

# Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6569

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION.

**Vote Date:** 3/26/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/8/2021

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Rep. Geraldo C. Reyes, 75th Dist.; Rep. Joe Polletta, 68th Dist.; Rep. Tom O'Dea, 125th Dist.; Rep. Michael DiGiovancarlo, 74th Dist.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

To (1) revise the membership of the task force tasked with studying compliance with motor vehicle registration laws, and (2) require a resident of this state to make an appointment with the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to register a motor vehicle with number plates issued by another state within thirty days of establishing residency. In aggregate: to prevent residents from keeping their vehicles registered out of state, which allows for the avoidance of property tax owed to both The State of Connecticut and the respective municipality.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

### [The State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice](#)

The State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice presented and submitted written testimony in support of this bill, offering their specific support for sections 2 and 3—"which seek to remedy the problem of residents failing to register their vehicles in this state." The testimony briefly summarized the three ways in which it finds the bill beneficial, then concludes with the following: "The Division is supportive of the balance contained within this proposal to ensure that vehicles are properly registered with our state so that our municipalities may receive property taxes and the vehicles comply with our emission requirements, while lowering the initial fine(s) for any such owner who fails to register, or fails to schedule an appointment, within their first two months of residency."

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

[Betsy Gara, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns](#)

Betsy Gara presented and submitted written testimony in support of this bill on behalf of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns. The testimony states that towns are "heavily dependent on property taxes to fund the delivery of critical services," and that "this bill would allow municipalities to deter individuals from driving unregistered vehicles which pose public safety and other concerns," as well as "[provide] municipalities with some welcome – and much-needed – revenue."

[Francis R. Pickering, Executive Director of the Western Connecticut Council of Small Governments](#)

Francis R. Pickering presented and submitted written testimony in support of this bill on behalf of the Western Connecticut Council of Small Governments. The testimony states WestCOG's appreciation for increasing compliance with motor vehicle registration laws and decreasing opportunities for tax evasion. The council also attached testimony submitted to the Planning and Development Committee regarding the adjustment of the state income tax credit to incentivize residents to register their vehicle in state.

[Rep. Michael Digiovancarlo, 74<sup>th</sup> Assembly District of Connecticut](#)

Representative Michael Digiovancarlo presented and submitted testimony in support of this bill, specifically Section 2, lines 65 through 114 (pertaining to the change in both the registration grace period and fee scale change). The testimony references the past times in which the representative has testified as a Waterbury Police Officer on behalf of this policy change, then states that "according to the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA), 912 tickets were issued over the last ten years since 2011 but approximately 95% of those same tickets were dismissed," attesting that current policies are ineffective. The text notes that the issues arise from the current fee structure, noting that "with nearly 90% of all issued violations being dismissed, it not only makes local enforcement, who track these vehicles, essentially ineffective but it also an incredible waste of resources at the municipal level"—before concluding with a commendation of the bill's "3-tier structure" and a reiteration of the representative's support.

[Neil O'Leary, Mayor of Waterbury](#)

Mayor Neil O'Leary presented and submitted testimony in support of this bill. The testimony begins by attesting that the issue of improperly registered and unregistered vehicles is "not new," then proceeds to reference data from 2018 in which 3,794 cases of improperly/unregistered vehicles amounted to 1.2 million dollars in unpaid taxes to Waterbury. The text notes that the bill would "address future abuse and foster a greater sense of accountability, all while allowing our residents to register their vehicles in a reasonable and timely manner," then concludes with a summary of which aspects of the bill would facilitate this.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed

**Reported by: Ian Bond**

**Date: 4/1/2021**