



# House of Representatives

**File No. 799**

General Assembly

January Session, 2023

**(Reprint of File No. 275)**

House Bill No. 6746  
As Amended by House Amendment  
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
May 19, 2023

***AN ACT CONCERNING WRONG-WAY DRIVING DETECTION AND PREVENTION.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2023*) (a) For the purposes of this  
2 section, (1) "wrong-way driving detection and notification system"  
3 means a system capable of alerting a motor vehicle operator with the  
4 use of flashing lights when such operator is driving in the wrong  
5 direction and notifying a law enforcement unit when a wrong-way  
6 operator is detected, and (2) "law enforcement unit" has the same  
7 meaning as provided in section 7-294a of the general statutes.

8 (b) The Department of Transportation shall expand efforts to  
9 implement wrong-way driving countermeasures throughout the state.  
10 Such efforts shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) The installation  
11 of wrong-way driving detection and notification systems on at least one  
12 hundred twenty highway exit ramps that the department determines  
13 are at high risk for motor vehicle operators driving in the wrong

14 direction; and (2) a public awareness campaign to educate the public  
15 concerning ways to reduce incidents of operators driving in the wrong  
16 direction and actions to take when an operator encounters a motor  
17 vehicle being operated in the wrong direction.

18 Sec. 2. Section 14-36f of the general statutes is repealed and the  
19 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

20 The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt regulations, in  
21 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, governing the  
22 establishment, conduct and scope of driver education programs in  
23 secondary schools of this state, subject to the requirements of section 14-  
24 36e. Such regulations shall (1) permit any local or regional board of  
25 education or private secondary school to contract with a licensed  
26 drivers' school approved by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for the  
27 behind-the-wheel instruction of such driver education program and  
28 instruction therein may be given by such school's driving instructors  
29 who are licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles, (2) require that  
30 the classroom instruction of any such driver education program include  
31 (A) a discussion concerning highway work zone safety and the  
32 responsibilities of an operator of a motor vehicle under section 14-212d,  
33 and (B) a discussion concerning ways to reduce incidents of operators  
34 driving in the wrong direction and actions to take when an operator  
35 encounters a motor vehicle being operated in the wrong direction, and  
36 (3) except for instruction offered pursuant to section 14-36j, permit a  
37 class or classroom instruction to be offered in person in a congregate  
38 setting, through distance learning or through a combination of both in-  
39 person and distance learning, provided such distance learning has  
40 interactive components such as mandatory interactions, participation or  
41 testing.

42 Sec. 3. Section 14-78 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
43 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

44 The commissioner may adopt regulations, in accordance with the  
45 provisions of chapter 54, regarding the conduct of drivers' schools and

46 instructor license requirements. Such regulations shall (1) establish the  
47 conduct of drivers' schools, including, but not limited to, (A)  
48 requirements as to the inspection of the vehicles used by the drivers'  
49 schools in the conduct of their business, (B) instructional standards and  
50 procedures, including instruction of not less than fifteen minutes  
51 concerning the responsibilities of an operator of a motor vehicle under  
52 subsection (b) of section 14-223 and the penalty for a violation of the  
53 provisions of said subsection, instruction concerning highway work  
54 zone safety and the responsibilities of an operator of a motor vehicle  
55 under section 14-212d, and instruction concerning ways to reduce  
56 incidents of operators driving in the wrong direction and actions to take  
57 when an operator encounters a motor vehicle being operated in the  
58 wrong direction, (C) the administration of a test at the conclusion of each  
59 class, (D) the posting of rates charged for instruction, and (E) the general  
60 form in which records concerning persons under instruction and those  
61 who have completed their course of instruction shall be kept and, when  
62 required, the method of transmission to the commissioner, (2) except as  
63 required pursuant to section 14-36j, permit a class or classroom  
64 instruction to be offered in person in a congregate setting, through  
65 distance learning or through a combination of both in-person and  
66 distance learning, provided such distance learning has interactive  
67 components such as mandatory interactions, participation or testing,  
68 and (3) establish the requirements for a person to receive a license as an  
69 instructor in accordance with section 14-73. On and after October 1,  
70 2010, the commissioner shall not issue a license that is limited to  
71 classroom instruction. Any person who was issued such limited license  
72 prior to October 1, 2010, may maintain and renew such license.

73 Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the purposes of this section, (1)  
74 "wrong-way driving detection, notification and broadcasting system"  
75 means a system capable of (A) alerting a motor vehicle operator with  
76 the use of flashing lights when such operator is driving in the wrong  
77 direction, (B) notifying a law enforcement unit when a wrong-way  
78 operator is detected, and (C) broadcasting the presence of a wrong-way  
79 operator on electronic message boards along the highway, and (2) "law

80 enforcement unit" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-294a  
81 of the general statutes.

82 (b) The Department of Transportation shall establish a pilot program  
83 to test the use of wrong-way driving detection, notification and  
84 broadcasting systems at highway exit ramps that the department  
85 determines are appropriate and at high risk for motor vehicle operators  
86 driving in the wrong direction. Not later than January 1, 2025, the  
87 department shall submit a report, in accordance with section 11-4a of  
88 the general statutes, concerning the results of the pilot program and any  
89 recommendations for the broader use of such systems throughout the  
90 state to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
91 cognizance of matters relating to transportation.

92 Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Transportation shall  
93 provide a grant from available resources for implementing wrong-way  
94 driving countermeasures to The University of Connecticut for the  
95 purposes of testing and analyzing the use of directional rumble strips in  
96 such a manner as to alert a motor vehicle operator through vibration  
97 and sound that the operator is driving a motor vehicle in the wrong  
98 direction. Not later than January 1, 2025, the department shall submit a  
99 report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
100 concerning the results of such testing and any recommendations for the  
101 installation of directional rumble strips throughout the state to the joint  
102 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
103 matters relating to transportation.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	14-36f
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	14-78
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

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## **OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to: (1) install various wrong-way driving countermeasures on select highway exits, (2) establish a pilot program to test the use of related detection, notification, and broadcasting systems, and (3) provide a grant to the University of Connecticut for testing of directional rumble strips. There is not expected to be additional cost associated with this because a wrong-way countermeasures program of \$20 million was authorized in PA 22-118 and fully allocated in July 2022. No change to debt service is anticipated as all authorized bonds have already been made available to the program and it is expected that DOT will use those funds for the requirements of the bill.

Additionally, sSB 980, the FY 24 and FY 25 bond bill, as favorably reported by the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, includes \$20 million of Special Tax Obligation bonds in each of FY 24 and FY 25 for wrong-way driving countermeasures, and the impact of those additional resources is discussed in that bill.

Other parts of the bill, including a public awareness campaign by DOT and an update to driving school instructional standards for the Department of Motor Vehicles, are not expected to have a fiscal impact because these activities are part of current agency operations and expertise.

House "A" alters the original bill by adding the pilot program and the grant to the University of Connecticut and has no fiscal impact.

***The Out Years***

***State Impact:*** None

***Municipal Impact:*** None

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**OLR Bill Analysis****HB 6746 (as amended by House "A")\******AN ACT CONCERNING WRONG-WAY DRIVING DETECTION AND PREVENTION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to expand its efforts to implement wrong-way driver countermeasures. These efforts must include the following:

1. installing wrong-way driving detection and notification systems (i.e., systems capable of alerting drivers with flashing lights when they are going the wrong way and notifying law enforcement upon detecting a wrong-way driver) on at least 120 highway exit ramps that DOT determines are high-risk for wrong-way drivers (see BACKGROUND);
2. establishing a pilot program at high-risk exit ramps that the department determines are appropriate for testing systems that also broadcast alerts about a wrong-way driver's presence on electronic highway message boards (i.e., "wrong-way driving detection, notification, and broadcasting systems"); and
3. giving a grant, from available resources for implementing wrong-way driving countermeasures, to UConn to test and analyze the use of directional rumble strips to alert a driver through vibration and sound that he or she is driving the wrong way.

The bill requires DOT, by January 1, 2025, to submit reports to the Transportation Committee on (1) the pilot program's results and recommendations for the broader use of wrong-way driving detection,

notification, and broadcasting systems and (2) UConn's analysis results and recommendations on installing directional rumble strips.

Additionally, the bill addresses wrong-way driving public awareness and education by requiring that information on ways to reduce wrong-way driving incidents and information on actions drivers should take when encountering a wrong-way driver be included in (1) a DOT public awareness campaign and (2) driver education program curriculum. The Department of Motor Vehicles must include this information in its regulations on driving school instructional standards.

\*House Amendment "A" (1) eliminates the requirement that DOT install rumble strips on exit ramps and instead requires the department to give a grant to UConn to test them and (2) creates a pilot program to test wrong-way driving detection and notification systems that broadcast alerts to highway message boards, rather than requiring all systems to be capable of doing so.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023, except that the pilot program and UConn grant provisions are effective upon passage.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Bonding for Wrong-Way Driving Technology***

The 2020 bond act authorized \$1 million in special tax obligation (STO) bonds to purchase signs that flash a warning when they detect a vehicle entering the road in the wrong direction and install them on exit ramps on interstate highways that are prone to accidents (PA 20-1, § 40). PA 22-118, § 322, authorized an additional \$20 million in STO bonds for DOT to purchase and install advanced wrong-way driving technology.

### ***DOT's Wrong-Way Driver Flasher Pilot Program***

As part of its wrong-way flasher pilot program, DOT analyzed 700 highway ramps, considering risk factors including (1) multiple off-ramps that meet at the same location, (2) wrong-way event history, (3) presence of an alcohol-serving business within one-half mile of the ramp, (4) presence of a raised median or guardrail separating the on-



and-off ramps, and (5) lack of sufficient highway lighting.

Through this analysis, DOT identified 236 locations as high-risk for wrong way driving events, developed a ranked priority list, and chose an initial 16 locations for installation through the pilot program in 2023. These installations include a 360-degree camera to detect vehicles and large, flashing wrong-ways signs that activate to warn the driver. The department plans to install this technology on more ramps from the priority list after the initial pilot project locations, and future installations will add the ability to notify the Connecticut State Police in real time.

**Related Bill**

sSB 980 (File 731), reported favorably by the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, authorizes \$20 million in STO bonds in each of FYs 24 and 25 for DOT to purchase and install advanced wrong-way driving technology.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 35 Nay 0 (03/10/2023)