

**Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

Bill No.: HB-6598

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROHIBITION AGAINST HIRING POLICE OFFICERS DISMISSED FOR MALFEASANCE OR WHO RESIGNED OR

Title: RETIRED WHILE UNDER INVESTIGATION.

Vote Date: 3/18/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/9/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

In the state of Connecticut, police officers that commit a reprehensible malfeasance in the service of a police department are generally dealt with one way or another (dismissed, retired while under investigation, etc.). Despite this arrangement, it is observed too often that such police officers end up being recycled between departments and end up making more offenses. Although current law exists on this matter, this bill aims to clarify and enhance the powers of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council to better adjudicate and prohibit such cases of employment. Since such proceedings are not always infallible, the bill provides the means for such affected officers and law enforcement units seeking to hire said officer to make a case for their employment.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Office of Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection (DESPP), CT

The DESPP supports this bill. The agency believes this bill clarifies the ability of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council to enforce prohibition of hiring police officers whose employment background makes them unsuitable to return to policing.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), CT

The CHRO supports HB 6598. The CHRO believes the matter which this bill addresses to be an urgent concern and stresses the need for officer accountability. It is implied by CHRO that if police officers continue to be enabled to cycle between departments following breaches of trust and authority, then the faith in law enforcement institutions will be jeopardized.

Kelly McConney Moore, Interim Senior Policy Counsel, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Connecticut

The ACLU of CT supports this bill, but believes that changes are needed in its language to implement effective policy. The ACLU of CT believes that the bill is unclear what constitutes an exoneration for purposes of certification and further warns that internal investigations are not always reliable or free from bias. Additionally, the ACLU of CT believes that the definition of excessive force under Section 1(g)(2)(C) is too limited to generally deem an action befitting of excessive force as unjustified. As such, the ACLU offers its own recommended changes to the definition of excessive force.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Jeff Reimer, President, Council 4 AFSCME Public Safety Council

The union does not support this bill. The union believes this bill is unnecessary as they claim current policy already covers the intent of the bill.

Reported by: John Gerke, Intern

Date: 3/29/2021