accreditation through the International Association of the Chiefs of Police and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and specifically what type of accreditation are we requiring in this proposal?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we're pushing our law enforcement units in the state to receive that

certification from that entity.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, what is that entity?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, as I said, it's the International Association of the Chiefs of Police and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas. This mask is driving me crazy. They've got these speakers turned off and I'm having trouble hearing too so bear with me.

Thank you.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Absolutely. I understand, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. So through you, Mr. Speaker, is that the only type of accreditation organization or policies that exist for law enforcement?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Mr. Speaker, but it's been certainly represented to the Committee that that is sort of the gold standard. I understand that there are a number of agencies throughout the state that receive that type of accreditation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, it was represented to us as the gold standard. Was that by law enforcement?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, as I sit here right now, I don't recall whether law enforcement did. I certainly remember members of Committee leadership making that representation.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I am a bit concerned regarding this. Once again, we have multiple accreditation policies, systems set up out there and we are not inquiring of the experts within the field who subject themselves to these accreditations. Certainly, I'll spare the good Chairman of specific questions, but it's been brought to my attention that there are different policy requirements for the different types of accreditations. There's a different type of fee for each accreditation. There are different renewal

fees associated with these accreditations and I think it would be important before we mandate any type of accreditation, that we make sure that it's a system that is the best and then certainly again, will achieve the goal that we have here in that regard.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, what happens if a police department or actually, let me back up, Mr. Speaker. Who's going to pay for the accreditation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it would be the local agency. My understanding is the cost is between \$5000 and \$8000 dollars.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, could the good Chairman reference where he

found that fee quote?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, as I sit here right now, I don't have that right here in front of me. I believe there's plenty of information available on the organization's website.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the good Chairman and in fact, he is correct. There is a lot of information on the organization's website, but unfortunately, the quoted information on that website is much higher than what's been quoted here. Certainly, the representation will depend on the size of the police department and population as well that they serve, but we're talking about an initial investment of anywhere between \$8500 dollars to

\$19,000 dollars and there's also a continuation fee of approximately \$3400 dollars up to \$5700 dollars as well. And the good Chairman did appropriately highlight that this is gonna fall on the municipality. Now, I highlight this because once again, there are other accreditations and in fact, the other accreditation, there's a lesser fee associated with it but again, we haven't asked the actual individuals that this will impact or have experience with this currently right now to be able to determine well, where should we invest our money? Which one's better? That's what we need to be doing and the reason why I highlight the cost is not because that I stand here today I don't believe that it's a very good investment. I highly believe that it's a very good investment because as much as this proposal attempts that we have this bill, that we have before us attempts to put things in place, we already have these accreditation standards out there, that all we need to do is ask our police departments to attempt to adhere to them as opposed

to piecemealing something.

So the investment's a good one, but we need to be frank and we need to be honest as to the cost associated because this is just one section of a proposal with a multitude of unfunded mandates. Now these unfunded mandates are going to fall on the residents. We need to be cognizant of that. We need to make sure, and I've said this from day one, that any proposal we put together, we need to make sure that funding is behind it. We can't just simply talk the talk and not put the money behind it.

Regarding the behavioral health exams, through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe we had discussed in the certification that the State Police would be included in having to have those assessments made; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that's correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr. Speaker, does the good Chairman know whether the State Police currently has behavioral health assessments done?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Uh, Mr. Speaker, I believe they do.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And how often?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure on the exact time frame.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, and who's gonna pay for the cost of the health assessments?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That would be the law enforcement agency.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, through you, does the good Chairman know whether a police officer's insurance policy pays for any of this testing, drugs, or psychological evaluations?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Uh, through you, Mr. Speaker, they could.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear the
response.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

One more time, Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I said they could. It probably depends on the
insurance policy.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr.

Speaker, so in order for me to be able to inform individuals who are going to be voting for this proposal, the impact that it may or may not have on a municipality, does the good Chairman actually know if these are covered through the insurance policies that let's say the majority of law enforcement officials have?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what percentage of law enforcement policies would cover this.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly wasn't looking for an actual percentage. I was even just looking for whether or not it was covered and

unfortunately, we don't have that information. I think that's important to know whether we're gonna have to then require a law enforcement official to have to pay more for health insurance, or whether the health insurance is covered by the municipality and the municipality now is going to have to pay more for the either exams or if it's covered, it's information that we need to know if we're mandating something. We need to know how it's gonna get paid.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, what happens to a law enforcement official if they were to fail a drug test?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we've asked POST to promulgate rules and guidance on that.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, when does this certification take effect?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what she means by certification.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas, want to try again?

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Certainly, Mr. Speaker. So through you, Mr. Speaker, in this proposal before us, we're now asking that the State Police go through the certification and I believe in our dialogue we highlighted that one of the requirements for that certification was to undergo a drug test as well as a psychological evaluation. We already know currently that the law enforcement on the municipal side certainly already goes through the accreditation, but now we're asking that the State

Police go through the accreditation. When does that take effect?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the behavioral health assessments will begin in January 2021.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, when are we asking that POST provide guidance as to what happens if an individual fails a drug test?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Before that date.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is that in the proposal before us?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would draw the ranking member's attention to lines 736 compared with lines uh 126-127.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are we also asking POST to provide some guidelines as to whether or not they were to fail the behavioral health assessment?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, what are the criteria by which POST could choose not to certify a law enforcement official?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

By which they could not certify an officer?

That remains unchanged from the bill.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, do we make any changes as to POST's ability

to either cancel, revoke or suspend one's certification?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, through you, Mr. Speaker, there are um, uh two changes to the de-certification criteria and those are located at lines 192-208.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, those factors that are highlighted there, that does not require that POST take any action. They, it's still permissive with may; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that's correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, specifically highlighting the language in subsection g that says "the holder has been found by the law enforcement unit pursuant to the procedures established by such unit and considering guidance developed under subsection g of this section to have engaged in conduct that undermines the public confidence in law enforcement." Does the good Chairman have a definition of what would be conduct that undermines public confidence in law enforcement?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I do not. In fact,

as the ranking member just articulated, what would be conduct unbecoming will be based on the particular law enforcement's unit established procedures as well as the guidance which POST will promulgate on what constitutes conduct unbecoming under subsection g, as they're required to do in the bill. We have set forth in here that although it is not a comprehensive definition, the types of things that can be considered to undermine public confidence is discriminatory conduct, racial profiling or conduct of that ilk.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, would this conduct be solely when a law enforcement official is on duty or does it also include when they're off duty?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it would also include when they are off duty and in fact, I would submit to the ranking member that that is part of the rationale for this exact proposal is as we have seen in this state on several occasions, officers have engaged in conduct outside of the scope of their work. The municipal police department has tried to fire them as a result of that conduct and they've been reinstated to their jobs as a result. In fact, I know there was one incident where someone was using racial slurs towards another and eventually reinstated.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I'll take the opportunity now that the good Chairman has offered an example. I believe the good Chairman just

described actions that rose to an example of the language that we have proposed in here, and I believe the good Chairman indicated that the individual was fired, but also then rehired. Through you, Mr. Speaker, if the good Chairman could explain how that individual after being fired was rehired?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker,

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we have certainly

heard time and time again from chief elected officials, police chiefs and others that sometimes, it's just too hard to get rid of the bad apples in a particular police department, that sometimes they engage in certain conduct, like I said, maybe getting in a couple bar fights, using racist terms, whatever the situation may be, and the law enforcement unit tries to fire that individual and because of labor relations issues or otherwise, they end up being able to get their job back as a result. So what we have envisioned here through this decertification process is where a law enforcement unit believes that an officer should not only not be a police officer in their department, but if they shouldn't be a police officer in Hartford, they probably shouldn't be a police officer in Farmington or Avon either, that they would apply for decertification through POST. There's a level of due process set forth in this bill and in our state statute for that process and at the end of that process, if the officer is found to have engaged in

conduct that undermines public confidence by clear and convincing evidence, they will be decertified and not able to serve as a police officer in that town or any other.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for a very detailed explanation in that regard, and if I'm not mistaken, the decertification process is not a new one. It currently exists. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that's correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

So we have decertification process currently, but yet these bad applies that have been described were fired, but I believe the good Chairman that there was something to have to do with the Department of Labor relations that got them rehired, but we're looking at decertification expansion to address that issue. But decertification isn't new and we still have the problem and we still have what's been described as the bad applies getting rehired. Why aren't we addressing the Department of Labor issues that so many through submission of testimony and conversations, we know goes to the heart of rehiring what's been described as bad applies, not only by us, but the public and clearly the chief official that fired them in the first place? But let's look at decertification as the answer and ignore the problem.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, now that we're just certainly highlighting the Department of Labor issues that have been described to us, is one of the issues certainly the process through arbitration

that these individuals are being rehired?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, having not gone through one of those myself, I'm not entirely sure. What we are -- but I know police officers are entitled to the same level of support and due process through the grievance process as any other unionized employee would be. I think what is unique here, Mr. Speaker, is that we are dealing with individuals who unlike a sanitation worker or a school custodian or a teacher or any other very valuable position in our society, we're talking about individuals who carry guns, have handcuffs and can deprive someone of their civil liberties. And so, Mr. Speaker, yes, they should be held to a higher standard and yes, there should be an opportunity where somebody has undermined the public confidence in their ability to the job, to have that

person not just fired from that individual city, but to be decertified so they can't go and engage in the same type of conduct in another municipality.

Take the example I said about an officer who makes racist remarks towards a co-worker. I would submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that that individual should not just be fired from working in the law enforcement unit they're working in, but they should not be able to be rehired in another law enforcement unit and that's precisely the issue and the types of issues we're trying to get at in this proposal before us.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Speaker, I believe the good Chairman was attempting to highlight that there is another provision in here that's new that simply states that someone who's been decertified can't go and get a job as a

security officer with a firearm; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Speaker, I'm going to put that to aside momentarily because as the good Chairman was going through about there should be a higher scrutiny, this individual has a firearm, that's exactly my point. A, we're not taking due process away from an individual and I think an individual who carries a firearm and an individual who carries a chalk stick in a classroom should both equally have the same level of due process, but I would submit that maybe the person who's carrying the firearm, you don't want them to

get rehired if they have no business getting rehired so again, it's not the decertification process or telling that individual that now you can't get a security job. We're trying to tell that individual you can't serve as a law enforcement official. That's why we're here. We're not talking about other professions. This proposal is concerning police accountability. We're not addressing it.

Regarding the other provision now that an individual, or let me just back up a little bit. If a law enforcement official gets decertified, do they have the opportunity to reapply for recertification?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Mr. Speaker, maybe I lost it between the end of the commentary by the ranking member and this question, but she seems to be suggesting that somehow this provision doesn't get to the issue of

removing an officer from the force that they're working on and that's simply not correct, Mr. Speaker. This entire provision about decertification is once you are decertified you can't work as a police officer and need to be fired by that law enforcement agency and cannot work in any other law enforcement agency in this state, so I'm not sure I quite understand the premise of the ranking member's question because she seems not to appreciate what the purpose and intent of this question is.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I'm happy the good Chairman gave me an opportunity then to re-explain that because that's exactly my point. This decertification does not automatically provide that this law enforcement official is not gonna continue as an officer. We just gave the example previously

of the individual who was fired and went through this process. This process currently exists but then at the point of labor relations, was rehired, but I'll be more than happy to move on, Mr. Speaker, because the pending question that I had for the good Chairman was once an individual is decertified, does that individual have the ability to apply for recertification?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you, when someone is decertified, they have to be fired by their law enforcement agency and that is set forth on lines 151-154 of the bill. I want to be very clear on the legislative intent of this that when an officer is decertified, they must be fired by their law enforcement agency because they no longer hold the certificate or the license to hold that job and cannot perform a basic job function.

That is non-grievable as an opinion issued by the Attorney General, I believe just yesterday makes clear that an opinion that was requested by the Minority Leader of the Senate and that opinion yesterday made clear that if someone is decertified, they cannot be rehired, uh, they cannot serve as a law enforcement official until, as the ranking member alludes to in her question, they apply for recertification and there is a two-year waiting period before the officer can apply for recertification.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Speaker, just to kind of clarify, if the law enforcement official is decertified, is there an absolute requirement that the individual be fired as a law enforcement official, or could they still serve as a law enforcement official, but not carry a weapon?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, they are not allowed to serve as a police officer and that's on line 152 of the bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe the good Chairman had indicated that there is an application process that they would be able to reapply to be recertified, I believe the good Chairman had indicated after two years; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, line 233 of the bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and if they're successful in that reapplication, could they then be hired as a law enforcement official?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, if they meet the certification requirements and POST deemed they were qualified, in theory, yes, they could.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, does the good Chairman know how many law

enforcement officials may have been decertified and then reapplied successfully let's say, I don't know, maybe in the last five years or any information that good Chairman has regarding that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information at my fingertips. My understanding is that POST does post decertification information on its website and some 60-odd officers have been decertified over the years, but that's over an extended period of time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, as I was reviewing the language that's before us, one of the things that just seemed to be maybe a little concerning, maybe unjust, maybe one

of those unintended consequences that I'd like to flush out with the good Chairman and we certainly had this dialogue earlier today, is as a law enforcement official if you get decertified, you wait two years and you can reapply and you could, if you're successful, be recertified which would allow that individual then to be able to be a law enforcement official, carrying a weapon. Conceivably they could also become a security guard and carry a weapon; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, I don't know that they could serve as a, well, through you, Mr. Speaker, yes, they could apply for recertification.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, if a law enforcement individual gets decertified and let's say that after a year the individual decides that they want to retire nonetheless so they don't intend to go back and become a law enforcement official so there's no reason for them to go through the application for recertification through POST, which again, POST is just for law enforcement and now we're including the State Police of course under that definition of a requirement. So the person's been decertified, is retired, but now wants to become a security guard which this position requires a firearm. Under the current new language in this proposal, that individual because they had been previously decertified would not be able to be hired as an armed security guard; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and because that individual now doesn't have the benefit of doing the reapplication through POST for certification because they're not serving nor do they plan on serving as a law enforcement official, how could that person correct the situation in order to become an armed security officer?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it's a relatively high standard to be decertified as an officer. If someone is decertified and they never go back through the process to be recertified nor found to have the requirements to be met, then they could not

reapply to be an armed security guard.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I guess I won't beat a dead horse and maybe it's a high standard, I don't know. I haven't actually had the opportunity to speak appropriately what the certification entails, but we know that there is a reapplication process so the possibility is there so it can't be that high of a standard that would negate any possibility because otherwise, then we would have decertification and never the opportunity to reapply, but clearly there is an application process to get recertified so conceivably, and we don't know the number because we haven't had an opportunity to determine how many individuals this impacts, but conceivably people get reinstated. Otherwise, you wouldn't have the opportunity to apply to get reinstated, but my concern here is there was a quick action to say oh,

you've been decertified. We don't want you to serve as an armed security officer or I'll correct that just for clarify, an armed security individual and that makes sense because obviously something rose to the level of being decertified. But it also makes sense that there's a reapplication if the individual wanted to become an officer just as dangerous with a weapon, but now we're specifically impacting in this proposal that they can't be an armed security guard. So it takes away that ability for that individual to apply and serve in that position. Just out of curiosity, Mr. Speaker, does the good Chairman how many let's say retired law enforcement officials become armed security officers?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I suspect quite a few, but I don't have the exact number in front of me.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I actually agree with the good Chairman in saying quite a few and what we've done essentially in this proposal is now we've, an individual who's been decertified, a number of the quite a few may not be able to serve as security officers although they had the opportunity to reapply if they were just policemen, but now they're shut out. That's concerning, Mr. Speaker. Again, one of several unintended consequences.

When we look at this section regarding the different factors to consider for decertification, with what standard are we making those judgements? Are we looking at it in a subjective standard or objective?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the decertification process is governed by the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act. The POST Council needs to do a De Novo review of the evidence, act as an independent fact finder and then in order to decertify, they have to do so by clear and convincing evidence and as the ranking member mentioned, certainly if somebody has engaged in conduct that has been found to that level and the person has been decertified, then yes, the consequences for those individuals, certainly the 60 or so who previously have, we do not want them operating as armed guards in shopping malls or other places of business.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, the ability now to suspend a law

enforcement official, how, how long could an individual be suspended?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom. I can hear maybe one in ten words. The acoustics up here are very bad so I'm only listening for signals that I'm supposed to do something [laughs]. Thank you.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

My apologies, Mr. Speaker. I'll be more than happy then when I say through you, to make sure that I'm directly at the good Speaker so my apologies.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

This room isn't good for listening when it's empty. It's interesting. It's just too hard.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Mr. Speaker would you like me to repeat the question?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Please.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Certainly. So through you, Mr. Speaker, there's a suspension that we had discussed in the proposal before us. How long could an individual be suspended for?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Forty-five days, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Speaker, that would be up to 45 days. Is this suspension new through POST?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is uh, would be what we

may consider a lesser included penalty so if someone is before POST for decertification and POST determines that whatever conduct or allegations that have been made against that officer do not rise to the level of decertification, but there should be some punishment handed down, they would have the ability to suspend that officer for up to 45 days.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, once POST decertifies an individual, is there any type of or what is the type of due process? Is there a hearing?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yeah, Mr. Speaker, as I've explained a couple of times, this process is governed, it's exist, it's

an existing process, unchanged through the bill. It is governed by the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act, which many types of proceedings and hearings are, and that Act is spelled forth I believe in Chapter 54 of our General Statutes. The individual, POST conducts a De Novo review of the evidence and must find the conduct to have met the standard for decertification by clear and convincing evidence. If the officer disagrees with that finding by POST, they retain a right to appeal to the Connecticut Superior Court pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, let's see if I can bring the good Chairman to the section. I believe it's all still under the same section here. Is there a requirement that POST, once they come up with those guidelines that

they - how would they share those guidelines with the individual law enforcement units?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the guidelines have to be posted on POST's website.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, as I see the language here, it says the council may develop and issue written guidance to the law enforcement units concerning the grounds for suspension, cancellation or revocation of a certificate and this is new language, and as I read that, Mr. Speaker, I interpret it as many times, the word 'may' to be permissive and not mandatory. Is that the intent of the proposal before us, that it

would be permissive for POST to provide those guidelines, but not mandatory?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. No, I think this is one of those statutory construction things where there's only so many people we can say shall to instead of 'may' and this one's one of those 'may' situations, but certainly what is expected that POST will do is that they will develop guidelines, they will post them and also, over time, a body of common law if you will, will develop as to what counts as conduct unbecoming or conduct that undermines public confidence and that those guidelines will be updated. Certainly, it would be impossible for this legislature to write into statute every single instance in which we would find the conduct of an officer to be such that they should no longer be a police officer in this state. As much as we do with

our judicial system, we set the outside goal posts and let that body be deliberative in applying the law we set to the facts of a particular case and that's what we envision here.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I'm happy to hear the good Chairman indicate that it's important to have these guidelines and certainly they would be goal posts because when I do read this, it certainly says that the council may develop, but later on in that same paragraph it says that once they have those, they shall be available on the council's internet website, and I do know for a fact based on the testimony we heard during the listening session as well as the submitted testimony by a variety of different officials, that language is very concerning, the conduct unbecoming and the public confidence. There is no definition to it and we're

relying and looking at POST that I would suggest that should've been shall develop so that there's some guidance, and then that it shall be posted and not just simply may. That is again why many had concerns regarding the language in that regard. It's difficult, very, very difficult for an individual to support language without understanding its meaning and then later on asking an agency to put forth guidelines. It's actually concerning because we don't know whether or not the support for that language is justifiable without knowing what the guidelines are cause I don't know how you can support language without knowing its meaning and how it's going to be applied, or whether or not it's actually going to do it's intended purposes in that regard would be. But those are concerns that came to our attention. It would've been good to have some guidance of information as to the definition of that in this proposal so that people would know what we're actually asking our law enforcement to adhere to. So we're trying to pass a proposal, actual

legislation that says you will be judged on this general idea. We don't know it. That's why it's not in here. We have to go to the experts which is POST, but we can't do that right now cause we don't have the time, but eventually, based on our language, it's only permissive anyways, you may do it, but if you actually do it, you shall post it which makes sense cause if you put the work into it, you certainly want to make sure it's posted, but I would actually say it should be mandatory so that everyone knows what you're being judged on and maybe even know the definition prior to enacting it and mandating it and judging it to know what you're judging on, to know whether or not it is fair, whether or not it does apply, and whether or not it actually goes to the intended purpose.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we do have some new training requirements. If the good Chairman could highlight what the requirements are in the proposal before us regarding training?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we certainly have new training requirements with respect to implicit bias and also crowd control management among possibly others.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, does the good Chairman know whether there is training for implicit bias currently?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, there certainly may be departments that are doing that and I suspect actually in fact many are, but certainly we are

codifying that into statute here.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So as the good Chairman indicated, we are essentially codifying something that they're already doing and I'm happy to hear because that was the report I was getting, that this implicit bias training already exists and I would hope all if not most are currently doing it in that regard, and the reason I highlight that is that I don't want anyone to believe or to think that but for this proposal, this training's not taking place. In fact, it is, but conceivably there are a variety of different times when we do codify policies, but again, I just want to make it clear it's not that it doesn't exist. We're simply codifying something that is already being done.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe the good Chairman also said regarding training on crowd

control. If the good Chairman could highlight to us, what type of training are we attempting to achieve with crowd control training?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, we're looking for POST to develop a uniform statewide policy for managing crowds by police officers again, so there is some continuity across department lines and I would submit part of the reason for this is certainly one of the drawbacks to the State of Connecticut is we have very small towns and when there is a large crowd in one, they have to rely on mutual aid from another town so this way, we make sure that in those instances, each department is operating under the same uniform policy.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, so whether you're a small town or a larger town, the crowd control training is expected for all law enforcement?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the good Chairman would be able to just clarify for me some new language regarding implicit bias training? Specifically, it says implicit bias training means training on how to recognize and mitigate unconscious biases against a particular segment of the population that might influence a police

officer's judgements and decisions when interacting with the member of such segment of the population. Now, my understanding is there's implicit bias training already and I had a question from a law enforcement official who was not exactly sure what a segment of the population means in order to determine whether or not this is a new type of training or if it conforms with the existing training. I don't know if the good Chairman is able to clarify that or not.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I think the word segment here is used to represent sort of a group of individuals who may share in common a particular race or religion or culture or a gender identity, among others.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for that explanation. In section 8, we've done some changes regarding the disclosure through FOIA. If the good Chairman can highlight that for us?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe section 8, section 8 provides for the fact that contracts cannot supersede state statute particularly with respect to section 9 of the bill, which requires that disciplinary actions or violations be publicly disclosable or viewable under FOIA.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, does this apply to the municipal police?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, section 9 I believe only applies to the State Police.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you, Mr. Speaker, and why only the State Police?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that was simply the way this section was drafted.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is just one more example. I don't understand. I don't know why that we are treating municipal and State Police completely different. There's been testimony and discussions of how important for us to be able to obtain certain records and in fact, action was taken several years ago in contracts to make sure that those records were not obtained, and now we're trying to correct that and we're applying it only to State Police. So we've got two components of law enforcement, municipal and State Police which in some of these provisions we want to treat the same, an example, certification through POST, but we don't have any information regarding what the State Police trainings are now, how it compares, how it doesn't compare, accreditation, whether it's the same or not or the best accreditation that we have, but now we're making a provision to make these records available, but only from the State Police and not

the municipal police officers. I would submit that we should be treating everyone in law enforcement equally. If we're going to change something in law, it should be evenly done.

Through you, Madam Speaker, good to see you up there.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Nice to see you as well, Madam.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

I do know that there are several provisions in this proposal that at times also applies to corrections. Just out of curiosity, would this FOIA change apply to corrections?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, this section specifically that makes this change and makes it FOIA-able, when does this take effect?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Upon passage, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So this is upon passage. My understanding is that currently, the State Police contracts would be contrary to this language; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, through you, Madam Speaker, I believe so.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So I know clearly there is language in this proposal that says moving forward, no contracts can be negotiated that would eliminate this requirement essentially if it passes, requirement, but are we subjecting the current State Police contracts to adhere to this exact language upon passage?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, that's my understanding.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, is there a reason why we didn't do it to be passed or apply to State Police upon the renegotiation of their contracts?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I don't believe that was ever asked in the discussions and negotiations on this bill we had.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I guess, I don't know what the good Chairman is referring to as to negotiations or discussions. I guess I'll ask straight out. Did the State Police opine as to whether or not they want their negotiated current contract to be impacted by this FOIA provision?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I don't believe that being discussed in their testimony.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's concerning. It's a very important laudable proposal to take back what was done in these contracts, to make this FOIA-able. It's important information. It was so important that it wasn't protected until just recently, but the importance only applies to State Police and not municipal police, but we are going into a negotiated collective bargaining contract and changing that. I don't know if we want that kind of precedent. What's next? This is important. Don't get me wrong. I'm not minimizing the information

that we're trying to achieve here, but it's not important enough that we're not subjecting the municipal police to it, but we're subjecting the State Police to it. And then where does that stop, what's important to one versus important to another? I wasn't part of the negotiations for the State Police. I don't know what they gave up or didn't give up in order to have that protection there or what the reasoning was for it or whether or not there should be a reasonable modification made to it, but this is what happens when we rush, with good intention, no doubt about it. But there's no urgency for sloppy work.

For section 10 of the proposal, we have some provisions regarding the recruitment of minorities to join law enforcement and we've identified and have heard from police departments throughout the State of Connecticut the challenges we currently have in recruiting minorities. We pass legislation not too long ago specifically essentially mandating that that be taken into consideration throughout the

hiring process, but we're still having those challenges. In this proposal before us, we are asking that an analysis be made that the police departments actually analyze what they're doing for recruitment, how could they improve this recruitment, and then sharing this information if I'm not mistaken with POST; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and the hope is that based on all of this information being gathered in one centralized location, if there's a police department out there that has found the best way to be able to recruit minorities to serve as law

enforcement that information's going to be shared. Sadly, based on the many police chiefs that I've spoken to, this challenge exists throughout the State of Connecticut so I think we do have to go beyond what's in this proposal. My personal opinion based on my conversations, there's a lot of great ideas, a lot of great programs out there that maybe should've been part of the proposal but they're not, but the gathering of information is certainly a step in the right direction because they should be talking to one another.

I noticed in the gathering of information we have women referenced. Through you, Madam Speaker, if we're gathering information regarding the recruitment of women, wouldn't we want that included in the top portion of section 10 then, acknowledging the fact that we're trying to recruit women also as part of the definition of minorities?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, that's an excellent question. I'm not entirely sure, but I do recall receiving pushback on changing the language from the upper part of this section from the minority caucus.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think the good Chairman is accurate because the upper portion is existing language and certainly during those discussions, we wanted to make sure to maintain what had been previously negotiated and passed into law, but when the recruitment in the new language of gathering of information specifically talks about women, then it should in my humble opinion have been a cleanup, then to put it at the top if that's gonna become a priority because we're asking the police departments later on to report on it so I think just some consistency so that police departments know

exactly what they're supposed to be doing would be important to effectuate the recruitment and the reporting to mirror one another.

We have in section 12 the examination of the task force. If the good Chairman could just summarize for us exactly what the task force is supposed to be doing in this section, section 12? What are the changes to the task force? Thank you, Madam Speaker, my apologies.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

We gotcha. Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, we have attempted to narrow in and focus on the ongoing task force work with respect to certain issues which were not addressed in the language of this bill, but which folks have brought to our attention as areas that could use further study and analysis.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, through you to the good Chairman, what was the purpose of this language?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

To give additional guidance to the task force.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, are we making any changes to the makeup of that task force in this proposal?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, regarding the task force, what are their reporting requirements in this proposal?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I believe they are to report back to the Judiciary Committee before the start of the next legislative session.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for his response. Moving onto section 13, we have the makeup POST and again what we have been

referring to as POST, the Police Officer Standards Training Council and there are several changes in this and specifically, there is a [inaudible 1:35:14:7] provision of December 31, 2020. Through you, Mr. Speaker, if the good Chairman could indicate the purpose of this new provision?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, we are reconstituting the makeup of POST and providing better clarity and guidance on the type of individuals and skill sets we're looking for to serve on that committee and as of January 1, 2021, those new individuals would be seated.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam

Speaker, and again, I'll apologize in advance because I know this has gone through different reiterations, but the language that I have in the LCO before me indicates that a member of the faculty of the University of Connecticut would also be serving on POST. Is that still the case or has that been modified?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, no. It's the member of a faculty of any institution of higher education in the state. It doesn't necessarily have to be someone from UConn. I think the old language was specific to a faculty member from UConn. We decided in this language that if there is a member of the faculty of another University in the state who is more versed or appropriate to serve on this task force based on their background in criminal justice studies, then they could be appointed

instead.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for that answer. As I indicated, I had a feeling that the language in front of me had been a little outdated in that regard. On January 1, 2021, there are some changes we are making to POST and again, I certainly don't want to make the good Chairman through each and every new language that we have here, but maybe in general, if the good Chairman could attempt to describe what's being achieved hopefully, the hope for achievement in the makeup of the individuals who serve on POST, the new language?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. We're hoping to get a more diverse and well-rounded group of individuals on POST than some of those that currently exist. We're looking for a greater variety of town sizes who are represented, everywhere from the largest cities to the smallest towns. As mentioned, we're looking for an individual who has a background of criminal justice studies. We have a couple of chief elected officials on there. We have some advocates for individuals with physical or mental disabilities. We have some justice-impacted folks. We have some I guess I would say more patrol type police officers and not just chiefs. We have a medical professional and we have a victim or somebody whose family has been a victim of a crime again, to provide greater diversity in terms of the skill sets represented.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, have we also made changes to the appointment powers of those positions?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker, in order to be more responsive to the electorate, we've given the legislative leaders of each of the various caucuses in the legislature an appointment onto POST.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, are we also making an attendance requirement for those individuals who made the commitment to serve on POST?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker, we are. In fact, it has come to our attention that under the current construct of POST, their attendance has seemed to be an issue with certain membership on there and so we are pushing to make sure that those who actually volunteer to serve on this board would fulfill those duties.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for highlighting the changes in this proposal regarding POST. Moving onto section 14, through you, Madam Speaker, if the good Chairman could just clarify the requirement for the name badges to be displayed.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. This bill makes it clear that officers must prominently display their badge and nametag on their outermost garment. Certainly this is only with respect to officers who are on patrol or interacting with the public and not undercover officers.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, if the good Chairman could just indicate where that exception is for undercover officers?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Line 681 and 682, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and this certainly may be implied and important for legislative intent, but those individuals we're requiring that that be displayed only when they're actually on duty; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, if I can bring the good Chairman's attention to section 16 of the proposal and at the end of that first paragraph, the last I would certainly say phrase where it says posttraumatic stress disorder and I'll

give the good Chairman an opportunity to locate that if needed.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I'm ready to proceed, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I just want to be sensitive to the fact that I know that I don't have the line numbers in front of me. I just want to point out to the good Chairman and this is information that I've received today, it's my understanding that the appropriate phrase would be posttraumatic stress injury and disorder is no longer or should no longer be acceptably used so I understand we've got the proposal in front of us, but I certainly wanted to be sensitive to the

individuals who have championed and advocated that that terminology is changed. So I bring that to the good Chairman's attention. Certainly I didn't even think of having that conversation. It came to me after our last conversation so again, just putting it out there so we're aware of it, we're sensitive to it and we'll see if there's you know any action to be had on it or now in that regard.

Regarding that section, section 16, when is it expected, well what does section 16 actually do?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, section 16 is the requirement that officers have a behavioral health assessment periodically, not less than once every five years. Section 16 also provides a mechanism whereby for cause shown, the administrative head of a law enforcement unit may order a behavioral health assessment and also requires that new hires receive

a behavioral health assessment.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, the good Chairman and I don't recall if it was said just now or in prior conversations, that there is an exception for an individual who maybe knows that they're going to be retiring just shy of the five years so it would be unreasonable to ask that a police department pay for this type of evaluation so there are exceptions in this proposal. Do we also provide POST to provide other guidelines of possibilities of other exceptions that may not have been contemplated in the drafting of this proposal?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, we do and I appreciate the ranking member pointing that out.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I know in our earlier dialogue we had indicated that it would be the municipalities that would be paying for the testing of the periodic behavioral health assessment. Does the good Chairman know what additional cost this would be for municipalities to incur based on the new mandate that it be done at least once every five years?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, my understanding is these are, or not my understanding, it's represented to us in the fiscal note that these assessments cost

between \$300 dollars and \$500 dollars.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and, Madam Speaker, who are the law enforcement officials that are subject to this? Would it be municipal police officers as well as State Police officers?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I believe so.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, just for clarification, so law enforcement officials on the municipal level, they would incur this cost by the municipality; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I caught the last word, but I think she was asking whether the municipality would incur the cost. If so, the answer to that is in the affirmative.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I'll admit that the good Chairman said that a lot better than I just did. Regarding the State Police, Madam Speaker, would it be the State of Connecticut that picks up the cost for those exams?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, the good Chairman already highlighted through the OFA report the approximate expense for each test. Do we have an idea of how many law enforcement officials both municipal as well as State Police that currently exist in order to have an idea of how much that would be?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, the fiscal note represents that for the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, the cost would range annually from \$50,000 dollars to \$100,000 dollars and for large cities in the state, it could be

\$20,000 dollars annually.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, this does not negate the ability for any chief official to request that an assessment be done at a different time prior to the five-year requirement; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That's right, Madam Speaker. The minimum requirement is every five years, but a municipality could, could require more.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and Madam Speaker,

does this proposal change in any way the due process rights that an individual may have available to him or her depending on the result of those assessments?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, no, and in fact, I believe elsewhere in this bill we've asked POST again to take a look at those policies and make sure they are up-to-date.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, taking the good Chairman's attention to section 17, this specifically references the civilian police review boards. If the good Chairman could just highlight what the purpose of this proposal is?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, the purpose of this proposal is to make it clear in our state statute that municipalities who want to, who choose to, again, this is not a mandate, it's permissive language, but a municipality who wants to through their legislative body, can create a civilian police review board which would review the actions and activities of its police department and members thereof.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, would this be replacing any what's commonly known as police commission or can this conceivably work in conjunction, in existence in a town?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COO (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, the latter.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, there are certain permissive powers that are provided to a civilian police review board if the local legislative body were to decide to enact those to provide the board with those powers; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker, through you, the, the legislative body has the ability to define the scope, the number of members of the board, the

process for selection, whether the members are to be selected or not, the terms of office and also the procedures for filling any vacancies.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and, Madam Speaker, is it simply permissive that if a local legislative body wanted to provide the civilian police review board with subpoena powers, they would be able to?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes, it is.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, would it be foreseeable that the subpoena

powers would only be in open investigations or could the civilian police review board simply if the legislative body decided to allow them to have subpoena powers with no restrictions of an investigation?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, the local board would set the scope of the subpoena the individual has. For example, elsewhere in this document, we talk about an inspector general who will have subpoena power that will be directed just to the police departments and their employees. A municipality could seek to copy that language if they like. The other check on the subpoena power of course is our Superior Court System and the normal process for quashing any subpoena that goes abounds of normal protocol and processes and discovery rights.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker to the good Chairman, is that actually stated in this proposal? That they would have the recourse to avail themselves of the Superior Court if they were to motion to quash or subpoena, or is the good Chairman for legislative intent making sure that that would be avenue based on the word subpoena and how typically subpoenas are handled and challenged?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Certainly, Madam Speaker, it is the legislative intent that a subpoena issued by a local civilian review board would be subject to quash by a superior court through the process laid forth in the practice

book and I believe also elsewhere in state statute where it may make clear that a subpoena can be quashed in a superior court with jurisdiction.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, equally, because I do not believe I see it here, but would the good Chairman for legislative intent state the fact that any individual who is subpoenaed as a witness before the board have the right to remain silent?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes, of course, an individual never gives up their fifth amendment rights.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, it is our understanding that civilian police review boards exist in the State of Connecticut. If any town currently has one in existence, what impact if any will this new proposal have on these boards? Are we asking that they must comply with the new language or are we essentially just grandfathering them in and giving them the option if they now wanted to incorporate any of this new language?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Madam Speaker, the latter.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, conceivably the civilian police review boards, especially based on our permissive language here, would be investigating any type of behavioral issues, misconduct by law enforcement; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, if that's the scope provided to them by the local legislative body.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and we're going to be addressing it here soon, but we do have a new proposal in the bill before us regarding creating an inspector general position that too will have some

type of investigatory capabilities here. One of the issues of concern that was raised is if you had the civilian police review board investigating an incident and the inspector general investigating the same incident that essentially, there could be overlap in that regard and some concerns then of subpoenaing of records, of witnesses, evidence, things of that nature. Do we have any provisions or guidance here in this proposal specifically to address that issue?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker. Lines 803 through 814 provide that upon written request, the inspector general, when he or she is investigating a potentially unauthorized use of deadly force case pursuant to his or her authority, can order that a civilian police review board suspend its proceedings for a period not to exceed six months so as not to

interfere with the ongoing investigation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, certainly again it would be up to the local legislative body how they would want to determine if there happened to be two open investigations of the same incident. So for example, if a legislative body wanted to say as soon as the inspector general opens an investigation, all of the powers of the investigation, all of the work of the civilian review board essentially can come to a screeching halt. The local legislative body would be able to have the ability to craft their powers in that way either allowing more or less; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I don't believe

they could provide for less. I think the inspector general always has six months that he could order, he or she could order the local civilian review board to stand down, but certainly if the legislative body wanted it to be longer and put that in the governing document for the civilian review board, then that would apply.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and I thank the good Chairman for highlighting that and I would agree and maybe I just didn't phrase my question appropriately. There is in this proposal if it becomes statute, the ability for the inspector general to suspend for six months when there are two investigations occurring at the same time of the same incident, but in fact, if a local municipality wanted to say to the civilian review board, now that the inspector general took this action to

investigate the same incident, the civilian review board's powers to investigate or pursue could be terminated. That would still be left up to the legislative body, local body to make that decision for the civilian review board when its formed; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, looking at section 18 of the proposal, if the good Chairman could indicate the evaluation that's being requested here?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, what's being requested here is whether local police departments in the state should use or could use the benefit of engaging social workers to either in conjunction with or lieu of a police officer help respond to certain types of calls. Certainly we have heard time and time again that oftentimes, as the ranking member began her, her remarks we have, you know, incredible police officers out there on our streets everyday who are put in situations that they may not be the best equipped to handle and sometimes, it's the touch of a social worker who can help deescalate a situation or solve a problem when law enforcement is not best equipped to handle that situation upon a call, and what we're asking local police departments here to do is to work on that issue and continue the evaluations and to report back to POST on their efforts in that regard.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the good Chairman for his explanation and certainly, the hope is there are some police departments or towns that are utilizing whether they're called you know crisis units or certainly just social workers and not in a unit form, but individually, to go to some of these calls and certainly in most cases very successful so I think gathering of that information would be very important moving forward.

Section 8 of the proposal, if the good Chairman could highlight what we're attempting to do when it comes to the use of cameras.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Sorry, Madam Speaker, I know we've been at this

for some time, does she mean section 19 of the bill?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker. My apologies if I said anything other than section 19 of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, what we're attempting to do in section 19 is require that the remaining police departments in the state that do not utilize body cameras, utilize them on or before July 1, 2022.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, regarding those cameras, so essentially are we mandating that police departments have body

cameras and dash cams?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and by mandating that we have body cameras and dash cams, are we also then mandating that there must be equipment ordered to properly store the feed from those video cameras?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

And through you, Madam Speaker, are these mandates, who would be paying for them?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, there has been for the last several years and will continue to be some funding available through the State of Connecticut via our general obligation bonding. There also I understand is federal money available for this. I know in my city of, my home city of Bridgeport, they were able to use federal funds to purchase body cameras there and ultimately, short of finding grant funding which is available out there, the municipalities would have to cover the cost.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, specifically through OPM, the State of Connecticut, what guarantees if any do we have for funding on these new mandates?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, it's my understanding that there is approximately \$3 million dollars to \$3.5 million dollars available in a, in grant funding that is administered through OPM.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, so at what percentage would a successful applicant for funding be able to receive funds to cover the cost of this mandated equipment in

storage?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, distressed municipalities would be entitled to up to 50 percent funding and other towns would be eligible for up to 30 percent funding.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and is there any funding for storage?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Um, there is funding available for storage for up to one year which is the requirement for storage

under the bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, so I believe the good Chairman had indicated that if you are a distressed municipality you could be reimbursed up to 50 percent and if you are a non-distressed municipality, it would be 30 percent and that would be for body cameras and dash cams, correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, that's correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and again, the storage

was simply for one year. Regarding the storage aspect of things, would that also include any new equipment that's required by an individual to set up in order to be able to store, review the video feed?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I'm not sure that's expressly prescribed here. Certainly we're allowing the secretary of OPM to promulgate certain requirements and conditions for receiving grants through this language.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, it's been brought to our attention through submitted testimony as well as I believe during the listening session that this may require the hiring

of personnel to manage this. Through you, Madam Speaker, is there any provision in here that would provide funding for the hire of new personnel?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

No, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. So Madam Speaker, I just need to take a pause here and just highlight again an unfunded mandate that we are putting upon our municipalities. Again, there's no question that cameras are important and quite frankly, I think it's just as equally important for the general public as well as a law enforcement official. We have seen time and time again that sometimes whether recollection or for other purposes, what's on video

isn't necessarily what's represented so it's important to have. With that said, the concern is we have heard from many of these departments who have made these decisions, sometimes very difficult ones, that they have continued and shockingly still, even after we made it permissive and provided some funding, they still were not able to fully fund their police departments with these cameras for a variety of different reasons. It comes with not only the requirement of paying for the cameras. There is then a requirement to equip them, there's the requirement of the storage and all of the equipment that comes with setting up the storage of the video feed and then yes, the individuals, personnel that's going to have to manage all of that, review all of it and do what's necessary. The cost is quite shocking and high and to ask now for a mandate where we are solely funding 30 percent for a non-distressed municipality, and 50 percent for a distressed municipality, once again, one more section in this proposal where we are not putting

our money where our mouth is, but we're asking the residents of the State of Connecticut to have to endure a mandate that all of us up here who vote for this are asking for them to once again go into their pockets. There are other ways of looking at this.

I would suggest that maybe those police departments that because of lack of funding and prioritization of funding, maybe towards education, maybe towards community services that the town provides, they didn't get cameras, but I would say that those departments, if there are no complaints, that should be looked at. They should not be subjected to another unfunded mandate. This is on top of the other mandates I've already highlighted in this proposal. Add it up! I believe the intended purpose here, which truly was the intended purpose when we made it permissive and put some funding out there, we know we don't have enough money to fund them all and the only thing we're doing here is a little bit of an enticement, I'll pay you now, but you still have to maintain it, you

still have to replace it and we're not paying for it, but we're mandating that you do it and the storage is costly.

Now there's ways of addressing it. Maybe we should mandate ourselves and when I say ourselves, the State of Connecticut, to collectively purchase. Maybe we'll get a better deal. Maybe the same thing with storage, but we're asking ourselves to do anything in this. But we stand here and say you must do this and with this timeline and with no money to fully fund. If it's that important, fund it. Maybe we should prioritize and get to the root of the problem. If there are incidents in police departments right now, with a high level of complaints, something's going on there. Cameras I think logically may or may not help, but this is where we need to be working with our police departments. The legislative bodies in those towns could right now mandate the purchase of this equipment that we're doing up here in Hartford; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Was there in a question in there, Madam Speaker? I missed it.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

There was. Thank you, Madam Speaker. The question was confirmation possibly of a statement that the local legislative body in any town or city can currently on their own purchase and/or mandate that cameras be purchased by their police departments? Is that not correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker. If a municipality wanted to purchase cameras, they could and under this

legislation the State of Connecticut is making clear that it is best practice and they should.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I agree. Best practice. They should do it. We should fund it. You mandate it, you fund it if it's that important. Because otherwise, that legislative body made the decision that they didn't put money towards that. Now I don't live in every town to know why they did, why they didn't, are they functioning appropriately without it, do they need it? But again, when we take the powers away from the local legislative body, we need to fund mandates. This is not a one-time purchase. This is an ongoing mandate for replacement, maintenance, storage and currently, Madam Speaker, does the good Chairman know how long the storage of this video is required by law?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, it will be one year under the bill.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The good Chairman is correct. If this proposal passes, it will be one year, but if the good Chairman can tell us how long is it now? How long does law require that if you have body cameras and video feed, how long must you store it?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I'm not aware that there is a set time period in the law currently.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, I've been informed it's 30 days unless there is a caveat, there is a known incident of investigation or a reason to hold it longer, and the reason I highlight that, Madam Speaker, is because I've heard from municipalities the cost of storage and now we're mandating that it be one year. That's a big difference. And in this proposal, we're only funding it for one year. Nothing thereafter. So, Madam Speaker, again, I can't stress enough that essentially what we're doing is pulling away the choices of the local legislative process and if we as individuals up here, elected officials, state representatives, senators, if we think that they need it, if we know that they need it and they don't have it, we should be vocal in towns to make it happen. We have voices. We reside in those towns.

We have local elected officials in those towns. We should be advocating in our towns. We should be taking local control of our towns, not being up here at this hour with a 70-something page bill mandating that our residents of our State of Connecticut fund what we say they must fund, without putting money where our mouth is. How much more must we remind everyone of the dire fiscal situation we are currently in? I get phone calls from residents; I'm unemployed, haven't received my unemployment check yet, my spouse has been fired. There are serious fiscal constraints today as a result of COVID, yesterday as a result of a variety of different irresponsible financial decisions that have been made, tomorrow, I don't know. But I sure as heck don't want to support something I know that's gonna cause them additional financial constraints tomorrow, possibly today. It's 3:35 in the morning right now. So if we vote on this, it could be today. I don't know when it will proceed forward if it does forward, but I will not support something

that's gonna tell the residents that they will tomorrow face all of these mandates cause that's what we're telling them from up here.

Madam Speaker, if I can have a moment to find the next section of this proposal to highlight. Through you, Madam Speaker, is the mandate for body cameras and dash cameras applied to municipal officers as well as the State Police?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, if I can bring the good Chairman to section 21 of the proposal. If the good Chairman can indicate what change is being achieved in the ability for

searching in section 21?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, we are, we, through this change we are eliminating the ability for law enforcement to ask an operator of a motor vehicle who is stopped solely for a motor vehicle violation, not for any other type of violation, but solely for a motor vehicle violation to have their searched without there being probable cause to do so.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and Madam Speaker, what is the reason or purpose that we're making this change?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, the statistics are quite frightening in terms of how often particularly young African American males are stopped by police officers and asked to, if their vehicle can be searched even when there's not probable cause to do so. I would submit to you, Madam Speaker, this provision in particular and this elimination goes right to the heart of the racial justice issue which this bill is aimed at getting at.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, the good Chairman indicated that there were statistics. If the good Chairman could share that with the chamber.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, African American males particularly under the age of 25 or 30 are stopped much more frequently and when, by percentage and when done, when that is done, asked if they can search their vehicle than their middle-aged white male counterparts and in fact, actually those consent searches generally turn up a higher incidence of contraband from white individuals because predominantly I would think because they are searched less than their African American counterparts.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, the statistics that the good Chairman just shared with the chamber, is that national or for the State of Connecticut?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I believe I've seen both.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, if the good Chairman can share with us the statistics for the State of Connecticut regarding that.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker, I don't have those statistics immediately in front of me.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the intent of the proposal before us is certainly laudable and if that is occurring, it's certainly something that could be addressed whether through training or now, we have mandated body cameras so if there's an abuse of power in those situations, we could make sure to get to it with the video feed as well as training. We don't have the statistics here today, this morning of how often this happens in the State of Connecticut. I won't pretend that it doesn't. Maybe we do have some individuals who unfortunately use that power to make that happen, but I don't know if it's one, two, 100, 1000. But my concern, Madam Speaker, is we're making a longstanding protected constitutional right change with this language. Don't take my word for it, but you can take the word of the State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice who submitted testimony

and I believe if I'm not mistaken also testified during the listening session. There's also testimony and also to highlight this would go against federal constitutional law based on his testimony, I don't believe we've gotten an opinion from the Attorney General's office, I haven't seen one, but I'm pretty confident in what was represented both in person, in writing, and if I'm not mistake represented to me through phone calls to the appropriate leadership to this fact.

Also doubly concerning is that according to the department and prosecutors who also submitted testimony, through these consent searches, and so let me kind of explain it to draw the picture. For whatever reason, probable reason more often than not or let's say a broken taillight, but allowable by law currently, law enforcement pulls someone over. The officer can ask the driver of the vehicle may I search your vehicle? The person has the opportunity say yes or no. And I'll actually take a step back. So they had reason to pull the person over, but

let's say they don't have probable cause because if they have probable cause, they can search it. They don't have probable cause, but they ask the question nonetheless. Can I search your vehicle? The person is within their right to say yes or no. Now more often than not, if you don't know what you can say you may get tripped and think well this is a law enforcement official. He or she is asking me so maybe they have a reason or a right to do so and I may acquiesce and say yes. I guess that's okay still. No harm, no foul, but the problem that does arise sometimes is upon that consensual search, there is contraband and illegal weapons found. Don't take my word for it; read the testimony. The fear is by eliminating this for the few incidents, we don't know the statistics in correct right now, that someone may be abusing their power, we're now going to lessen the ability to take illegal weapons from our streets.

You don't need to turn on the TV or to open the newspaper to sadly hear right now the conversations

about what's taking place in our State of Connecticut regarding illegal weapons and shootings. But we're taking a mechanism that the Division of Criminal Justice here in our state, prosecutors here in our state are saying that this request, a simple request has actually come out to good stuff coming off the street. Lives, we are here to save lives I would hope. What are we doing?

Now, if we want to empower the driver so the driver knows his or her rights and maybe is not assuming that they have to consent to a search when asked, then we empower them with knowledge. We tell them. We educate them. I don't know, maybe they don't talk about it in driver's ed school. Maybe we should talk about driver's ed school. I remember back I think it was in high school I took a practical law class. I can tell you right now, that was the best class I ever took because it actually talked about a lot of these interactions with law enforcement. Very important class. Little did I know even back then, but you empower with knowledge.

You keep taking away these tools and you still don't educate and empower, you're putting the public at risk because of the drugs and weapons that they've successfully been able to obtain, and you're still not empowering the person. It's, it's not, in my humble opinion the best way to go about this.

Again, we should be working together on this. We should be working to treat everyone equally, but at the same time keep everyone safe in our State of Connecticut and protect federal constitutional rights. That's what we should be doing as legislators.

Under this proposal, if the individual happens to say to the officer without the officer asking, officer, you can search my car cause sometimes people do get nervous and when they feel like the officer is accusing them of something, you just want to be over with it and ask them please search my car, does this prevent the officer from searching a vehicle that the driver simply unsolicited offers to have the officer search the vehicle?

Through you, Madam Speaker. My apologies.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I, again, I think I got confused in that, in that statement but I'm not aware of a federal constitutional right that someone has to search another person's car. I think if anything, it works the opposite way, that you have a right to be free from unreasonable search unless there's probable cause to do so and certainly that is the balance that is struck by this proposal. That if, as the ranking member alludes to, if somebody says go ahead, search my car and offers that up then yeah, in that instance the officer could search the car. What this proposal simply says is the officer can't request, can't demand, can't mandate that somebody consent to the search of the vehicle which is exactly the issue that we're trying to get at and the balance that I think is appropriately struck in

this language.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and certainly we can agree to disagree and that's why we're up here to make sure that we are able to articulate and debate the proposals before us because it's important for people to know varying views of the language that's before us in that regard. So, Madam Speaker, moving onto the next section, we have section 22 of the proposal. If the good Chairman can highlight what we're trying to do in section 22?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker. This is an analogous provision of the bill. The last provision was related to a search of a motor vehicle. This

would be related to a search of the person and the person's effects.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker and through you, Madam Speaker, my apologies. I'm just going to go to the end of the last section. I forgot to highlight some new language that we have there. I believe it's restrictive, further restricting documents that could be requested.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Excuse me, Representative, the Chamber needs to stand at ease. Thank you, madam. Would the Chamber please come back to order? Will the Chamber please come back to order? Representative Rebimbas, we will start with you as we have left off with you, when you are ready.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the

Clerk has an amendment. It is LCO 3808. Would you please ask the Clerk to call it and I be allowed to summarize?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The Chamber will stand at ease while we scan that number right in. Will the Chamber come back to order? Will the Clerk please call LCO 3808, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule A?

CLERK:

LCO number 3808, House Amendment Schedule A, offered by Representative Klarides, Representative Candelora, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection? Hearing none, Representative Rebimbas, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the amendment that we have before us that I offer to the

good Chamber for its consideration would strike sections 41 and 42 in their entirety and renumber the remaining sections and internal references accordingly. Now Madam Speaker, as summarization would request, I will attempt to be brief as to what this amendment essentially would do.

Section 41 and 42, 41 specifically has been well known as the qualified immunity portion of the proposal that's before us. And 42, Madam Speaker, for an over simplification truly is the implementation of section 41. Now, Madam Speaker, in summarization, I ask that the good Chamber consider this amendment, but I ask that the good Chamber consider this amendment not because I ask the Chamber to do so. I ask the Chamber to consider this amendment because of all of the individuals that we have heard from regarding this topic of qualified immunity. So I ask that you listen to those individuals who took the time to participate in our listening session. That would be individuals from law enforcement, from police chiefs, all the

way down to patrolmen and women. I would ask that you listen to all of the individuals who also participated in that listening session who highlighted the problematic concerns that they had with this provision and how they believed it would impact their communities in having law enforcement do what they need to do. I would ask that you review the testimony provided by collaboratively all the cities and municipalities through their individual organizations from COST down to CCM that also asked that we take pause, we do not pass the language we currently have addressing qualified immunity.

I would ask on behalf of the legislators' communications that we have had in deliberations, in negotiations, in examples and sharing of stories, that we just take pause and don't take action on this now. I ask that you allow the task force that so much work saw, expertise currently is working on qualified immunity and most importantly, all the other issues that relate directly to what people

want or claim that qualified immunity would do as well as in the proposal before us. We haven't gotten to it yet, but we specifically ask the task force to look at professional liability insurance. That is not in there coincidentally. That is in there because we knew that sections 41 and 42 were being advocated for. So when you advocate for something that will cause financial liabilities and damages, you want to make sure, you better make sure that you've got all the information necessary to make sure that you've got some type of insurance policy in place that would address section 41. Not just for the law enforcement; for the municipalities who once again will financially be on the hook and strapped for what potentially, let me rephrase that, what we know municipalities will have to pay in cases that will come as a result of section 41.

So for all of the reasons I've just stated from all of those individuals, professionals in their own right, I ask that you please consider taking the time to allow the additional information and study

on this. I would also add to that list our Governor. Our Governor who does daily briefings directly to the public. That's important to know. People have asked that we take the time for a variety of different reasons. Everyone has asked for different reasons. Some know the impact it will have, and I'm gonna give you an example. Law enforcement. Now it's easy for us to say law enforcement. What we believe to be law enforcement is either grey uniforms or blue uniforms serving us in the State Police, serving us as municipal police officers, but let me just bring it back to the law enforcement individuals. I'm proud of them all, every single one of them who do right by their uniform, who do right by their badge, who do right for their communities, but I'm gonna listen extra special. I'm gonna tell you, I'm gonna listen extra special for those individuals who serve in law enforcement who are from the minority communities and why do I do that in this particular situation on this particular bill? Because I believe with

sincere thought that the intent that we have here, that I share with my colleagues is to make sure that those who may be treated, actually let me rephrase that, those who we know might be treated and it's the words at this hour, not might, those that we know that are mistreated, that we are attempting to protect with this proposal. I'm gonna listen extra special, I'm sorry. It's the subject matter. How do I not? That's what I hope everyone is here to do. I have some amazing law enforcement officials that serve in Naugatuck from Hispanic to black and we've got everywhere in between, Portuguese and a variety of others. And I've had the opportunity, I serve on Judiciary, I don't serve on the public safety so I don't have that direct contact with our law enforcement on a regular basis up here at the Capitol, but I've had a great opportunity in working collaboratively with many of the leaders in this building. Another opportunity to speak with individuals from all across law enforcement. Union reps, police chiefs, patrolmen and women, you name

it. And I'm so proud of the ones that had the ability to come up whether it was here today, the hundreds that took the time to be up here to voice their opposition to this, to the ones who've been doing infomercials out there and that came during the listening session and I'm going to hype an amazing young lady, union representative, law enforcement official in Naugatuck, who took the time not only to tell me, but to tell everyone how this would impact her and her life. Her fiancée serves in Waterbury. He's black if I'm not mistaken and she's Hispanic and it was touching to me, and it was touching to me, like I said, I gave the extra attention because I want to be sensitive that what I'm actually doing, what I'm gonna say is being attempted in this is actually being achieved and not hurting our minorities who have chosen this most amazing, fulfilling, dangerous, dangerous profession. There are very few people in this world who are real human beings and not just TV cartoon superheroes. There are very few people in this

world that we ask on a daily basis, that we train on a daily basis to put themselves in harm's way, to consider others before themselves.

This qualified immunity that we have here will change all that, but you don't have to believe me. Believe the individuals, minorities, white, yellow, purple, all of the individuals who have taken the time to share with us what the experience is like for them wearing those uniforms. And then the unintended consequences of the impact that this is going to have financially on the municipalities, but also then personally to the individual. We're talking about liability insurance. We're not talking about getting rid of bad apples. We can do that already, we can already do lawsuits and because this is a summarization, I just wanted to hit each of the main points that I think are so desperately important here, even irrespective the financial component of mandates that you guys have already heard me say multiple times this evening regarding the proposal before us. But just think of what this

does to those individuals.

So, Madam Speaker, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

The question before the Chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule A. Will you remark on the amendment? Representative Stafstrom.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment before us. I think it is fair to say that many folks and advocates in this state and around the country and in fact other states in this union including Colorado and Massachusetts most recently, are looking at the fact that the federal qualified immunity definition has gone too far and is too restricting in allowing folks to proceed with their cases in court. In fact, even Congress is taking a look at this issue on both sides of the aisle recognizing that this is an issue.

We have heard from the advocates since the public hearing. We've heard from law enforcement and we have listening and made tweaks in the current language before us. We still provide in the language before us an early dismissal for cases where the officer has an objective good faith belief that their conduct did not violate the law and we also make sure that an individual officer, I repeat, an individual officer does not face liability for any act they undertake unless their action was malicious, wanton, willful in contravention of someone's constitutional rights.

Madam Speaker, I believe the language in the underlying bill before us strikes the right balance and begins to let us have a conversation in this state about qualified immunity at the federal level. I hope that conversation will continue on and I know there are others who wish to speak on this amendment, so I will leave it there. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment? Representative McGee on the amendment, sir?

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

Yes, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. MCGEE (5TH):

First and foremost, I'd like to thank you, Madam Speaker, Majority Leader for the opportunity to respond to this amendment during this morning's debate. I'll only take a few moments of your time, but I wanted to set the table on what it is or rather what it is we are discussing this morning. As a black man, as chair of the legislature's black and Puerto Rican caucus, I wanted to define qualified immunity in a legal sense and on a personal level.

While I am no lawyer, it's my understanding that qualified immunity, the ability for a public employee to evade certain legal action against them

during the course of employment. It's afforded to an individual if they have reasonable belief that their actions in question were lawful and part of an established policy set in their work environment. Qualified immunity, a doctrine established by a series of supreme court cases or rather decisions is a law of the land by default and not by our own volition. It is time we have our say as a state and as a legislative body and decide whether or not we wish to continue to live in what I call the dark. To rid our police departments of qualified immunity it to rid over-policed streets of bad actors. To rid our police departments of qualified immunity to breakdown the blue wall of silence, a cold built solely to suppress accountability and silence the voices of extremely good cops. I'm pleading with my colleagues, black and Puerto Rican caucus, Republican, Democrat, white, black, Hispanic, to reject this amendment and to lift the veil. To allow our citizens to have a voice in how we're policed because we know that not all laws are

enforced equally. That is not an anecdote. That is not a hyperbole. It is a fact and until we stand up as a legislature, stand up and say enough is enough when it comes to race-based violence. Until we put an end to the decades of violations against civil rights of residents across this country and even in the State of Connecticut. Equality among our people will remain out of reach if we don't come to that resolve.

I'm not asking you to know my lived experiences and understand the fears that my friends and my neighbors, my family, people of color have lived under because that is neither fair nor possible. What I'm asking if you could just simply weigh how to vote on this is to understand that there are worlds between what the sound of a police siren means to my neighbors on the north end of Hartford and to those of my neighbors in the suburbs.

An author, Michelle Alexander, put it best and I quote, "The fate of millions of people, indeed the future of the black community itself may depend on

the willingness of those who care about racial justice to reexamine, reexamine their basic assumptions about the role of the criminal justice system in our society." I'd like to share with you a poem that resonates so real in me and it was shared by a Connecticut resident some time ago with many members of the black and Puerto Rican caucus following the killing of George Floyd. And because at the end of the day, we must remember that we are here because despite every reform suggested or recommended, in spite of the years of the benefit of the doubt guaranteed to officers, another black man, another black man, another human being was murdered in broad daylight at the hands of someone who was supposed to protect him. So please indulge me as I read this, this quote and I really hope you hear the sentiments of my heart as I read this quote or poem, excuse me.

Enough is enough. This is out of control. Stand up black man, stand up. We watch video of knee on throat and life slowly slipping away because

you fit the description of a forgery suspect, judge, juror, and executioner, George Floyd. We can't go jogging, Ahmaud Arbery. We can't relax in the comfort of our own homes, Mr. Jean and Atatiana Jefferson. We can't ask for help after being in a car crash Jonathan Ferrell and Renisha McBride. We can't have a cell phone, Stephan Clarke. We can't leave a party to get to safety, Jordan Edwards. We can't play loud music, Jordan Davis. We can't sell CD's, Alton Sterling. We can't sleep, Aiyana Jones. We can't play cops and robbers, Tamir Rice. We can't go to church, Charleston 9. We can't walk home with Skittles, Travon Martin. We can't hold a hairbrush while leaving our own bachelor party, Sean Bell. We can't party on New Year's, Oscar Grant. We can't get a normal traffic ticket, Sandra Bland. We can't lawfully carry a weapon, Philando Castile. We can't break down on a public road with car problems, Corey Jones. We can't even shop at Walmart, John Crawford. We can't have a disabled vehicle, Terence Crutcher. We can't read a book in

our own car, Keith Scott. We can't be a 10-year-old walking with our grandfather, Clifford Glover. We can't decorate for a party, Claudette Reese. We can't ask a cop a simple question, Randy Evans. We can't cash a check in peace, Yvonne Smallwood. We can't take out our wallet, Amadou Diallo. We can't run, Walter Scott. We can't breathe, we cannot breathe, Eric Gardner. We can't live, Freddie Gray. We are tired and I'm not just saying as a black man, I'm saying as a people we are tired. Tired of making hashtags, tired of trying to convince you that our lives matter, our black lives matter. Tired of dying, tired of being tired, just tired.

So to vote for this amendment is to reinforce a status quo that has done harm to people like me, not because of our actions but because of the color of our skin. Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in this legislative body to vote down the amendment before us and take into full consideration the reason we are here is because another person, another black man was killed at the hands of law

enforcement and might I add, my comments are not against our police officers. I have family, I have relatives who serve daily, wear their badge, wear their uniform and they wear it proudly and I support them. This is to hold bad actors accountable and I hope and I pray that those of you in this Chamber will think about the words that we all are sharing with you this evening.

You'll hear from my colleagues, list of victims of Connecticut Police violence, I'll read two. We have Alphonso Zaporta, 41, was shot and killed by Hartford PD. We have Anthony Vega, 18 years old, was chased and shot in the head after during a traffic stop over an allegation of stolen car plates on April 20. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment? Representative Felipe.

REP. FELIPE (130TH):

It's not on. Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise strongly in opposition of this amendment. I

think it's important to say to this body that qualified immunity is just another barrier between our people, meaning black and brown people, and justice. It is just another way that the system fails us. Qualified immunity is supposed to be a balance between two important interests, the interest of holding officials accountable for their actions, and making sure that they are not liable in lawsuits for just doing their jobs. I understand that, but that balance has squarely shifted towards shielding officers and government officials and not holding them accountable for the actions that they take and I'm gonna share a story with you.

In my district three blocks where I live now and two blocks from where I grew up, a 15-year-old boy was killed by an officer. That officer stood behind a car that this boy was in. It was a stop, a full stop and he started backing up because he felt cornered and instead of taking any preventative measures or any de-escalation, they shot this young man through the back of the car, in his back and his

passenger next to him and then they let him bleed out for hours without giving him medical attention. They let him sit there and die, did nothing about it, watched as he pleaded. I have a video on my phone from May 9, 2017, right now where they say that he was dead as soon as the shot him, instant, instantly dead. But there's a video on my phone right now that shows otherwise. His head was moving. He was pleading for help. He wanted medical attention. They said no and the officer that shot him, James Boulay, used qualified immunity. He got off on that and he now has a pay raise, he still on the force, and he still continues to harass people in my district. There's a young man by the name of Abdullah Anthony Marshall who got pulled over on his way to work one morning. This man sells oils. He got pulled over and the officer that pulled him over was like you know what, I know you, you're a good young man, he was fine on his registration, his license wasn't expired. He was like I'm gonna let you go, but instead, James Boulay

shows up. James Boulay says no, you can't go anywhere, decides without any proper cause to search his vehicle. When he searched that vehicle, he found that the oils this man was selling had 1 percent formaldehyde and he took him in. He lost his job. For what? For selling oils? For doing something that culturally he was taught was something that was fine to do, to sell oils that smell good that represented his culture. And as I look here at this list that I have compiled for all of my colleagues, of 40-plus people who have been murdered by police, I think of their families. I think of all the debate we're gonna have today about qualified immunity and how much it might cost a municipality. Have we thought about how much these funerals cost these families? How much money they've spent on these funerals, on medical bills for people who've been brutalized by police and how that impacts their budget? Their family budget is nowhere as big as a municipal budget and they have to take these losses over and over and over again.

I understand that any bill that we take up, we're gonna make some mistakes. It happens. It happens, but when we talk about erring on the side of justice, I don't think that we're thinking of justice for an occupation. We're thinking of justice for a people. My colleague who spoke before me was born in his brown skin. My family members were born in their brown skin. They can't quit that. They can't decide oh I'm not gonna be black tomorrow. I'm not gonna be brown tomorrow. That's not their choice and for, since the inception of this country, when injustice is done upon them, they have little to no recourse. Little to no recourse, but due to qualified immunity, when something happens with an officer, they have all the recourse in the world. Sonia Sotomayor, when she was confirmed as a Supreme Court Judge, Joe Biden said to the police unions, she'll be good to you and she was. But she even says this is an absolute shield for law enforcement, an absolute shield of law enforcement that should not exist. That's what she

says, as somebody who is supportive of police and her record shows that. We have a really big problem with qualified immunity in this country and I think if Connecticut wants to make a stand and do something about it, we should and as my colleagues are, I'm gonna read a couple of names, tell you what happened to them because everybody needs to know about the victims of police violence in Connecticut and you need to understand that if you don't vote, if you vote for this amendment, you're ignoring them. You're ignoring them and ignoring the justice their families could've gotten if there was one less obstacle towards justice for them, and I'm talking about Jarelle Gibbs who was killed after being ejected from a car window in Hamden. And I'm talking about Corbin Cooper from my hometown of Bridgeport that was also killed in an unlawful car chase. I'm urging everybody in this caucus, in this chamber to think about black and brown lives every single time that you go to press a button today. Think about us. These are our stories. I

understand that people might be telling you one thing or another, but when we tell you that our lives are in danger and that we feel like we've been wronged, believe us. And a lot of people here are gonna have some issues coming out of this and I know, and I know we're gonna heal. I know we're gonna heal, but right now a lot of us are saying that we love each other. Well as one of my colleagues would say, love is an action word. If you love me, show me. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Reyes, on the amendment, sir? Good morning, Representative. Can you test your mike, please?

REP. REYES (75TH):

Can you hear me?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Yes.

REP. REYES (75TH):

Thank you. As a person of color who's been in Connecticut for over 55 years, in the inner city

predominantly, in every city or town that I have ever lived in, it's always been in distressed municipalities, predominantly with people and communities of color. I've definitely seen a lot in my youth and my adolescence and I certainly have heard a lot more. Plenty of stories from constituents, from family members, from many people who I represent and have the privilege to stand here and speak on their behalf and for those who are no longer with us, who I know the stories. I represent them today and the word that comes to my mind that's very crucial in this amendment and on this bill, House Bill 6004, is accountability. There are not many professions, professional professions where there is no recourse for accountability. No appeal process for accountability and what that leads to and has led to is abuse of power. Abuse of power and I have to say that, as my colleagues before me have already testified, the pain and suffering that the family of Edward Gendron, Jr., who was killed tragically in Waterbury in January of this year and

a judge recently just cleared the incident, declared the officer innocent of all charges and you still have a grieving family. You still have many hard feelings in the community. You still have many people who have lost faith in policing and have lost trust in the people that put and pay to serve and protect those very communities that we're talking about. The judge that ruled in that case, in one of his statements said, but the report's conclusion doesn't mean that everything they did about this instance went well and that was the, the judges, in the judge's comments. That very same judge also said, and you can read this, this is all available online, that very same judge also challenged us all to actually do something about it. That we as lawmakers have the ability and the right to actually do something about it for those communities of color that we represent.

I stand before you not as an angry man, not as a bitter man, but a man who's had the opportunity to grow and learn and never will I stand here and tell

you that I'm a perfect human being, but I learned a lot in this life and to stand here and have folks tell us that we are anti-policing is an insult to all our intelligence and to us as people of color. My family not only have retired proudly from law enforcement, but still preside and still work in the State of Connecticut as law enforcement and I'm proud of the work they do and when we start talking about bad policing or bad actors, we have to remember, we keep using the words it's a small group, it's a small percentage, but just as when something happens in a family or a team, you are judged by the least of you, not the most of you. You are always judged by the least or the weakest link and furthermore, when you are a good officer and stand by and do nothing and say nothing, you are complicit and you are just as equally guilty as that officer who is actually not doing what he has sworn to do which is to serve and protect the people of his community.

We are a country of law and order, but in a

country where people are disproportionately stopped and frisked, stopped and harassed, stopped for minor incidents that end up in death, it's really scary. It's really scary and I have, I have to tell you personally that communities of color are really, really at the point where enough is enough. I cannot state it enough. Because of the lack of accountability, we are at the point, the boiling point where we are going to lose more law and order and we're going to have more chaos before we have order. And I'll close with after listening to the testimony of many of my colleagues and I have to tell you that they have poured their heart out over this bill. Many people have put a lot of hours into this bill. I absolutely stand in opposition of this amendment, stand wholeheartedly in support of the bill as it was written, and I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to consider it. To look into their hearts, into the communities they represent because this is a vote that will be historic for the State of Connecticut. Thank you,

Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Michel, on the amendment, sir? Please proceed.

REP. MICHEL (146TH):

Thank you, Madam Chair, Madam Speaker, sorry. I do want to speak tonight briefly about my experience in becoming American. I came here as a white immigrant from France and my first American friends, those that accepted me and evaded my voice were my black, brown, and yellow brothers and sisters. There was, I came here at the age of 14 and it was a strange world and I shut up, I know a lot you don't believe that, so that I could listen and learn. It was easy to learn about the oppressive system that was in place. My friends were trying to have a normal life. What did normal mean then? It was to have a job and raise a family. This was their dream which also became my dream, but was it a dream for all or was it just a normal course for someone else's life? Every time my

friends fell, they tried to get back up but were constantly put back down by the system and by the police.

I'm not here to entertain the idea that all police officers are bad. I have a friend who's a police officer, who fought against racial discrimination within his police department. I have even met others that took a stand publicly to denounce the racial discrimination in their departments and saying they were gonna get penalized for it. The idea here is to simply describe what I witnessed and learned. We're not at a crucial time in our existence, a historical time where the need for social justice has become more visible than ever. It is not as if it was new; it was always needed. For all those years since I was 14 and moved to the U.S., I saw the same thing over and over again, repeatedly so to the point where it seemed normal in our American culture. Well normal was never normal. We have to see things for what they are and not what we think they are. We have to

make things better for everyone. I also am guilty for not changing this horrible oppression and segregation in a country that is now my home. So I am here as a fellow state rep with what seems to be some power of change.

How can we call ourselves Americans when the very core of what we pride ourselves on is liberty and justice for all? All. When the policing powers for the people protect their institution and are here to serve and protect, then why does this not systemically apply to our black, brown, yellow sisters and brothers? Are these not the values that are the pride of our nation? This has been going on for way too long. Slaves became slaves under a different form, one that makes racism seem like fiction. One that hides the truth. One that will get people to believe that this belongs to another era when it is rampant everywhere today. This needs to stop. Discrimination has to stop.

My friends, police officers have to be reassured that good cops will not be hurt by this

bill. But as much as members of the public need to be reassured that their civil rights will not be infringed upon. The idea of protecting some of their own crimes or abuse of power is to the point that members of the public have their civil rights dismissed has no place in the hearts that believe in liberty and justice for all.

I ask my colleagues to support our brothers and sisters in the legislature and elevate their voices, and elevate the chance for social justice. I beg of my good colleagues in the house and Senate to vote in favor of eliminating this loophole called qualified immunity. Why should a civil servant not be prone to the same laws that they themselves enforce? I hear about freedom all the time so how about freedom of being, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and freedom to get a good education. I will vote and support the bill introduced with sections 41 and 42. I stand against the administrative and I thank you, Madam Speaker, and the proponents of the bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment? Representative Stallworth?

REP. STALLWORTH (126TH):

Good morning, thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Good morning, sir. Please proceed.

REP. STALLWORTH (126TH):

Madam Chair, it's good to see you this morning. I stand in strong opposition to this amendment. You know the more I think about this and I've been thinking about my first encounter, of my first encounter of hearing stories about what we call bad apples or bad police officers. I had to ask myself when I was in seminary and my car was stolen and I called the police officer who refused to take a report and told me I must've stolen my own car. Or I think the encounter of my son, my son, flesh and blood. He and five of his friends were stopped by police officers and had guns pulled on them because

they allegedly had been throwing eggs. Guns were pulled on them. You know, I have to ask myself what has changed because that was not the first encounter. The first encounter really when I was a child and there was an African American male who was shot in the streets of my hometown and nothing was done and I have to ask myself, what has changed between that time and now and I have to look myself in the mirror and say not one damn thing. Excuse my expression, but not one damn thing has changed. Maybe cell phones because now we say we see, well we have been seeing for a long time. We just celebrated the life of Congressman John Lewis. There was a police officer who hit him as he came across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, not a KKK member. Of course, the police officer could've been one. Who knows? But it was a police officer. We just celebrated the life of C.T. Vivian, another civil rights worker. Who slapped him in the mouth in Selma? It was a police officer. You know, Chris Rock who's a comedian has said some professions

cannot have bad applies. Delta Airlines cannot say oh, we have a few bad pilots who like crashing planes. Some things cannot happen. We need the strongest accountability bill possible.

Now I'll close with this. Two things come to mind. One is the opioid crisis. When it was just in one community or communities of black and brown people, no one was concerned. But it didn't stop there. It went to other communities and so what we're pleading for today is not just help for black and brown communities because what happens in one place will at some point happen in another place, and it will not just be our sons and daughters and our sisters and our brothers and our mothers and our fathers, but it will be everybody's sons and daughters and mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers. But I also feel like I've been in some kind of way moved back to 1963 and I feel like I'm sitting in that jail cell next to Dr. King in Birmingham, Alabama in which eight white clergy persons wrote him a letter, made a public letter and

said to him, wait. You know we're tired of waiting.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Nolan.

REP. NOLAN (39TH):

Good early morning, Madam Chair. I stand before in opposition of this amendment. I stand before you because of the tough position that I am in as a law enforcement officer who knows the trials and tribulations that our people are speaking to us about when it comes to community. We are in the midst of an uprising from our communities and they are speaking and they are speaking loud and clear about police accountability. I, being in this unique position, am able to make decisions to make our communities better. I believe police need to be held accountable. I believe that there has to be something done to this immunity statute for our communities to feel safe, to have trust, and to make our communities better.

Since we've started the creation of what we've brought before this legislation, I've gotten calls

from police officers, I've gotten visits from police officers, I've been followed by police officers to let me know I'm still part of the union, to let me know that I should be careful, and to let me know that I should watch what I say. I speak loudly to police officers that are doing good. We are proud of you. We like what you're doing in our communities, but we have bad apples as was said earlier and we do not have control over them. It is time for us to gain control. We cannot any longer allow for bad apples to think that because of this immunity that they can get away with things. I stand with my fellow colleagues to say let's push this bill away and get back to the main bill and vote on it. I also say to those that are listening, watch who votes. Watch who doesn't vote because the elections are coming and we heard you. We heard you when you protested, we heard you when you rallied, we heard you in our small groups, we heard you through email just like they say they hear everybody else. We hear everyone, but we know that it's time

that we have to make this move to make it better. We can no longer stand by. We can no longer wait. It is now. Now is the time that we need to push this bill, not amend to move it, not to coddle those who think they can get away with it anymore. We need action to speak louder than the words that a lot of you said that are against this when you were at the rallies. Many of you asked what you can you do. Many of you asked how you can help. You can help by getting rid of this amendment. You can help by voting on the bill that was presented. That's how you can help. You said black lives matter. We worked to bring the unions together to talk about this and we asked them to bring something to the table. Nothing. Nothing until this week did I see something presented. It is disappointing that you expect us to bring a plan and for you not to have a plan to give back. It is hard for us to put something together to make it work if you don't help us make it work.

I'm not angry anymore. I'm actually relieved

because people are gonna see who's all talk and who's action. When you get ready to vote, I ask you to look deep inside at the people who are scared and the people who shudder and at the people who look for help when they call the police. Again, I'm not saying all police are bad. I believe we have numerous police that are great in every community, but we have police that do wrong and we need to hold them accountable. We need to help the families be satisfied by being able to have a judgement in the end. Only way to do that is to pass that original bill. Much too much we wait for the courts to say no, that doesn't qualify for you to have a civil penalty. We even talked to officers who said I'm gonna lose my house, I'm gonna lose my educational fund for my children. So we switched up on the bill again where we made the possible suspect if they were to commit a crime as a police officer not liable for any financial aspects up front. Just like they asked and now people are worried about the burden on the municipality. Don't get me wrong.

There will be an increase, but the municipality already owns that burden. The municipality already owns that burden.

When you vote, vote with your heart, not your head. Thank you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HENNESSY (127TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Wilson Pheanious, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative, you're not, hold on.

REP. PHEANIOUS (53RD):

Okay. I guess it's on. Thank you, Madam Speaker and I'm sorry for the delay. I rise in opposition to this amendment and I rise as a black woman on behalf of people that look like me. I rise also because I am concerned about the lives in my community and I speak for the people in my community who don't look like me. Most of them aren't black, but they have written to me and they have asked me to demand justice in this chamber. They've asked me to protect people not always in our community, but

all over Connecticut because they have heard of the atrocities and they understand it and they know it.

I have also heard from policemen in my community and I have sought them out and talked to them because I wanted to understand their feelings and what they told me was they too were frightened. They were frightened of perhaps being forced out of their jobs. They were frightened of being accused of something for which, that they did not do, that they felt wronged about. They feared that people did not understand that they were just human beings. That they were just men and women who had families and who loved them and who sent to work and tried to do a good job. They wanted me to understand that. And I wanted them to understand that I just wanted the same things. I wanted to be recognized as a human being in my skin. I wanted to be recognized as having the same innate value as is attributed to those who don't look like me. I wanted my life to matter. And I'm tired. It's been a long, long time. It's been a long day. It's been a long

night, but it's been a very long 400-odd years that I've been asking or someone who looked like me has been asking for the same things.

My fifth great grandfather fought in the Revolutionary War on behalf of this country in 1776 and men in my family have fought in wars in this war ever since. My father fought in three of them as a Tuskegee Airman and in Korea and in Vietnam and all he wanted was to be treated as a man, to be able to live a life without fear, to be able to live a life where he could create his own prosperity and he did that and I'm part of it. And I'm here in this room talking to you because of those sacrifices of all those people.

So I have a reason to be tired. For me, this isn't a philosophical question. This isn't some issue of town rights or some issue of money or local control. It's a matter of life and death; of life and death and dignity. It's a matter of being treated like a whole American. That doesn't happen all the time. Governmental immunity which some have

called qualified immunity using the federal language is important because without it, no one is held accountable. There is no justice when there is no accountability and it is this accountability that has everyone so worked up, so put out, so concerned. So I wonder where is the accountability when you're talking about a Rayshard Brooks who was sleeping in his car at a Wendy's in Philadelphia or Aura Rosser at home in Ann Arbor after a domestic dispute who was killed by a policeman. Stephon Clark standing in his grandma's backyard eating ice cream as was Botham Jean seated on his sofa in Dallas eating ice cream. Akai Gurley walked down his building's stairwell and shot by startled police. Gabriella Nevarez, well she was a bad driver and slammed into a police car, but I ask you, was that a reason for her to die? Tamir Rice was a 12-year-old boy playing in a yard with a toy gun. Michael Brown refused a request not to walk down the center of a vacant street and so many of these cases, nobody went to jail. In most of these cases, nobody even

got fired. They got retrained and put back on the force. Every year in this country over 6557 people are killed by the police. Twenty-five percent of those people are black. Well, you might say, sounds like a reasonable number, 25 percent, but only 12 percent of the population is black so there's a bit of a discrepancy there. And you know I wonder whether people think about these things when they're talking about the issues that I've heard talked about. Things like well qualified immunity is going to mean more lawsuits. It's gonna mean perhaps frivolous legal involvement. Well those things aren't necessarily true and they're probably not true the way the statute was written, but I would ask them how unfair and unjust is imprisonment or is being pulled out of your car or beaten up when you have done nothing but be black or be brown or not white. I wonder how that feels?

I talked to officers who were afraid or were concerned because they might be afraid to do their jobs if the qualified immunity provision were

removed and they said well, I'm not gonna do my job. I'm gonna be afraid to do my job because somebody's gonna sue me and I would say to them every time my husband leaves the house, I'm afraid. I'm afraid to live. I'm afraid to walk, I'm afraid to shop in my skin because it's not white and because I look like a criminal to somebody. I've heard towns say that they're gonna have to pay more money, that insurance may be a problem, there may be an increase in that, that maybe their workers will quit and I have to say to them, can I quit being black? Can people that look like me quit being black to move themselves out of harm's way and I ask you why should they?

I've heard that nobody will do the job out of fear of being wronged and I tell you that I fear being wronged every time I see a police car and I know that there are good cops. There are good cops in my district, wonderful people who I would hold up before anybody and they are as unhappy about the bad cop as I am, but as someone I just heard say a few minutes ago, we are frequently judged by the least

of us and unfortunately, that's what happens with policemen.

So when I hear these kinds of concerns, I look at the other side of the issue. I look not at the fear of the policemen. I look at the fear of the people that that bad cop, not all cops, but the bad cop, I look at that. I heard some talk about the liabilities that towns will undergo, you know, that it's gonna cost more money, that it might take money from schools, it might take money from other social services within town. And I ask when a person is unfairly killed and leaves their children, their spouse, their family behind, someone mentioned funeral costs. I suspect that's the least of the problem, of the financial burden, of the lack of resources that someone in that circumstance is going to have. So is it too expensive or is life too expensive to lose for nothing and I know what danger our officers are in and I fear for them too because I know how quickly things can change and go wrong and I don't want to see them hurt either, but for

the ones who are there, the ones who maybe didn't get the training they needed. The man who stood on George Floyd's neck was a training officer. He was a training supervisor so I have to wonder, what does training really mean in that context?

You know, liability cuts both ways. Liability for the town, but why should the person hold a liability because of what they look like? Because of a skin they can't leave, and I don't want to leave my skin behind but as a matter of fact, whether I want to or not, I can't. And people see me and they will treat me like what they see my skin color looks like to them and I can't account for that, but I know I haven't done anything wrong and I know I shouldn't have to be frightened and I shouldn't have to fear for my husband and my son and my grandsons because somebody's gonna look at them and think they look like thieves or something too. I can't tell you how to fix that, but I know it goes way back. It goes back before 1776 when my fifth great-grandfather was fighting for this country. It

goes back through all of those years when we have been deprived of the rights that we have earned, that we deserve, that we demand. It goes all the way back and I get, I get a little stressed out when I hear people talking about how this is gonna impact the policemen, some of whom have done the very harms that I'm talking about and they're not being able to be held accountable for. It's not that I don't care about those police. It's not that I don't care about the cities and towns. God knows I do. That's my home, but I also care, I care about the fact that I can't walk down the street or get into a situation where maybe I have a flat tire or maybe I have some kind of situation where the police have to come to me and I have to wonder, am I gonna be okay? Not as much as I wonder when it's my husband I tell you, but still, should I have to wonder? Should I have to second guess? No. God knows I shouldn't have to, but I do. And so I don't think it's such a burden for towns to hire and train and regulate and manage their officers when they give them a gun.

I'm not asking for something that seems unreasonable. It seems prudent, it seems appropriate, it seems like what needs to be done.

You know, people have said that all of these things happened out of town. Well you know you can't hold the police accountable, can't hold the good police accountable for what the bad police are doing. Well it happens here in Connecticut and people that look like me are held accountable for imaginary things that some other person that looked like me did or might do or somebody's afraid they're gonna do. It's not right, it's not fair and the people in my district know that including the police who of course they're concerned. Of course they're worried because they think they're gonna be wrongfully charged, that it's gonna somehow cost them something. You know I saw not if they are not causing someone grievous bodily harm or removing someone's civil rights from them. That's when they need to worry. I worry every time I open my door. So I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the

aisle to think of this outside of your experience because your experience isn't my experience. I seriously doubt that any of you have been accosted or embarrassed or humiliated or had your husband humiliated in front of you or any of these things. I just doubt it. I mean I could be wrong and I apologize if I am, but I suspect I'm not because it doesn't happen in your world. It happens in my world.

Somebody said to me why, you know the cities are out of control. I thought I heard somebody call them a plantation, you know which is scary but the fact of the matter is it's because it is happening in communities of people that look like me and people that don't, maybe they don't get it. Maybe they don't understand it. Maybe they don't see it. Maybe it doesn't seem like a big issue to them. Maybe it seems more like something they ought to be concerned about, town coughers or town control or local responsibility or some of these other things. I see it as life. I see it as dignity. I see it as

400 years of sacrifice and love and believe in this country and I still stand here today believing. I stand here today believing like my fifth great-grandfather believed. He was a freedman. He was already freed when he went into the service of the sixth Connecticut regimen to help free and save this country. I don't think I'm asking too much. I just ask for you to look at it like I have to feel it every day. Think about it. Think about how it is from outside of the skin that protects you. I ask you to think hard and long about this amendment and about the underlying bill because it isn't asking for more than is deserved. I want to be protected and served and I want my life to matter just like yours does and I don't think that's asking too much. So I ask you to toss off this amendment and to get to the underlying bill and to pass that bill because if there are kinks that need to be worked out, there's time to work them out and if there are you know some adjustments that need to be made, there's time to make those adjustments, but how long do I

have to wait for justice in this country? Is it ever coming? Is it ever coming? Is it ever coming under a police state where some bad cops continue to get away because nobody can hold them accountable? All of these people whose names we'll call out from time to time tonight and make reference to, they're all dead at the hands of police for no good reason and they're gone and their families miss them every day and it's not about the money. It's about the acknowledgement that they were wronged, that their life was cut short because somebody got scared? Because they look at a black man and he frightens them or somebody got upset because their brakes didn't hit on the car and they ran backwards into the car and that's a reason to shoot through the car and kill somebody? It hurts me to have to say this because I love the people in my town and I love the policemen that are doing the right thing, protecting mine and everybody else's life and this isn't about being against them. It's about, it's about preserving the lives of so many people who just

don't seem to matter. So I ask you again to think carefully and to reject this amendment and to vote on the underlying bill. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment? Representative B. Smith from the 48th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SMITH (48TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm here in opposition to the amendment. I have no story to tell. I'm a 63-year-old white man who's benefited from white privilege, but I have eyes and I have ears and I have a brain and I have a heart, and I'm of the generation who's grown up on the television age and I've watched an awful lot of the nightly news in my life and throughout that time, I've seen people being murdered on streets. I've seen rioting on streets. I've seen calls for justice my entire life and nothing's happened.

Now at its core, this bill is intended to foster greater trust in police services among

segments of our population that have with justifiably good reasons lost that trust and while it represents change and nobody likes change, its spirit is not an attack on the police. The bill has evolved in response to concerns of police officers and their advocates as well as others and on the bill, and in particular on the subject of government immunity, I've gone back and forth over the past weeks in my mind. I've heard from and listened to the concerns of many current and retired police officers and I've heard from many members of the public as well and I've also asked myself, what if they were still with me would my father who was a police officer when I was young and my Uncle Jim who retired as the chief of police of that same force that my father was on would tell me about this bill. I've also myself what my great-grandfather who I knew when I was young and who served in the legislature in New Jersey 100 years ago also would tell me about this bill and I can only speculate on the advice that they might give me but I know that

they all served in their hometowns and those were diverse urban communities in Northern New Jersey. And they were good public servants. They entered into their fields as have we all because they had a desire to serve the public, all the members of the public. My father in particular was a student of history and he could recognize a historic moment when he saw one. This is such a moment.

Critics of the bill say it needs more work, it's not ready, it's not perfect. Well neither are any of us. Neither is any law. Like our country, all of us are a work in progress. This bill has been drafted to do three things; one, respond to this moment in history, two, to allow enough time for us to hear from the task force, to hear from all sides of this issue in more detail, and three, to make needed adjustments that will improve it before it goes fully into effect. History is watching us now. It's telling us now that this is the time to take action. If we truly want to rebuild the bond of trust between our communities and our police,

then we must act now and I'm urging my colleagues to reject this amendment and adopt the bill as it was presented. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further on the amendment? Representative Gilchrest.

REP. GILCHREST (18TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I stand in strong opposition to this amendment. Now is the time to take action. Signs and protests are important, but when I saw black lives matter, I'm committing to making individual change, looking at myself. I'm committing to community change and I'm committing to institutional change and section 41 of this bill is part of that change.

Don't all of us want to prevent a police officer from depriving someone of their equal protection under Connecticut's law? Section 41 helps us get there. My community of West Hartford and many communities across this state have declared racism a public health crisis and they have

committed to taking action. Well section 41 is that action. Section 41 says that if a police officer deprives someone of their rights and an aggrieved brings a civil action, then it is a municipality, not the individual officer who will need to protect and save harmless that accused police officer. To me, section 41 is saying and making municipalities have more skin in the game, which is what many of our municipalities have said that they wanted and it's going to ensure that law enforcement in our communities treat all residents equally.

There seems to be a lot of misinformation on what section 41 does. You know what it doesn't do? It doesn't bring back someone's loved one and it doesn't take away the trauma that someone may have experienced at the hands of the police simply because they are black. Section 41 just gives that person or their family member one path to seek justice. So I encourage all of my colleagues to vote against this amendment. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (56):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Palm.

REP. PALM (36TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in strong opposition to this amendment because I believe that rather than promote security for good police officers, qualified immunity demotes the trust between them and the communities they serve. Outside this building today at a rally, a highly placed police professional said that anyone who votes for the police accountability bill is either "a cop hater or brain dead" to which I say, no, sir, I am neither. Everyone who knows that black lives matter is offended by those comments and everyone who understands the professionalism of responsible police officers should be offended by that comment because rather than being brain dead, those of us who know that black lives matter actually do our homework. We think deeply about the state of our country and we know our history. I was born the

same year as the Montgomery bus boycott and when I was 7, they bombed the church in Birmingham and my mother read to me what John Kennedy said about that and I remember it. He said that the events in Birmingham have so increased the cry for justice across our country that no city, state or legislative body should dare to ignore their cries. So I am asking all of my colleagues to heed the cries that we have been hearing not just for the last two months, but for decades and decades and generations in both our big cities and in quiet little towns like those I represent because the people in my district understand their privilege and many of them don't have it and many of them do have it, and several of them have written to me about the importance of this bill.

So it is important for all of us to understand how momentous this moment is. I believe everybody in this body on some level ran for office to improve the world. This is our moment to do that. Please reject this amendment. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Hughes.

REP. HUGHES (135TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to urge my colleagues to reject this amendment because we were summoned here in this session in an emergency. This is not just a special session; it is an emergency session. We have been barred from doing our legislative duty, our oath of office to legislate since this was shut down because of the pandemic of COVID-19 and during that time, the pandemic of racism, of systemic racism got worse. It got worse. We lost lives. We had communities traumatized like my colleague, Representative Palm, said not just in the past few months, but for decades. For decades bleeding and crying in the streets, bringing us to this emergency and you better believe that this legislation is rushed because that's what you do in an emergency. You rush to the scene. You rush to the scene to render aid, to interview, and our

colleagues have worked really, really hard for years to prepare for this intervention and I resent this implication that this is sloppy. What's sloppy is that we have waited so long to intervene. We have waited so long to come to the scene of the, of, of, of the pain, the scene of the emergency and the emergency isn't just one person. It's communities and communities and that's why they've taken to the streets and I almost reject the characteristic of bad cops or bad actors because the system is so pervasive and it's designed to do exactly what it's doing, which is protecting white people and white property. That's what our police forces were designed to do and that is what they are doing well and it also, the systemic racism is so pervasive, it criminalizes poverty, criminalizes black and brown and non-white skin, like Representative Pheanious and Felipe and Representative McGee were talking about and the system criminalizes and suspects people who are fearful now because they're traumatized by their experiences and their

communities' experiences of police and it criminalizes that fear and running away to justify the use of excessive force and violence. We need this piece of accountability to start to create structural accountability within the system. Not just one or two individuals, but system wide and this piece is really important because those people harmed by excessive force, by brutal abuse of power and that's what we're talking about. We're talking about abuse of power. We're talking about arming a system to abuse this power and to normalize that and it's so pervasive that's invisible. It's so pervasive it's invisible to us; the system wide pervasiveness so that when cops do the norm, even though they're doing their duty, they're harming the very people that they're sworn to protect. But the unspoken rules of systems is that you protect some people and you suspect others of being criminals that you need to hunt and arrest or detain or harm.

In an emergency, we rush to the scene and the person bleeding out is the community. Not a single

person but a whole community that's bleeding out and begging for help so this legislature is an emergency session right now to respond to that emergency and this bill is the ambulance. This bill is the ambulance that has been summoned to the scene at this time. Now is not the time to send that ambulance back for an oil change or more spark plugs or a little tune-up. Now is the time for the ambulance to deliver the patient to the hospital and the hospital is our court system and it gives that person a fighting chance for justice, for accountability through the civil courts. That's what qualified immunity does, I mean that's what removing qualified immunity does which is why I reject this amendment because the people most harmed and impacted and the families and the communities that have lost their beloved family members at the hands of our public servants deserve recourse in the civil courts just like everyone else. It doesn't lower the standards. It's not gonna be easier for them to prove willful misconduct and abuse of power

and deliberate removal of their constitutional rights. It doesn't lower that standard. It doesn't make it any more likely that they'll have an outcome, but it gives them that open door. It gives them that hospital fighting chance which they've been denied and that's the only meaningful option for justice for many of these communities and families that keep seeing this pattern of pervasive harm and we're talking lives being lost. Will there be a cost associated? Maybe. But I want to hear that concern for the cost to be proportional for the concern for the communities terrorized and traumatized by pervasive patterns of police brutality and I'm not hearing that up until now. I am not hearing that.

We've been summoned in an emergency to attend to a patient that is bleeding out. The ambulance is here. We need to get that patient to the hospital. That is our job. That's why we're here in a pandemic in an emergency to do our jobs and to my colleagues, I want to say I'm sorry it's taken so

long. I'm sorry that Jayson Negron's loss of life killed by police wasn't enough. I'm sorry that Mubarak Soulemene wasn't enough, killed by Connecticut police. I'm sorry that Edward Gendron wasn't enough. Justin Griffin, Michael Gregory, Jose Soto, John Carras, Alphonso Laporte, Anthony Vega Cruz known as Chulo, Kyron Sands, Paul Arbitel, Juan McCrae, Zoe Dowdell, Gus Stalos, Thomas Gazotos, Jr. I'm sorry that it wasn't enough, that we lost Val Thomas, Daniel Reyes, Dillon Pepe, Christopher Andrews, Richard Love [crying], Christopher Anderson, Davon Werblow, just in the last five year in Connecticut at the hands of Connecticut police. I am sorry that it took George Floyd and all of us gazing in horror at the eight minutes and 46 seconds that officer with all those colleagues on casually extinguished George Floyd's life.

I'm sorry that it has taken taking to the streets in outrage to summon this ambulance. That we haven't rushed to the scene sooner, that all of

those deaths weren't enough of an emergency for those communities, for us to recognize and acknowledge that we have a pervasive, systemic racism problem in Connecticut and police are only a part of it. It is so pervasive it just permeates the air we breathe, the water we drink, the soil we're in. It is everywhere. It's in our school system, in the housing inequity and the fact that we're not in our, in our maternal mortality rate, in our medical systems, in our educational systems and our economic opportunity systems and how we, how we award credit. And hey, we're not immune to not holding systems accountable. My colleague was pointing in the 2008 economic collapse no one was held accountable. Interesting.

We're not talking about punishment. We're talking about interrupting system violence and we're talking about if we do nothing and we allow this amendment to go forward, we're doing policy violence to our patients bleeding out in the street and I'm not going to come here in an emergency in a pandemic

and allow another one to bleed out. We're just trying to survive these two emergencies, COVID-19 and racism and you know who's not surviving very well? It's our black and brown communities. We need to survive. We cannot afford to wait and it's all on us, not on us and them. And I know change is uncomfortable. I know structural accountability is confusing. That part is messy and we're gonna work together to tighten it up, but we're gonna get this ambulance to the hospital today and I urge my colleagues to get in the ambulance and let's go. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Hennessey.

REP. HENNESSY (127TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in opposition to the amendment. So I'm a legislator from Bridgeport and I don't think I could be a legislator in any other community except Bridgeport because it's the people of Bridgeport that I'm so proud to

represent cause they don't ask for anything. They just ask to be left alone and to live their lives with dignity, but you know Bridgeport struggles and I think a lot of it has to do with the zoning that goes on in this state. I call it apartheid in which people just aren't given a chance to thrive, to give a good education and that's why I'm a legislator in Bridgeport, from Bridgeport because these are the people I fight for and it's rough. It's rough up here to fight for urban communities in this state cause we're outnumbered. So I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Under current law, police are provided certain governmental immunities. Section 41 seeks to address this immunity and hold police accountable for use of illegal deadly force against individuals. This is the section this amendment seeks to remove. Since the murder of George Floyd, the country has mobilized and taken to the streets demanding police accountability, that the police be held responsible for their actions when they act criminally and use

their weapons to harm people and deprive them of their constitutional rights.

When I found out that there were those seeking to take section 41, qualified immunity out of the police accountability, my breath was taken away. To my mind, the qualified immunity section was us, the mostly white, privileged, male Connecticut state legislature saying to the black community yes, we get it. We understand and we are willing to take a stand with you against police brutality. This was us saying we got your back. Black lives really do matter. To seek to remove this section to my mind is a betrayal to our black brothers and sisters. The amendment before us seeks to remove the possibility of redress for police brutality. Are these Capitol walls so thick that we can't hear the cries for change, the very change this section would provide if passed? To remove this section is a tragic loss. It is a crime against humanity.

This is not about good cops versus bad cops. This is not an issue about questioning a police

officer's character or job performance. I think the Judiciary Committee did an excellent job to ensure this section was fair and in keeping with recognized agency standards and guidelines. This section basically is about a police officer accountable for killing or maiming someone. It means the police can no longer get away with murder. If you kill someone and it's proven to be willful and malicious and outside the scope of proper behavior for a police officer, the police officer will be tried in a court of law and justice will be served. To willfully seek to remove this section which gives a victim or a victim's surviving family the right of redress in a court of law like I said is breathtaking.

We refer to ourselves in the House of Representatives as a family. This bill is about a larger family; it's called the family of man. There are those in this family not doing so good. They are suffering due to systemic racism because of the color of their skin. The harvest of hate that has been perpetrated throughout the centuries of

American history must stop. Qualified immunity is a small step in the right direction. To miss this opportunity by removing this section would be most tragic. Our constitution states we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We all know that this has never been the case due to the legacy of slavery. There are many issues we as legislators must consider in our political careers. I would suggest this will be one of the most important votes you will ever take. This issue won't go away. Every day in the news we find new examples of police brutality. As the demonstrators chant no justice, no peace. To remove section 41 would be most unfortunate. Please do not be swayed by those speaking falsely about how qualified immunity will work and we can always address issues that come up in the next session. We have rolled out the effective date for a year to allow time to

address and work through any unintended consequences. We have been working to make this most fair. I hope we can listen to the better angels of our nature in this debate. We must address police brutality racking communities of color. We must seek to stand up and protect them with compassion by enacting this legislation. Reform is a good thing. It's not to be avoided. It needs to be done, but it does take courage to take an unpopular stand. Let's please do the right thing and make this bill all that it can be. Please vote no on the amendment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Representative Winkler.

REP. WINKLER (56TH):

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I rise to speak against the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Please proceed, sir.

REP. WINKLER (56TH):

I often or I usually rise in this chamber to

try to dispel misinformation. I see that people are afraid for their police. Towns indemnify their employees. If an officer is sued, the town provides the legal protection, the town pays the attorney fees. The town pays any settlement or judgement. This bill makes that perfectly clear, though it was already perfectly clear. No police person will be harmed.

My district treats me very well, but so many people send to every legislator that I get to read other legislators' emails. I've been told even in this building that this is a kneejerk reaction. This is a 400-year-old story in this country and this is just the next chapter. I prefer to think of it as critical mass. We all knew what was happening in the cities for the last 50 years, some major cities for the last 50 years, but we chose to ignore it and then cell phones made it impossible to ignore. It's not kneejerk; it's long delayed. It's critical mass.

Another thing I've been told in this chamber,

we need more study. Well don't let anybody tell you that about this amendment because this amendment not only deletes 41, it also deletes 42. Forty-two says we'll study the problem and they don't want a study. The people who made this amendment want no study. They don't want to know and they don't want a committee to come back to them with any advice. They want this problem gone. When I first saw the bill and got my first email, I knew that 41 was gonna be the problem and I knew that 41 would not survive and it didn't. It's already been amended before it even reached the floor. The original bill, the working draft eliminated qualified immunity. Now in the version that's on the floor, it's back. So we've already compromised. Now we're just trying to get the compromise through and still people are resisting.

So I said no police officer will be harmed. There is one worst case scenario. One of the things involved with 41 is municipalities do not want to be held responsible for the actions of their employees.

Now in the private sector, you are responsible. If an employee of A&P pulls a practical joke on the customer and the customer is injured, A&P is liable. Why the towns think they should not be liable and I want to say, the towns have been thoughtful on this issue, but when the bottom line comes, they don't want to be liable for the actions of their employees. Why is that? Why should the public sector get immunity from liability? When a person's civil rights are violated, they should have some means of redress. Otherwise, you just keep the lid on until the pressure blows. Now the federal courts have pretty much made it impossible so sue for violation of civil rights. It's almost like you can't sue the king so this bill attempts to establish a cause of action in state courts. There's still gonna be immunity, but it's not gonna be as extensive as in the federal courts. It's going to be a little easier to sue in state courts than federal courts when your civil rights are violated. That's all this does and why shouldn't

people be held accountable for their actions and why shouldn't municipalities be responsible for the actions of their employees?

So here is the worst case scenario, where an officer might possibly be harmed. So an officer is sued repeatedly and the town has to pay repeatedly for a single officer. Before there was no right to sue, before the federal courts would throw it out. Now there's an officer who they have to keep on paying for. Well one of those times, rather than just pay, they'll realize that this officer is a constant drain on their resources and the next time the officer is guilty of a transgression, they will fire that officer for cause and that is something that some officers see, and they don't want that to happen, but looking at it the other way, it's almost pathetic that we have to wait for time and time and time again where nothing is done now in cases. Now with some liability, the towns will realize that time and time again they're paying for an officer and maybe when it affects their pocketbook, they'll

be more willing to do something on behalf of the public. So that's the worst case scenario and I don't think it's that bad. So I rise to speak against the amendment and I hope we get to the bill in its compromised, but un-amended form. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Rosario.

REP. ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good morning. I rise in strong opposition of this amendment because the lack of police accountability has been an issue across the State of Connecticut. Over the past few months, I've had the honor and privilege of attending peaceful protests across the city of Bridgeport and most of these protests have been led by young students of color and many of these young students of color, they have hit the streets. They have talked to their elected leaders like myself and they've sent us here with a task and they've said

the system doesn't work for us. It doesn't work for people who are black and brown. The system is broken and we just can't go back to the status quo.

We all know this was a movement that was started by the tragic death of George Floyd in Minnesota and we've all seen the video. It was tragic. It was painful, but incidents like that don't just happen on the other side of the country. They happen in our own backyard. Many of my colleagues have aforementioned the late Jayson Negrón, who was a 15-year-old young man who unfortunately was slain at the hands of a police officer in Bridgeport. Young Mr. Negrón was handcuffed, he was no longer a threat and he succumbed to his injuries. He literally bled out and when I saw young Jayson Negrón gasping for air, blood, a pool of blood forming around his body, I immediately thought about my son cause my son was the same age as young Mr. Jayson Negrón. Could you imagine as a parent going to a police scene and seeing your child gasping for air and there was

absolutely nothing that you could do to save your child. Absolutely nothing. You're helpless. George Floyd when he had his knee on his neck, he asked for his mother. He asked for his mother. His mother wasn't even alive. He asked for his mother. That broke my heart. What happened to Jayson Negron broke my heart. Jayson should be 18 years old right now, just like my son. Getting ready to vote in his first presidential election. Getting ready to go to college and I'm, I've seen this movie before. We've been talking about this issue since before I was elected. Many of these fighters, folks like Senator Winfield have been fighting this fight for a long time and I want to thank him and Chairman Stafstrom for all the hard work that they've done. But I'm tired of talking of bad apples cause this isn't an agriculture bill. We're talking about police accountability and bad cops and it is a privilege to be a public servant and to serve the community so I urge my colleagues to strike down this amendment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Thank you, Representative. Representative Hall.

REP. HALL (7TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good morning.

DEPUTY SPEAKER COOK (65TH):

Good morning, sir.

REP. HALL (7TH):

I rise in strong opposition to the amendment. The COVID-19 pandemic from my perspective has been both a blessing and a curse. It's a curse because thousands of people have lost their lives and even more will live on with the effects. The economic damage it has wrought will be with us for a long time. It's a blessing because the America that large swaths of this country thought they lived in they now know is a fantasy. In their fantasy, everyone has equal access to healthcare. In their fantasy, children receive an equitable education and can easily do remote learning. And of course in their fantasy, police officers don't willfully and

maliciously kill unarmed black and brown people.

Think about that for a second. There are people inside and outside this chamber who feel that an officer who willfully and maliciously kills someone, that they should not be held accountable. I took my oath to be part of this chamber April 28, 2017 and just a month into my first time here, I found myself commenting on guess what? A police accountability bill. I've heard comments that we haven't had a chance to discuss this. Black people in this country have been talking about these things for 400 years so don't tell me we haven't discussed these things. This chamber has been trying to fundamentally change how police interact with the communities they serve for decades. Yet, here we are.

If you ask any objective person if police are held accountable today, they will emphatically say no and I will go even further. If you ask police officers if they are held accountable and they're being honest, they would say no as well. This

system that exists is rotten to the core. When I spoke in 2017, I talked about how the constitution is supposed to be rooted in justice; however, it's just us who never seem to receive it. Although the underlying bill speaks to police accountability and transparency, it should speak to governmental accountability and transparency. We have to remember that police officers are agents of the government.

In the past, we have given significant discretion to both municipalities and police departments to hold these government agents accountable. That has not worked. The systems that are in place are set up to protect the offending officer. I have to remind my colleagues that police officers work for us. We tell them how to police our communities, but more importantly, we determine how to hold them accountable. Many have spoken about the potential of what they're referring to as frivolous lawsuits. We're not talking about frivolous lawsuits. We are talking about when

people are maimed or killed by the very people who should be protecting and serving, but the language that the proponent of the amendment seeks to remove is where an officer willfully and maliciously violates a person's civil rights. There are countless examples of police violence, some of which you heard about tonight.

I was a teacher for about 12 years at Weaver High School, both a teacher and a coach and during that time, you have students that you feel very fond of and that you can always remember, you can always see. You have hundreds of students that come through. Over that time, I probably had 2000 students, but some of them just strike you in their heart because you know at their core they're very good. One of those students was Jashon Bryant. May 7, 2005, as I opened up the Hartford Current to read that Jashon Bryant was shot twice in the head by a Hartford police officer. That police officer, Robert Lawlor, was never held accountable. Never held accountable. Jashon's family misses him

dearly. They recently celebrated the 15th year of his murder and the officer walks around like a free man. Not like a free man, excuse man, a free man. I leave you with what Jashon's father said at the time. A police officer has the license to kill black people in our neighborhood and get away with it. Enough is enough. If you vote in favor of this amendment, what you tell me and the community that I represent is that black lives don't matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Representative Phipps, you have the floor, sir.

REP. PHIPPS (100TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition of the amendment. I think about the numerous marches that we've had over the last few months after the death of brother Floyd and the chant if we don't get no justice, then you don't get no peace

rings in my ear over and over and over again. If we don't have peace, you do not, if we do not have justice, then you have no peace and that dichotomy is so important because as the many callings that are in my heart, a calling as an educator, a calling as an organizer, a calling as an elected official, you have to meet folks where they are. And in doing so, I try not to use dichotomies. I try not to say it's this or that, it's either black or white, it's either good or bad. In many things in this world, there's often grey. In this particular case, there is no grey. There is a clear dichotomy in your choice in how you vote for this. This is a vote on honoring property or honoring life. This is a choice of listening to your colleagues that have day after day for the last few months, have shared their pain, their horror, their trauma. You can choose to listen or you can choose to ignore. You can't do both. You can choose to believe the experiences of folks that you say that you love and that you care for, that are your colleagues and your friends. You

can choose to believe their stories and their experiences or you can choose to say that it doesn't exist and you can ignore it. You cannot do both.

You can choose community and people or you can choose process. You can't do both. You can choose to hold those that are sworn to protect and serve. You can choose accountability or you can choose no accountability. You cannot do both. You can choose to center your discomfort or you can, once again you can believe the stories. You cannot do both and I'm asking you all, I'm asking all of us to choose to listen, to choose to love, to choose to believe because that's the sort of way in which I try to do this work, which is through listening and through hearing and once again, through love in your heart. I don't know how we can continue to hear over and over again over the last few months and over the last few hours and choose to ignore. I'm not sure if we are ready for that kind of pain as a collective unit. I know we're not.

And I want to offer at least one more dichotomy

that we have. Once again, we can choose to honor and respect the collective pain that many of us have and that many of the communities have or you can choose to center your individual feelings and one of the hard parts about this work is that words get thrown around and I'm not sure if folks understand the meaning of these words and the word justice has come forward over and over again, that this is about justice and as you sit in a restorative circle as part of a restorative justice process and you look that mom in their eye, you look that dad in their eye, you look that, that, that, that brother or sister or niece or nephew that has lost a loved one and you ask them in their restorative circle and you, to, to bring justice and ask what, what would make things whole? What would make things better? There is not a single person that would ever say money is going to restore this. This is not about justice. This about accountability and transparency. Period. No money is going to be bring the pain, is going to bring the pain away.

None. This is not about, this is not about just-, this, this, the, the way that we have seen continued violence over and over again at the hands of, at police brutality, this is not going to restore justice. What this will do is start to allow folks to be held accountable.

So I want to, I want to share two particular names to show how difficult this work can be and I have to apologize to these two folks who are no longer here with us, Louis Martinez and Andrew Basilici. I'm probably pronouncing his name wrong and if their families see this, I apologize in the most wholehearted way I can and I wasn't going to mention their names. It was difficult at first because when they died at the hands of officers and at the hands of a police force, they were allegedly committing a crime. So the way that we have all been conditioned is that we have now prioritized property because they were allegedly committing a crime and allegedly committing a theft that their punishment was death. For the stealing of property,

their punishment was death. I don't think there's anyone in this room that thinks the punishment for death I mean the punishment for theft should be death and that happened to two people in our own state, in the State of Connecticut. We have to admit that is wrong and the fact of the matter is, is that this bill including with the amendment or without the amendment would not bring justice back to those two people and their family.

We have normalized our trauma. We have normalized the trauma and pain of people of color over and over and over again. Today as 40-plus people have been killed in the State of Connecticut at the hands of officers over the last five years, someone came up to me and said oh, you're lucky Q. You don't have anyone on this list. That's what makes me lucky? To know in five years, I haven't had anyone in my direct community die at the hands of police? That's what makes me lucky? So then we have to ask which of us are lucky and which ones of us aren't? I can make a few guesses. I bet you can

make a few guesses. But that is not luck. That is systemic oppression and systemic racism over and over and over again when we know who that affects and we know which communities it affects. That is wrong. That needs to change.

Many of us have talked about being tired and we now have a pervasiveness of fatigue. It permeates our bodies where I said we have normalized our horror, we have normalized our pain, we have normalized our trauma over and over and over again. It is common, it is to be expected and that's not right. So I want to share why this is so personal to me in two quick ways and I appreciate the, the little bit of extra time. As I said I'm an educator. I'm not a teacher but I work in a school, I help parents and help students with special needs and one of the scholars at the school begins yelling slurs at an officer he sees outside the window, which is a teachable moment. So I pull this scholar aside, I say you can't do that to a community member. Why are you doing that and he said well let

me tell you what happened to me last night and he shares a story of what happened to his father and how father was harmed and hurt and beat and he said I'm really, I'm scared. I don't have the ability to teach a child not to be fearful or not to have that kind of reaction because that is actually a logical response and reaction to that kind of trauma and it pains me to know that in his own community, folks that are supposed to protect him and serve him, even at such a young age, even as young as an elementary school kid, he no longer feels the ability that those folks are there to keep him safe. That's painful and it's painful because I have a brother that's an officer and by brother, biologically I'm an only child, but love makes a family. This is a man now with two kids, we grew up together. I was at his house more often than I was probably at mine. He was at my house more often than he was at his own. We've had more meals together than I can count. I officiated his wedding. He's a little over 6 feet tall, a skinny white guy, and it's kind

of once again the best friendships that you have when you're from Middletown where in our particular neighborhood, it wasn't uncommon to have friends that were both black and white. And we're both doing the work that is our calling. I find myself as a legislator and as an elected official to be my calling and I've seen the passion and joy that my brother has had as an officer. He's thought about it for years. I remember the first time he began to train for the task and the exam. I've never seen him so fired up before about anything. So I appreciate him being on the service. Now as you grow up with someone from 3 years old, when you start off with Ninja turtles and you're on the track team together, then you get a little older, trouble can happen with young, with young kids and young boys. And this particular brother once again, and all of our brothers were, once again, he's one of the two white guys in the group and the rest of us all are, we're Jamaican and Puerto Rican and black Americans, we're a pretty mixed group but in this

group, there's only two white guys. So we had more interactions with officers when we were kids with people of color than without. So he knows what it's like to see an officer come up to your car with his hand on his hip already ready to shoot. He knows what that's like. He was there with us. He sat in the same car and even as I tell this story, I wasn't gonna share it at first because I didn't feel like the trauma that I had was enough compared to the many colleagues that I've shared their story that are going to continue to share their story and once again, I want to say again that it is not enough to know or it doesn't feel like it's enough or it doesn't feel like it's traumatic enough or it's horrible enough, that to see someone come over with their hand ready to shoot already is not enough to share your story. But my brother that's an officer now, he knows what that's like. He knows what it's like and after he, he, he, once again, but he also knows what it's like when we walk across the street, go into a new restaurant and lounge, being stopped

by several officers and once again, just active, he knows what that's like cause he was there. He was there right with us and I've seen him come out of training and out of the academy and in the last few years, my brother is practically unrecognizable. He's unrecognizable to the point where he forgot what it was like or he suggests that as part of his training, he has to forget in order to keep himself safe and I shared with him if you're telling me that those are the policies and practices that are gonna keep you safe so I never have to tell your two sons what kind of man their father was, I'm gonna, I'm gonna have to think about that and, and, and, and fight with that because I don't want to have to, I don't want to, I don't want that kind of responsibility. But I also want you to wrestle with the idea of knowing that all your best friends are people of color and that those sort of actions keep us unsafe and can harm us and you know that because you were there with us. So what I am asking for is if there are folks that think that is what it takes

to keep people safe, then there needs to be levels of accountability and transparency to make sure that all of us are safe cause we are not all safe. We are not. We're not all safe.

So as I'm probably well over eight minutes, the amount of time that that officer held their knee and foot on George Floyd's neck as he called out for his mother, and I want to us to at least take on your own that eight minutes and take a moment of silence and think, have we done enough in the State of Connecticut to make sure that if that happens, we will begin to have some sort of justice and I would argue like this, this amendment, if it was to pass, would not put us on the path of righteousness and justice.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the bill, on the amendment before us? Representative Lemar, you have the floor, sir.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Good morning.

REP. LEMAR (96TH):

Mr. Speaker, it's about 6:30 a.m. and for the last number of hours I've been listening to my colleagues share personal stories, personal stories that they themselves have experienced, they have witnessed, or the communities that they represent have gone through deeply. You know I don't have the permission to share some of the stories I've heard today so I won't except to say that many of the stories that I have been told by my constituents, by my friends, people I've known for a long time make you question the role of government and the folks that we entrust to enforce the laws that we pass in this building. And you can get lost sometimes when you hear the stories but you don't see it yourselves because you see, my local police department back in New Haven or where I grew up in Rhode Island, I've always been able to rely on them and count on them

to have my back. I've never once worried, never once had an experience that would make me question that a local police officer wouldn't come to my rescue or my need or be by my side when it was necessary. I've never for a moment experienced fear. I've never for a moment felt like that wasn't my agent and I have the sense that a lot of folks in this room and a lot of folks in our state feel the same way. And so how do you grapple with that? How do I grapple with the experiences and the stories of my friends, my colleagues and the people that I represent with the experience that I know is true in my heart and my experience? When we look at the facts?

You know we're here in this moment right now because for the first time in our history we're able to quickly and easily have video evidence of experiences. You know it's not just the last few years that people have been able to highlight mistreatment in the hands of police officers. It's just we've had the video evidence now to support

those claims. But as my colleagues have suggested, it's not the invention of the iPhone that turned some cops bad. It's 400 years of history. It's 400 years of excuses and I think frankly it's about 60 years of something called qualified immunity.

Now we can pretend that this is a legal construct that we all voted on at some point in the past and we need to reverse that action. We didn't. I don't think if I put qualified immunity up on the board right now it'd get 20 votes because it's a ridiculous standard. It is a ridiculous standard that has bipartisan support to change across this change. There's Libertarian organizations and Republican senators across this country that are trying to remove it. How is qualified immunity being used? Well let's look at Reasons Institute, again a Libertarian organization highlighting how nefariously qualified immunity is used. Cops have been granted qualified immunity for shooting a 10-year-old and 15-year-old. Cops have been granted qualified immunity for stealing \$225,000 dollars

while executing a search warrant. Cops have been granted qualified immunity for assaulting and arresting a man standing outside of his house. Cops have been granted qualified immunity for sicking a dog on a handcuffed and surrendered I discussed.

It is a ridiculous standard that I doubt anyone would vote for, but because it's been allowed to be developed over years of judicial decisions, we have this standard that we have this one opportunity to at least roll back just a little bit, just a little. Can we have a real conversation about this policy? Can Connecticut be a little bit different? Can we protect our citizens a little bit more than the federal government seems interested in doing? And that's what we have before us. And I understand when our local police departments or as the President of the Connecticut State Union said today, I have to be brain dead or a cop hater to vote for this bill today. He said it right outside. Right outside today. Brain dead or a cop hater. No. I'm standing on the side of the innocent 10-year-old,

the innocent 15-year-old, people who have had their lives, their property, their dignity stolen from them for years. It cost me very little to stand up today and say I support police, but to roll back qualified immunity. I'll go home again, feel comfortable with my local police department, feel comfortable that I'll be safe and protected at every interaction I've ever had. But you know what else I've heard in these halls and outside over the last few weeks? Not directed at me. Directed at some of my colleagues though, you can guess which ones. I bet you're gonna want that police coverage when it comes time. Maybe it won't come as quick. Gosh it would be unfortunate if it took them five minutes instead of two minutes to respond to a call. That's what it sounds like when you know you're above the law. That's what it sounds like. And the problem is, I know a lot people know I'm not making that up. They know it happened. They know they've heard it and I can be one of the folks who pretends another person didn't say that. Or I can stand here and say

it's time for this to change.

I'm asking folks to not wait for the next advent of technology to realize all the stories are true. That everything we've been told for 400 years has been true, but this is an egregious, egregious legal standard that needs to be removed. We don't need another ridiculous court decision to finally open our eyes. We have them already. Our eyes should be open and this should be an easy act to deny this amendment. Deny this amendment that strips this provision. Deny this amendment that even strips a study of this. That's, that's the part that really galls me. If you vote for this amendment, you're saying you don't even want to study this issue.

A lot of my colleagues have had more powerful things to say this evening, this morning. I center my comments on the passion and the experiences that they've shared and I ask you all to vote no on this amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Representative Vargas, you have the floor, sir.

REP. VARGAS (6TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm here tonight to oppose this amendment because it goes to the heart of undermining what I believe to be the best pro-police accountability bill that is before us. We have what I believe is a pro-police accountability bill and I believe this amendment is an anti-police amendment. The good police officers in my district who do their job every day, day in and day out want to professionalize their job, want to have a good relationship with our community. We're lucky to have leaders like Hyacinth Yennie and our NRZ that meets every month with the police officer, Kathy Evans at Southwest Behind the Rocks. We have Carl Williams and the South End community and the communities that I represent, we have a great relationship with our police officers but as a

member, as a supporting member of the Southern Poverty Law Center, we know that white supremacists have been infiltrating police departments and sheriff's departments around the country to pursue a racist agenda under the cover of law and I am convinced that the majority of officers in the State of Connecticut would love to see their departments cleaned of these kinds of individuals that abuse peoples' civil rights. This amendment, this amendment will create distrust between police officers and their communities. Hardworking, honest police officers will benefit if we kill this amendment and they'll benefit if we pass a good accountability bill. It will rebuild that trust that we need between community and policing. We have had millions of young people out on the streets marching peacefully asking us to pass police accountability. Police officers have joined those marches. Good cops have been there with those young people and young people believe that the system will be responsive. That we as elected officials will be

responsive to the community. If we fail, if we fail to kill this amendment, we can easily call it listening to my good colleague from New Haven, we can easily call this amendment the ostrich amendment where we refuse to even look at the issue and just bury our heads in the sand. Can we blame the young people that are watching this? Can we blame them if they start losing faith in our, in our governmental processes? This bill is the most pro-police bill I've seen in a long time. It helps the police officers who many times can't speak out. Our police officers, the good honest police officers, it's very difficult for them to speak out because of the blue code. Police officers that try to speak out are shunned. They're treated like lepers. This would be like a breath of fresh air, but I believe that this portion of the bill which is open slightly, it barely addresses the worst of the worst cases where people willfully and maliciously destroy your rights. Just think of it. People have barged into homes, destroyed furniture, killed people, done

whatever they wanted and you're lucky if you get an apology. And you have no recourse and it's happened. It's even happened in affluent white communities in Long Island. Oh, Colonial Street, we were told there were drugs on Colonial Avenue. It was a mistake. Well an apology really doesn't cut it, does it? We need legal redress for victims of police violence from bad applies.

You've heard all my colleagues bear their souls to you and tell you how they've felt. I'm here. My brother was a cop, my two sons are corrections officers, I support police and I believe that we're doing the police a favor by killing this amendment and by adopting the police accountability bill. and you know, for those police officers who may have been confused by all the rhetoric and are being told that the people floating this amendment are your friends, let me remind you that many of those same people that are saying they're your friends by protecting the worst of the worst in your profession are the same people, many of the same people that

when we were trying to get the police officers and first responders at Sandy Hook their Worker's Comp wouldn't support us on that issue. The same people that don't support your collective bargaining rights, the same people that don't support your raises or your fringe benefits. I'm a union guy. I've always supported the cops. I've always supported their right to bargain contracts, their rights to good wages, their right to safe working conditions and it offends me that this amendment has even been presented. It offends me that people are trying to kill the police accountability bill with this. This is a poison apple to kill the overall bill. We need this bill for the sake of the good police officers. This is all anti-police and the people supporting the accountability bill are the true friends and allies of every honest, hardworking police officer in the State of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ROSARIO (128TH):

Thank you, Representative. Would you care to

remark further on the amendment before us? The Speaker orders the vote to be take, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I am like many of you very tired so when I gave a wrap-up more than 12 hours ago I've had to pile a little more fire in me so I'm gonna apologize if I'm a little groggy and I appreciate everyone's comments here tonight. I, I failed in my job today so let me apologize to the whole chamber. My job, one of my roles is to know what the vote count is going to be. My job is to be able to tell the Speaker of the House with certainty whether a bill will pass. I cannot do that. I do not know what will happen when this amendment goes on the board so I can only tell you the thought process and what I hope you will consider before you hit that because there is no certain outcome so if you're listening, there is no predetermined outcome here. That doesn't happen very often in this chamber.

No one's lost control of the chamber. The Speaker hasn't given away his roles and responsibilities and I didn't stop learning how to count. I'm not a great mathematician but I did not stop learning how to do that. Sometimes democracy can be a little uncomfortable, it can be a little messy. It's not a perfect process and in this country, it certainly has not been a perfect process. The only time in this country and in this state we have seen significant change is a groundswell of people and legislators or Congress doing something. So in your history books there are milestone achievements that we can point to, that there was a turning point. There was a moment in time where the elected officials of a state or country said we have to do something different. And often they were voting for things that were correcting horrendous wrongs or injustices that had carried on for a long period of time and so in that moment, it felt uncomfortable and scary but in history when you look back, you go I'm surprised

that it took so long to do that. It could be voting rights, Jim Crow laws, a woman's right to vote, all those things were for a long time thought of as ideas whose time had not come and then we look back and wonder why it took so long.

So on this one, sometimes you got to let people speak and make a case and make an argument and for those of you who have not determined how you're gonna vote, I do think it's important to walk through how this happened because we weren't in a normal session. That was mentioned and I don't disagree. We're in the middle of a global pandemic so it's tough. I mean we got Plexiglas. It's just, it is what it is. We did our best to have a public hearing and listen. We still get emails, we still have phones, we have technology that was not available. The original bill, when qualified immunity came out, I think Representative Winkler talked about this as well, it was different. Okay? It was different. When leadership gets involved, the Chairs tend to hate it, but when Representative

Stafstrom and Senator Winfield were sort of told a few days ago the language is not going to work probably and get the votes. That was a very difficult conversation. The language in the bill you're voting on, forget this amendment for a second, the underlying bill does not require any police officer to personally pay for damages under a new cause of action under some new standard. So what do I mean by that? Right now in federal court, you can be sued, a police officer can be sued individually, personally liable if they're convicted of a malicious, wanton or willful act. That is the exception. That is the doctrine and it's a really hard thing to overcome as people talked about. That would be Connecticut's standard. The same exact standard as federal court so it's not a new cause of action. So for the officers that I've talked to, that changed. They said someone listened and let me tell you that was not an easy sell. There's a lot of people who think that was a lot to give away, but there's no new liability standard for an individual

officer at all and the newspaper accounts I read and the quotes I read, that was acknowledged. It was the towns that got worried. Folks, towns indemnify everybody now. Not just police officers. They indemnify the animal control officer. They indemnify the Board of Education. That is all already done. Go look in Title 7, the municipal statute, 7-101. Read that indemnification provision. That's why there's huge insurance policies for towns. I can't quantify it. Would it add some cost? I suppose, but you already indemnify individuals for these kinds of things. It's exactly what you do. Folks, I was on the city council in Hartford and in my three years there, we had probably two or three settlements. I don't believe we had any murders. I don't believe we had to settle a case for a murder, but I do recall serious bodily injury. Do you know what happens in these situations? It never goes to court. You make the payment because you look at the family in Hartford or Tolland, wherever you are, and you go something

really bad happened and you settle the cases so even further to the point, it doesn't even ever get to court when it's that egregious and that's why you have insurance and that's why it gets settled. That is what happens. So there's no new huge flood of cases under this standard that could personally hurt somebody.

There might be some more court cases on smaller claims of constitutional violations. That could be true too, but again, you can ensure for that, you can indemnify for that and those are the smaller claims. The new influx of cases is for that new class of constitutional things that has not been in before that's outside of bodily injuries, but it's not gonna lead to huge, huge increases.

So I hope on that point alone people understand how far this bill came. But it is uncomfortable folks and I get it and it's odd for me to tell you that I don't know what's gonna happen but it's an opportunity for you as well. It's an opportunity for you to say this is a democracy, but admittedly

we kind of know what's gonna happen on that board most times. You make a choice, you make a decision now, but make it what you think is the right thing to do and no one can hold that against you if you thought about it critically and you've made that decision but Q was telling, Representative was telling a story, I will wrap up with this, I know it's late and I think we all want to see where we go with this. I go on a trip every year with guys that I grew up with. It's a very mixed group of folks all, all, you know, we all do different things, different races and one of those, one of the [crying] one of the things that is striking when we drive places or fly is that when we drive like four hours somewhere, I don't call my mom when we get to the location. I don't text my mom or my dad to say I got there, but for my friends that are African American on that trip, right for Franklin or Ben, they always call their mom when we get there. That's powerful stuff because it's a different perspective of how you grew up and what you

witnessed and we're not saying that if you don't believe in qualified immunity, I'm not saying that, that you don't understand that, but listen to that perspective. This change is not as drastic as people make it seem, right? But it is a change and getting things in statute that are new, that are novel, that may seem way ahead of their time, you'll look back 15 years from now when a lot of states have done it and you'll go that was actually not that dangerous at all. The water wasn't that chilly when we did it and it did help in some cases. This is not going to hurt municipalities. They have to insure against these things now folks. It's not. So if that's why you're voting no, I hope you'll change your mind. If you have other reasons, maybe it's other sections of the bill ultimately, but if all you're saying is a municipality, feel like it's gonna be money, I'm telling you I think that's the wrong answer and if it's true that we missed it, some have said we can come back. It's not effective until July 1, 2021. So look, you got to understand

that Connecticut's a small state, but the divide is real for people. The divide, it's like the Pacific Ocean and we can live within a half mile of each other, a block of each other.

So I know this is difficult and I know people have struggled with it but for me, I believe this amendment should fail and we should move the bill forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH:

Thank you very much, sir. Staff and guests to the well of the House? The machine will be open.

[Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? If all members have voted, please check the board to determine whether your vote has been

properly cast? If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

LCO No. 3808, designated House A

Total Number of Voting	144
Necessary for Adoption	73
Those Voting Yea	72
Those Voting Nay	72
Those absent and not voting	7

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The amendment on a tie fails. [Gavel] Will you remark?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

The chamber will come at ease. Will the chamber come back to order? The chamber will stand at ease. The chamber will come back to order. Representative O'Dea of the 125th, you have the floor sir.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So that was

interesting. Just a little history I think though is important after we just went through that vote. Qualified immunity was created by the court in 1967, okay? 42 USC, section 1983 was a federal law passed in 1877 to address wrongs being done by the KKK. Qualified immunity was created by the courts in 1967 and one of the main reasons they did it was to protect government officials from fear of litigation, litigation expense. It was the Warren Court that created it and for 53 years we've had juris prudence interpreting qualified immunity and Congress has done nothing to address that legislation and the judicial interpretation and involvement and activism and that's why you've got Justice Sotomayor and Justice Thomas agreeing that something needs to be done with qualified immunity for obviously different reasons.

Right now, and just by way of background, I spent ten years on POST. I couldn't be on POST of this legislation passes and I was on it for ten years. I've tried to verdict between 5 and 10 42

USC 1983 cases. There are right now I would say dozens if not over 100 1983 cases going on in Connecticut between state and federal court, mostly federal court. So to say that we needed to get rid of qualified immunity in order to bring bad acts by officers to court is not true. Qualified immunity only protects officers if they don't violate a clearly established right. If they violate a clearly established right, they're sued right now. To say that we needed to pass this legislation to bring bad cops to justice is not true. Qualified immunity gives a reasonable mistake, an officer a chance of avoiding litigation over a reasonable mistake on a constitutional right that was not clearly established.

Make no mistake about it. This legislation will cause a massive increase in litigation in the State of Connecticut and it will not avoid the terrible things that have happened whether it was Tony Timpa in Dallas, George Floyd in Minneapolis. Those horrible things were a clear violation of

someone's constitutional rights. They were murdered. We didn't need to get rid of qualified immunity to address those wrongs. We didn't need to get rid of qualified immunity to address the many wrongs that were discussed here last night and this morning.

If I may ask a few questions to the proponent of the bill starting on line 1078 in section 22, to the good proponent of the bill. As I understand it, 1078 to 1082 changes the standard for consent searches and makes Terry stops illegal in Connecticut; am I correct in that?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the language in 1078 through 1082 make clear yes, that a, the consent of a person given to law enforcement to conduct a search shall not absence probable cause constitute justification to conduct that search.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you. And just to be clear so everybody understands, there's a plethora of Supreme Court State Law that allows instead of on line 1080 probable cause needed, reasonable suspicion is all you need and law enforcement throughout the State of Connecticut has stated that this will impede their ability to prevent crime. Taking a look at line 1212 in section 28, to the good proponent of the bill, why is section 28 effective October 1, 2020, when section 29 is effective April 21, 2121?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, they're completely different topics. Section 28 talks about false reporting of an incident which is based on someone's

race or other protected class status. Section 29 talks about the use of force standard. We have a later effective date for the use of force standard under section 29 because we heard feedback and credited the feedback, we heard from law enforcement during the public hearing that as we move closer to the federal standard for use of force, that that is a higher standard than what Connecticut has traditionally operated under and the law enforcement will need some time to get trained, acclimated and up-to-speed on what that new use of force standard was. So it was only appropriate to kick that out to the second quarter of next year which is what actually the chair of the POST council asked of the Judiciary Committee.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much for that. Section 12 or lines 1231 to 1237, I actually taught an excessive

force at POST, it was a long time ago, a lot fewer grey hair, I got even more of them today, but in reading 1231 to 1237, I'm just, I can't understand what that section does so if the good proponent could educate on what the purpose of lines 1231 to 1237 happens to be and why it's there, I would appreciate it very much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, this language that is referenced by the proponent is actually longstanding existing law in the State of Connecticut, unchanged by this bill so frankly, since the representative taught classes he may be better versed to answer his own question than I am.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Well now that we have, thank you very much, Mr.

Speaker, the section reads for purposes of this section, a reasonable belief that a person has committed an offense means a reasonable believe in facts or circumstances which, if true, would in law constitute an offense. If the belief, facts or circumstances would not in law constitute an offense, an erroneous though not unreasonable belief that the law is otherwise does not render justifiable the use of physical force to make an arrest or to prevent an escape from custody is what those lines read. When there was qualified immunity, in reading this section, the officer would be protected if the conduct was not prohibited by law or if prohibited, the plaintiff's rights not clearly established or a defendant's actions objectively reasonable in light of the rules clearly established. So with reading those lines, qualified immunity could still protect that officer, but without qualified immunity, the officer is not protected if you read this section; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe it's correct. Actually, the language in the underlying bill at section 41 makes clear that there is still a version of qualified immunity available to an officer who operates upon objective good faith belief which I believe is very similar to the standard the representative cites. Of course, he's citing to a criminal standard for criminal liability as opposed to the civil standard, but I believe they're quite similar and in fact, I would mention in response to the history lesson that the good representative was kind enough to give us, that in fact, he's correct. Qualified immunity first came into existence in 1967 under the Warren Court, but the clearly established standard that the representative cites, did not come into effect until sometime later than that, mainly in the 1980's. What our language in section 41 attempts to do is go

back to the original meaning or version of qualified immunity from the 1960's and not as it has been I think as the representative referenced and as Supreme Court Justices and certainly US Senators have referenced over the years been modified more towards, in many respects bastardized by the later court decisions of the 1980's.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and I believe it was actually Thurgood Marshall in the Harlow decision that talked about the clearly established rights as discussed by the good proponent as I understand it. Is that your understanding?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm forgetting the

name of the exact decision and who the author was,
but it's my understanding that that clearly
established language really started to appear in the
federal common law in the 1980's, not in the 1960's.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Heading to lines 1265 through 1268, is there a
definition somewhere in line 1265 where it mentions
exhausted the reasonable alternatives to the use of
deadly physical force? By the words reasonable
alternatives, is that defined anywhere or is there
some legislative intent that we can put forth to
explain with more specificity what is meant by
reasonable alternatives in line 1265?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the

representative to double check his line reference off the E-certed bill. I'm not seeing that language in 1265.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm looking at LCO 3787 and it could be LCO 3700. Is that the LCO number?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Uh, I apologize, Mr. Speaker, it may have been me who was looking at the wrong version here. If you could give me that line reference one more time?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Sure, 1265 looks to be the same on both LCO

3787 and 3700 and looking at, well I guess I don't know exactly which LCO number we're looking at.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I, I'm with you.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

I apologize, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you, the reasonable alternatives language on 1265, certainly reasonable depends on time, place, condition of setting. There's a number of factors that go into what is reasonable in a particular circumstance. Certainly if someone is charging at you with a firearm with their hand on the trigger, that's different than a situation where someone is lying on the ground without a firearm in their hand or near them so certainly what is meant by reasonable here is reasonable under the circumstances with connection to time, place and

condition.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So taking a look at interpreting section 41, there will be an opportunity for an officer getting out on qualified immunity in this section, but would, would any interlocutory appeal be unavailable to him?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, there is a prohibition in I believe it's lines 1961 to 1962 on interlocutory appeals from a trial court's denial of an application for the defense of qualified immunity.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much. Taking a look at section 1320, I'm sorry, lines 1320 through 1327, again it's unchanged from previous law and 53a-19 allows a private person to use force in defending himself or his home and my question is, if a police officer is home and uses force to someone who for example is robbing their house, a private person would be able to use the defense of his dwelling theory under 53a-19, presumably a police officer in his own home would still be able to use force without having to prove that he, because he wasn't acting under the code of law at that point in time; is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Taking a look at lines 1453 to 1456, basically there, the commissioners may not grant a license to any person who has been decertified as a police officer or otherwise had his or her certification canceled, revoked or refused renewal pursuant to subsection C of section 7-294(d) so that applies to any police officer who lost his certification in Connecticut. Through you, Mr. Speaker, is that correct?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yes. Through you, Mr. Speaker, this is the decertification that set out earlier in the bill and has been flushed out in this, sorry, let me take that back, Mr. Speaker. This applies to the decertification process which has long been on the books in Connecticut which we flush out in this bill and give I would argue a little more teeth to which

I discussed earlier, I guess last night with the ranking member.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

What would happen if an officer say in New York or New Jersey was decertified and came to apply in Connecticut? Would he or she be eligible as the decertification happened out of state or is that addressed somewhere in this bill?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that's not addressed in this bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

So someone, a man or woman who is decertified

in another state, but came to apply here in Connecticut, they would be at least under this legislation eligible for certification, but not if they were decertified in Connecticut as I understand it?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, there's not the expressed prohibition that you see in this language, but I believe there are other requirements to become a licensed security guard in the State of Connecticut and certainly an armed licensed security guard in the State of Connecticut and depending on the circumstances which led to that individual's decertification in those states, they in fact could be denied a licensure or certification to become a security guard.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and a couple of questions for legislative intent online 1686. There was language added and then language changed, inspector general shall investigate and determine whether the use of physical force by the police officer was and it used to be appropriate and the language was changed to justifiable under section 53(a)-22. What's the difference between appropriate versus justifiable for purposes of legislative intent?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe there's any difference. I think this was a mainly technical revision recommended to us by the legislative commissioner's office because justifiable is actually the term used in 53(a)-22 so

using the term justifiable in both sections seem to make them more compatible.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Moving on to section, I'm getting closer to the end, to the section on military equipment, section 40, line 1907 reads in section b, on or after the effective date of this section, no law enforcement agency may acquire controlled equipment. What if the controlled equipment is donated or purchased by a third party and donated to the police force so there's no appropriation, so it wasn't actually acquired, just received, would that be okay under this legislation?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, if the equipment was not acquired through the federal 1033 program, then no, there would not be a prohibition on acquiring that equipment. It's my understanding that most of this equipment is either not acquirable or certainly not acquirable in a manner that is cost effective outside the 1033 program, but conceivably if the municipality were to purchase it outside of that program, it's not covered by this legislation.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

What if there were donations made so they didn't have to spend any money it, but rather it was simply ended up being equipment that they didn't have to pay for? They didn't have to acquire it, but third parties donated the money so that they could get the equipment under that scenario.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I think if the equipment originated from the US Department of Defense pursuant to the federal 1033 program, even if they used some sort of middle man or straw man type scenario, it would still be, they would still be prohibited from acquiring it.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And going down to lines 1919 through 1931, there's a process by which the Governor and the Commissioner may reconsider the order prohibiting the acquiring by a municipality and the public hearing, does it simply have to be held or, and does there have to be a particular, the legislative body, how does that hearing process foreseeing to be set up?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I think it probably depends on the municipality and what makes sense. Certainly in a town that has a city council type of government or even an RTM type of government, it may be feasible to do that through the legislative body. In other towns where you just have a town government formal meeting as the legislative body, that may be impractical and the board of selectmen could do it. It's not specific in here. I think the intent of this language really is to make sure that the local municipality, that the citizens of the local municipality have an opportunity to make their voice heard as to whether they want to challenge the Governor's order after the Governor has specifically said a type of controlled equipment should be disposed of and that it's not just the mayor, first selectmen, whoever kind of making that decision, but that there is an opportunity for some public input

as well.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and just for legislative intent, looking at the next couple of lines that, if the department demonstrates in its request for reconsideration, I'm reading in line 1928, that the use or proposed use of the controlled equipment is necessary for the operation and safety of the department or is for relief or rescue efforts in the case of a natural disaster or for other public safety purposes, I foresee a situation where the, like we saw the unfortunate situation in Portland where you've got a riot situation and you've got officers separated and being attacked and there have been in the past as I understand it SWAT teams that have had personal carriers available in case of riot situation to get to the officers to get them out. I guess is for legislative intent, is, if

the police department has had experience in the past of a riot situation in Connecticut, maybe it's 20, 30 years ago, is having a personal carrier like that available for relief efforts for public safety officers, something that would be grounds for having prohibition waived?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I think it could be if there was a showing of necessity for the operation of the department or the safety of the department, certainly safety of the officers would be in that, but as is set forth lower in that section, if the purpose of the vehicle is just for peaceful crowd management or intimidation tactics, then it would not be permitted.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that response. My next question was lines 1938 to 1940 where the good proponent had mentioned such equipment may not be used for any such, for crowd management or intimidation tactics and obviously I think we would all agree with that, but if they can show a use that's not for intimidation tactics or crowd management like we discussed, that's something for legislative intent that would be looked upon as something that could justify a waiver, correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Yeah. Through you, Mr. Speaker, absolutely. I think there is a judgement call to be made there.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Taking a look at the qualified immunity section, which is section 41, in line 1971, I believe it is, and I know I've got members of my own caucus telling me I'm boring them but I do want to try and get some legislative intent set forth here so I appreciate the indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and the good proponent. In lines 1971, the sentence starts, in the event such officer has a judgement entered against him or her for a malicious wanton or willful act in a court of law, such municipality shall be reimbursed by such officer for expenses it incurred in providing such defense and shall not be held liable to such officer for any financial loss or expense resulting from such act. In the next paragraph, 1976 through 1979, it states in any civil action brought under this section, if the court finds that a violation of subsection b of this section was deliberate, willful or committed with reckless indifference, the plaintiff may be awarded costs and reasonable attorney's fees which as we know is similar to 1983 claims. Why the

difference? Why malicious, wanton or willful act in line 1971, but deliberate, willful or committed with reckless indifference in lines 1977 and 1978?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker and maybe only the questioner, myself and the good ranking member are entertained by this discussion, but I think this is actually a more than fair discussion and an important point to flush out for legislative intent. The reason for the difference in the language is the language you were referencing in lines 1971, 1970 through 1971, 1972, the malicious, wanton and willful act language, tracks very closely if not identically to language that exists in Connecticut General Statute 7-101(a) which is our general defense and immunity provision. We wanted to retain that language here so that there was a body of common law that could be looked to in applying this

new section as this new section starts to develop and common develops with it. As you reference, there seems to be a slight, albeit I'm not sure significant difference in the language of 1977 through 1978, which is deliberate, willful and committed with reckless indifference and as the questioner notes, that language tracks the federal 1983 language and again, that would provide a body of common law for the court to look at as they begin to apply these new causes of action and don't necessarily have to do so with a blank canvas because there is that body of federal common law that they could draw upon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will confess that I have not tried a 1983 action in a number of years, but when I did try them, insurance companies who had retained our firm would not pay a judgement against an officer for deliberate, willful or reckless

indifference awards and my question to the good proponent is, is he aware of some change in law since I had tried those cases, would insurance companies cover those types of awards as discussed in lines 1976 through 1979?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe they would. Obviously what we are talking about here is the truly most heinous of heinous violations by an officer of someone's civil rights. Let's be clear what we're talking about. We're talking about an instance where an officer has deliberately, willfully or with reckless indifference violated someone's civil rights and has done so in a way to get above and over the qualified immunity language that exists earlier in this section whereby they would have an objectively good faith belief that their conduct did not violate the law, so you are

talking about an instance where someone willfully deliberately violated the law in contradiction of someone's constitutional rights. In those types of instances, I don't believe there would be insurance coverage available for an officer or any other government employee and that that standard matches with the current federal 1983 standard where an officer would be personally liable for that type of action.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

I'm starting to feel a hook around my waist so I will try and move quickly. Line 1980, was a good year, civil actions brought pursuant to this section shall be commenced no later than one year after the date on which the cause of action accrues. As I understand it and for example, an excessive force claim, the action would have accrued on the date of the force that was used, the date that it occurred.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, is that accurate?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative Stafstrom.

REP. STAFSTROM (129TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct and to be clear and I want to make this clear, part of the reason we chose one year for the statute of limitations on this is that matches up with the body camera storage requirement which I discussed with the ranking member earlier. We wanted to make sure those two dates were consistent.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Representative O'Dea.

REP. O'DEA (125TH):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do have a number of other questions but we've been here for, I've been here for almost 24 hours now. The vote did not result the way I had hoped on the qualified immunity piece. I respect my colleagues very much. I hope the fact that I was on the other side of the

vote does not lead anybody to believe that I have any ill will towards anyone here in the chamber. I do believe this is gonna cause a lot of expense for municipalities. I'm hopeful that the task force when they come and review this takes a look at the cost of insurance, the ability for the officers to get it, the ability of whether or not insurance companies will cover it. There are a lot of issues here that I do believe in my heart are a mistake, but I appreciate from where the intent of the law and legislation came from and I just hope that the task force will take a look at this entire body of legislation and be open to fixes, particularly this legislative body as we look at this legislation going forward, and I would ask my colleagues with due respect and I know there's a lot of passion on it, to vote no on the underlying legislation and if I lose that one too, I would ask that we take a close look at this and what the task force recommends going forward.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Thank you, sir. Would you care to remark further? Care to remark further? Representative Cook of the 55th, you have the floor, madam.

REP. COOK (65TH):

Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see you there.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Good morning.

REP. COOK (65TH):

Mr. Speaker, it's been a very long day and a long night. Emotions are flying. You can hear it in my voice and this is one of those situations that you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't and so I stand in front of this chamber very conflicted on what to do next. I'm conflicted because we're supposed to be a family. We're supposed to treat each other with respect, we're supposed to have each other's back, and we're supposed to look and try to understand what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes. It's also

about compromise. It's about recognizing that we have a goal to get to and every party has to give. It's about following the process, recognizing that we are building for the people, by the people, of the people and I believe in that process. Each and every one of us that raised our hands on the opening day of session said I will do this and follow the process and now we're in the middle of a pandemic. And so it is if so many things got flipped around and then we have a racial crisis and in my world, that is the perfect storm. How do we ensure that when we walk out of here today that we can still look each other in the eye? We can still respect each other? How do we walk out into the constituents we represent and say I fought for you and at the same time say I fought for you and I go back to my original statement? Mr. Speaker, there are several of us who are damned if we do and damned if we don't. I have heard my colleagues say that if I don't support this bill or if I did not support section 41, that I did not support a black lives

matter movement and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, that is the most far from the truth statement that could've ever been said on the floor of this house.

I will never say that I can understand what it is like to walk in Representative Nolan's shoes. I can't. I heard my majority leader speak about how it is for him to travel with his friends and bring tears to his eyes. I am a mother of a son who is 20 years old. I understand, Mr. majority leader, what that feeling is and when my son does not call me, if he doesn't get to the destination, it's not because of his color, it's because of the people that he associates with, it's because of a lot of things. And I go back to the whole thing. We are supposed to work together. We are supposed to follow a process and we are supposed to make things better and this bill, that's conflicting for me. On one hand, I do believe that it makes things better for my colleagues and my constituents, but on the other hand, I think that we have good officers that are walking our streets and that are protecting us and

they are in fear that there is a hit on their profession and we see what's happening in the state of New York. Early retirements are up over 400 percent. Shootings are up over 150 percent because they took a path against their officers. I don't want to live in that world. I want to live in a world that God forbid I need protection, the protection is there to come and serve. I thank Representative Nolan for serving and doing the job that he does. Representative Verrengia, the same thing. I just got off the phone with my chief and how do I say to him, we tried, but we fell short? I'm sorry. And then how do I turn around and how do I look my son's friends in the eye and say I have your back?

Mr. Speaker, this might very well be one of the absolute most difficult decisions that I will have ever made in the 12 years I have been in this chamber, but what saddens me more is how we treated each other to get here. I am ashamed of how my colleagues were treated. The insinuations that were

made and I'm hurt that in a bill of 41, well the new one I think was 44, 41 sections on the original bill, the compromise couldn't be one section and in my world, 40 sections to 1 sounds like a pretty good compromise.

I have a young man who is a police officer in Meridian who calls me his mom because his mom was a dear friend of mine and she passed away a few years ago. If I could only share with you the messages that I have received about how he fears for everything he has worked for. He is a veteran and he is a police officer. He fears that everything that he has worked for gets flushed away. How do I tell him I don't have your back? Mr. Speaker, I don't understand. I don't understand why, why right now we felt that it was okay to not follow the process. The process starts in January. We are in the middle of a pandemic. My true belief? We should be sitting here talking about how we get our kids back to school safely, how we keep our nursing homes from having the tragedies they had again, how

do we recover from a pandemic? How do we do that? We are millions and millions and millions of dollars in the whole and I'm gonna go now and burden my municipality with more. In every budget year, my police department and my fire department get cut and on the contrary, I believe that we should invest in training. We should invest in retraining. We should make our departments stronger and better so we know they're serving the way that we need them to serve. I don't know what to do. I do know this; if I press the button to pass this bill, I've gone back on my word and if I press the button the other way, then I'm failing another group of people. I would've hoped that we would have followed a process. I would have hoped that we would've been more respectful. I would have hoped that we would have recognized that we were supposed to be a true family and not treat each other the way that we have and I would have hoped that before we got here today, all of the other stuff was ironed out and my colleagues who are afraid to talk, who are afraid to

vote the wrong way, Mr. Speaker, that's not why we're here. So before anybody presses the button today on either side of the aisle, I would hope that we sit back and think about what we're doing, why we're doing it and respect each other's decision regardless of how this decision is played out and I would hope that those folks that I represent understand that what I do, whatever it might be, I have been so sick for the last 24 hours. That whatever I do, it's because to my core I believed it was the right thing now and I commit to coming back and working on things again in the next session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Thank you, madam. Would you care to remark further? Would you care to remark further? Representative De la Cruz, you have the floor, sir.

REP. DE LA CRUZ (41ST):

Mr. Speaker, thank you. I just have a few comments. I know we've all had a long night and this has been a very tough issue. I've had people

calling me and asking me about my yes vote for the amendment. I actually did a lot of homework on this and I have been sick to my stomach. You know I think if you looked at me, you would assume that I was going to vote a certain way and my life circumstances brought me to different places like we all have. We have all gotten to the place we're at through learned experiences, through maybe folks that you know and for me, I did a lot of soul searching these last couple of weeks and I worked with chiefs of police, rank and file. I talked to people at rallies I've gone to and there were 41 sections in this bill, 43 now. And they didn't like a lot of it. They went through piece by piece by piece and weren't happy with plenty of it, but they felt like they could work with the officers and still be able to save a little bit of thread of what they think is being appreciated and I think I said it in our caucus meetings where perception has become reality, where they think a lot of folks just don't respect the job that the police do while

they're out there working and I think this is dangerous. I think that we have a lot of folks and again, we're in dangerous times. We're in tough times. Our country needs to heal and I think we're trying to sometimes maybe, and you don't want to say get there too fast cause justice can't be fast enough if you're at the wrong hand of it, so I totally understand where folks are coming from, but please understand where I'm coming from. I'm really, this is a tough vote. It doesn't really matter how this goes or what passes. We will all have to go home and face people that are professionals that have worked in our towns, that we know and tell them what we did and live up to that. And I'm willing to do that if that's the right thing, but I don't feel like it's the right thing now and if we could have adjusted that one piece of the one bill and I know I heard all the arguments for it and people are very passionate about it so I get it, but that's where I had to draw the lawn and again, I think my chiefs were, and rank and file,

they were very good about it and again, some of things they still think are gonna be a huge problem, but they're willing to work around it and I just wanted to give you guys an explanation. Obviously I'm probably not the most popular guy in the room today, but I will always vote from my heart and I will always speak what I say. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CANDELARIA (95th):

Thank you, sir. Would you care to remark further? The chamber will stand at ease. The chamber will come back to order. Would you care to remark further? The minority leader, Representative Klarides, you have the floor, madam.

REP. KLARIDES (114TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, here we are, nearly three months since we gaveled ourselves out in March, nearly six months since we last did any real business in this chamber and what a day this has been. A great deal has happened in the state since then. We have seen our state pull together in ways we probably didn't know it could.

We have gone from the epicenter of COVID to a place where people are starting to feel safe again. We worked hard and we worked together to get here. I want to commend everybody who helped weather that storm; elected officials, first responders, utility workers, grocery store workers, all our essential workers, all our frontline workers. Our doctors, our nurses. Everybody who helped us get here, that made our daily lives possible. Moms and dads who taught their kids at home while they tried to work at the same time. I want to thank each and every one of you because you're our heroes. You're our heroes and we are here because we did it together. We put aside our personal agendas. We put aside our politics and we did it together.

However, despite working together, people suffered. We unfortunately lost people we loved. We lost people we loved and cared about. We saw people get sick. We saw people lose their jobs. We saw people lose their businesses, their livelihoods. On top of this pandemic, we came face-to-face with

our evil past [crying]. A past that many people in this state and this chamber live every day and I'm sorry for that. Like many of you, I was shaken by what happened in Minnesota because I'm sure like all of you, I am proud to be an American. I am proud to live in the best country in the world where we are allowed to say what we want and feel what we want and support who we want and love who we want. I am proud of that and to see things like that happen makes me ashamed.

I don't know what it's like to be black in America. I don't. That's just a reality. But I want to listen and I want to learn. I reached out to an African American pastor in New Haven to ask how could I help. Help me understand, help me learn and he did and together we put together a police accountability panel on Facebook cause unfortunately, we couldn't do anything live. We had the police chief of New Haven, we had the NAACP, we had the Urban League, we had the ACLU, we had the Jewish Federation, thank you, I'm a crier, sorry.

And we heard a lot. We heard a lot and I learned a lot. What I know is we can and we must do better in this state and in this country. I know there are parts of this country that are much worse than we are. I get it. But that doesn't mean that we don't have a lot to learn in Connecticut. Okay? That's the reality. I'll say it. And I know we can lead that battle.

As we talked about earlier, we did so many things today to help people in Connecticut from insulin to telehealth to allowing people to vote absentee ballot during all this time, but now and for many hours, we've been talking about a police accountability bill and I was so proud to see the chairman and the ranking members of the Judiciary Committee sit down day in and day out, take time away from their families and their summer and their real jobs because they are so passionate about this issues so I thank you. I thank you, Representative Rebimbas, I thank you Representative Stafstrom, certainly Senator Winfield and Senator Kissel. And

the leaders. We met almost daily on this and I believe we all wanted to make this work. I had faith in it. I did. I had faith in this process, but unfortunately, this became an issue of picking sides. This became an issue of you were either pro-police or pro-minority or pro-fairness or pro whatever we want to call it. Not only can that not be the case, it must, it must not be the case. We cannot fix problems in this state of this magnitude without doing it together, without saying I'm the pro-cop guy, I'm the anti-cop guy, you know, you're one or the other and if you don't, then I don't want to talk to you. Then you're wrong and we can't do this. No one should believe that all police are bad. I believe in my heart, in my heart that the large majority of police are good people. They leave their house everyday knowing that they may not see their family again. I know it depends on the town you live in and where you work, there's a higher risk or lower risk, but it's a reality nonetheless, even if you work in the sleepest town

in the state.

I wanted so badly to have us here today no matter how long it took and all of us be able to vote for a bill that we knew in our heart and soul was going to help this state move forward, help this state heal. I did. And maybe I was naïve about that. Maybe I was. I know there is no such thing as a perfect bill. We all know that. We've been doing this long enough. Unfortunately, although I understand and respect the position of people that supported the qualified immunity removal, I didn't agree with it because when we make decisions in this state and in this legislature, we make them by balancing the pros and cons and in this situation clearly, people who support the qualified immunity removal thought there were more pros. A lot of us thought there were more cons. The reality of this is, notwithstanding whether the police officer has to pay the insurance and be personally liable or the town has to now be on the hook even though they're on the hook now, I've heard all those arguments.

The reality is we are diminishing the ability of the police to do their job. Now I will say this, I absolutely believe that police need better training, need better education and certainly need more accountability. I believe that and I would be willing to vote for a bill that did that and sleep like a baby and be proud of what we did because I think even though I believe the majority of police officers are good people who believe they're doing the right thing, I believe that some of them aren't. We see it. I mean forget what happened, the tragedy in Minnesota. That's an extreme, that's a criminal case. That has nothing to do this. That's way beyond any of this. Every day people are looked at differently and treated differently because of the color of their skin. I get it and I know it's a real thing and that should never happen, but we change that by training people and getting rid of people that are doing the wrong thing. That's how we stop it. Not by punishing them and taking away their immunity. Again, I understand that this is a

different version and the liability is not technically on the police officers, but I will tell you this, if this passes, I would not be a police officer in the State of Connecticut without buying my own personal liability insurance. That's my opinion cause I would not feel safe no matter what the town was going to cover. That's just how I feel about it and I think that's what you're gonna see a lot of. You're gonna see people retire, you're gonna see officers and police departments not being able to hire as best they can now.

I'm disappointed, I'm sad. What I really wish, what I really wish is we took this one issue of qualified immunity and sent it to that task force. I have to tell you something; I'm very proud of that task force that we set up. I personally have two appointments on that task force. I have a police chief from Milford, Connecticut and I have an African American pastor from New Haven. Those two people come from completely different places, they have different experiences and that's why they are

great on that committee, just like the Speaker's appointments and the other leaders' appointments. Let them study this. There is a reason that amendment was a tie. There is a reason that vote was so close because people aren't sure and again, I am not diminishing the seriousness of this problem, but the solution is unclear. The problem is clear, the solution is unclear and to be here for three or four weeks in July and try and cobble a bill together that we don't have all the information on is not fair to such an important issue. It is not fair to the people who are being treated unfairly. It is not fair to the police officers, it is not fair to people like George Floyd and his family who lost a life and everybody in this state who hasn't been treated fairly and it is not fair to the people of the State of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH:

Thank you very much, madam. [gavel]
Representative Ritter of the 1st district, you have

the floor, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Madam Minority Leader for your comments. I don't have much to add from the remarks I gave maybe about an hour ago on the amendment that we voted on, but I also do want to just say what Representative Stafstrom, the Chairman, Representative Rebimbas, Senator Winfield and Senator Kissel, look, that happens a lot in this place. When people get a task and assignment, you see committees kind of go off and run with it and I know you all worked very hard and I appreciate the amount of time you all put into this. You know, you even had a vice-chair step up in Matt Blumenthal. You'd think Matt came from a political family or something, he had pretty good instincts on it but I know how hard you all worked and maybe it didn't finish the way you had hoped it would have when you started as the minority leader eluded to, but we do appreciate it. The state appreciates the work you put in there. We do.

I just have to correct something. No one needs new insurance policies. Nobody. Nobody needs new insurance policies because it's the same legal standard that exists now so people are not understanding or maybe fully comprehending what was passed. Right now if an officer, you can sue an officer in federal court, but not state court. That is true and if it's wanton, reckless and willful and a jury or a judge finds that is true, that officer could be liable personally. That is nothing we did. That is existing body of case law or statute, federal statute, okay? This now says you can go to state court and you can prove the same thing in state court and if that standard was met, an officer would be civilly liable. But nothing's changed. It's the same federal and state standard. A municipality would, but when someone said it's not technically on the officer, no, it's not technically, there is no liability, there's no new liability, there's no new standard that has been formulated. The municipal will indemnify as they do

for so many employees and that's why this bill will pass today, I believe. I think that was an important change but in closing, look, today was uncomfortable. I mentioned that in my speech. This was hard. It was very hard, Mr. Speaker, I know for us and I know it was hard for everybody in this chamber but without pushing ourselves and without discomfort and without really getting, I mean, my last thought is some people gave stories today that some people may listen to and think are easy to tell or it's part of a narrative or part of a speech. I just think sometimes people don't understand how difficult it is to tell those stories over and over because you're trying to persuade somebody that it does happen and so I think what we're doing today is really historic and I think it's a national opportunity for people to day [someone sneezes] bless you, this is how we can do things in Connecticut. So we're all tired. I'll be quiet. I hope everybody supports the bill and I'm gonna make one more challenge though. I hope that folks who

didn't get there on the underlying amendment, we had a battle over one particular session, maybe there's disagreement.

Well now we have a bill with a lot of other sections that people worked very hard on. I hope folks will vote for the bill because the one provision that I heard complaints about and questions about is effective July 1, 2021. As I said, I know the Chair and the Ranking Member will get together in this chamber and I know they'll do it upstairs so if folks think that has to be tweaked, that has to be reworked, we can have conversations. We start from a statutory framework, right? A little different situation when you have something in the law, but folks can forward and testify and we can have that conversation so that can still have conversations, but I ask folks to really consider the rest of the bill. Don't vote no over that one thing. We had the debate. People know how you felt about it.

I'd ask you to really think about supporting

the underlying bill cause you all know it has really good stuff in there. We didn't get into any of the provisions, but it's really good stuff and I had heard that but for that section, we had a bipartisan bill by and large, so I'm gonna ask people to think long and hard before they hit that button because that one section, we litigated it. The outcome was what it was, right? But we did litigate it, you had your vote. I hope you hit that green button. If you don't, that's fine, but I think it's the right thing for the State of Connecticut and I hope you do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH:

Thank you very much, sir. Staff and guests to the well of the House? Members take your seats. The machine will be open. [Ringing]

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. The House of Representatives is voting by roll. The machine is now open. Have all members voted? Have all

members voted? If all members have voted, please check the board to determine whether your vote has been properly cast? If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6004

Total Number of Voting	144
Necessary for Passage	73
Those Voting Yea	86
Those Voting Nay	58
Those absent and not voting	7

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. [Gavel] Representative Curry of the 11th district, sir, you have the floor.

REP. CURRY (11TH):

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that we immediately transmit this to the Senate.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Ladies and gentleman we're still struggling with the microphones a little bit. I know that was

very difficult to hear. Can we keep the noise down in the chamber? Please remember social distancing. [Gavel]. Ladies and gentlemen, Representative Curry just moved to immediately transmit to the Senate. The microphones aren't picking up like they normally do so that's why I'm repeating it. The question before the Chamber is immediate transmittal to the Senate. Is there objecting? Hearing none, so ordered. [Gavel] Representative Ritter of the 1st district.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, seeing that there is no further business on our --

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Oh, I think we have announcements or introductions by Representative Betts, Representative [overlapping conversation].

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Representative Betts, I am very sorry. All you.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Betts of the 78th district, sir,
you have the floor.

REP. BETTS (78TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of
journal, Representative Floren was out of state or
in self-quarantine, Representative France is self-
quarantine. Representatives Green and Smith had
family commitments. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you very much, sir. Are there any other
announcements or introductions? If not, now
Representative Ritter, oh, Representative Ritter of
the 1st district, you have the floor, sir.

REP. RITTER (1ST):

Mr. Speaker, seeing that there is no further
business on our agenda in this special session, I
would move that we adjourn sine die.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on
adjournment sine die. Is there objection? Is there
objection? It will be so ordered. We are adjourned

sine die. [Gavel]

(On motion of Representative Ritter of the 1st
District, the House adjourned at 9:05 o'clock a.m.,
sine die.)

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 676 pages is a complete and accurate transcription of a digital sound recording of the House Proceedings on Thursday, July 23, 2020.

I further certify that the digital sound recording was transcribed by the word processing department employees of Alpha Transcription, under my direction.

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