

Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5254

AN ACT ENSURING ACCESS TO PARKING NEAR PUBLIC BEACHES AND
Title: RECREATIONAL AND SCENIC AREAS.

Vote Date: 3/24/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/7/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. Michael A. Winkler, 56th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Geraldo C. Reyes, 75th Dist.](#)

REASONS FOR BILL:

To create equitable access, for municipal residents and non-residents, to public beaches, recreational areas, and scenic areas.

Substitute language for the bill adds clarifying sections. These sections concern parking spaces, fees related to admission, and occupancy restrictions. Additionally, a section was added that exempts public golf courses from the provisions.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Submitted.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Zaccagnino, Jess - Policy Counsel - ACLU CT:

- Writes in support of the bill, stating that the bill continues a fight to ensure equal access to public beaches. Points out that the issue, historically, has been a racial one and that this bill continues to fight racist policy regarding access to public locations.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Calabrese, Anthony - Director - Fairfield Parks and Recreation:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that they would place undue stress on municipalities to support an influx of visitors. Believes that control over local parking should stay with local entities. Additionally, points out that beachfront municipalities would lose a considerable amount of funding should the bill pass.

Collins, Randy - Advocacy Manager - CCM:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that taking away another local revenue option would force increased reliance on property taxes to fund programs the public benefits from. States that differences in pricing between resident and non-resident passes are used to pay for maintenance and staffing needs associated with greater amounts of visitors.

Collins, Valerie - Executive Director - The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, INC:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that it will limit municipality's ability to operate their own resources.

Hanson, Tracey - First Selectman - Town of Voluntown:

- Opposes the bill, stating that it will place unnecessary economic stress on residents of towns that will be affected. Additionally, points out that should this bill pass it would cause towns to place heavier reliance upon property taxes.

Gara, Betsy - Executive Director - Connecticut Conference of Small Towns:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that it would prevent municipalities from restricting parking access and from charging non-residents greater fees to access parking. States that this bill would exacerbate an issue towns already struggle with in enforcing capacity limits. Additionally, this would further place the burden of cost on the residents of these towns, as a revenue stream that traditionally goes towards maintaining these facilities would be taken away.

Lyons, Peggy - First Selectwoman - Town of Madison:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that it will exacerbate problems currently faced by the town of Madison associated with parking. Asserts that current parking problems in the town create issues for neighborhoods, local businesses, and create crowding issues at local beaches.

Parker, John-Michael - State Representative - 101st Assembly District:

- Writes to express concern with the bill. Specifically calls to attention the lack of control that towns would have over parking should the bill pass. States that towns are currently committed to ensuring equitable access to public resources.

Raap, Denise - First Selectman - Town of Litchfield:

- Writes in opposition to the bill, stating that it limits a municipality's ability to manage their resources. Believes that the current system, which charges non-residents more for their parking passes, is fair as residents already pay into the maintenance of public beaches.

Scafariello, Stephen - Chief of Department - West Shore Fire District:

- Opposes the bill, stating that it would exacerbate parking issues faced by municipalities. Overparking on public streets prevents emergency responders from carrying out their duties as need be.

Reported by: Trenton Kapij

Date: 4/1/2022