



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

Raised Bill No. 5331

LCO No. 2260



Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION

Introduced by:
(TRA)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SUSPENSION OF MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATORS' LICENSES FOR FAILURE TO PAY FINES OR FEES OR FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR A SCHEDULED COURT APPEARANCE.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 14-111 of the 2024 supplement to
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

4 (a) No provision of this chapter shall be construed to prohibit the
5 commissioner from suspending or revoking any registration or any
6 operator's license issued under the provisions of any statute relating to
7 motor vehicles, or from suspending the right of any person to operate a
8 motor vehicle in this state, or from suspending or revoking the right of
9 any nonresident to operate, or the right to any operation of, any motor
10 vehicle within this state, for any cause that [he] the commissioner deems
11 sufficient, with or without a hearing, except the commissioner shall not
12 suspend the operator's license of any person solely for one or both of the
13 following reasons: (1) The person failed to pay any fines, fee or other
14 charges associated with an infraction involving the use of a motor

15 vehicle, a violation of any statute relating to motor vehicles specified in
16 section 51-164n or a violation of sections 29-322, 29-349 and 29-351, or
17 (2) the person failed to appear for any scheduled court appearance with
18 regard to any such infraction or violation. Whenever any certificate of
19 registration is suspended or revoked, all evidence of the same shall be
20 delivered forthwith to the commissioner or to any person authorized by
21 the commissioner to receive the same, and the commissioner or any
22 person authorized by the commissioner may seize such certificate of
23 registration and all evidence of the same. Except as otherwise provided
24 by law, the commissioner may cancel any such suspension or revocation
25 and may return such certificate of registration or restore the operator's
26 license either with or without an additional fee, provided no certificate
27 of registration or operator's license which has been suspended for any
28 definite term, except as provided in subsection (k) of this section, shall
29 be returned or restored until the term of suspension has been completed.
30 Any appeal taken from the action of the commissioner shall not act as a
31 stay of suspension or revocation except with [his] the commissioner's
32 consent. No service of process shall be necessary in connection with any
33 of the prescribed activities of the commissioner, but a notice forwarded
34 by bulk certified mail to the address of the person registered as owner
35 or operator of any motor vehicle as shown by the records of the
36 commissioner shall be sufficient notice to such person that the certificate
37 of registration or operator's license is revoked or under suspension.

38 Sec. 2. Section 14-140 of the general statutes is repealed and the
39 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

40 (a) Any person who has been arrested by an officer for a violation of
41 any provision of any statute relating to motor vehicles may be released,
42 upon [his] such person's own recognizance, by such officer in [his] such
43 officer's discretion, unless such violation is of a provision relating to
44 driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs, [or]
45 using a motor vehicle without permission of the owner or evading
46 responsibility for personal injury or property damage or involves the
47 death or serious injury of another, in which cases such person shall not
48 be released on [his] such person's own recognizance.

49 (b) If any person so arrested or summoned wilfully fails to appear for
50 any scheduled court appearance at the time and place assigned, or if any
51 person charged with an infraction involving the use of a motor vehicle,
52 or with a motor vehicle violation specified in section 51-164n, fails to
53 pay the fine and any additional fee imposed or send in [his] such
54 person's plea of not guilty by the answer date or wilfully fails to appear
55 for any scheduled court appearance which may be required, or if any
56 person fails to pay any surcharge imposed under section 13b-70, any fee
57 imposed under section 51-56a or any cost imposed under section 54-143
58 or 54-143a, a report of such failure shall be sent to the commissioner by
59 the court having jurisdiction. The provisions of this section shall be
60 extended to any nonresident owner or operator of a motor vehicle
61 residing in any state, the proper authorities of which agree with the
62 commissioner to revoke [, until personal appearance to answer the
63 charge against him, his] such person's motor vehicle registration
64 certificate or operator's license. [, upon his failure to appear for any
65 scheduled court appearance.] Any infractions or violations, for which a
66 report of failure to appear has been sent to the commissioner under this
67 subsection, that have not otherwise been disposed of shall be dismissed
68 by operation of law seven years after such report was sent.

69 (c) The commissioner may enter into reciprocal agreements with the
70 proper authorities of other states, which agreements may include
71 provisions for the suspension or revocation of licenses and registrations
72 of residents and nonresidents. [who fail to appear for trial at the time
73 and place assigned.]

74 (d) Any judgment under this section shall be opened upon the
75 payment to the clerk of the Superior Court of a fee of forty dollars. Such
76 filing fee may be waived by the court.

77 (e) In addition, the provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall
78 apply to sections 29-322, 29-349 and 29-351.

79 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2024*) Not later than January 1, 2025,
80 the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall reinstate the motor vehicle

81 operator's license of any person whose license was suspended solely for
82 one or both of the following reasons: (1) The person failed to pay any
83 fines, fee or other charges associated with an infraction involving the
84 use of a motor vehicle, a violation of any provision of any statute
85 relating to motor vehicles specified in section 51-164n of the general
86 statutes or a violation of sections 29-322, 29-349 and 29-351 of the general
87 statutes, or (2) the person failed to appear for any scheduled court
88 appearance with regard to any such infraction or violation, provided
89 such person is otherwise eligible to have such person's operator's license
90 reinstated. The commissioner shall not charge the restoration fee
91 specified in subsection (a) of section 14-50b of the general statutes, as
92 amended by this act, to any person whose license is reinstated pursuant
93 to the provisions of this section.

94 Sec. 4. Section 14-50b of the general statutes is repealed and the
95 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

96 (a) [Any] Except as provided in section 3 of this act, any person (1)
97 whose operator's license or privilege to operate a motor vehicle in this
98 state has been suspended or revoked by the Commissioner of Motor
99 Vehicles, (2) who has been disqualified from operating a commercial
100 motor vehicle, or (3) whose identity card, issued under section 1-1h, has
101 been revoked due to misrepresentation or deceit, shall pay a restoration
102 fee of one hundred seventy-five dollars to said commissioner prior to
103 the issuance to such person of a new operator's license or identity card
104 or the restoration of such operator's license or privilege to operate a
105 motor vehicle or commercial motor vehicle. Such restoration fee shall be
106 in addition to any other fees provided by law. The commissioner shall
107 deposit fifty dollars of such fee in a separate nonlapsing school bus seat
108 belt account which shall be established within the General Fund.

109 (b) Any person whose motor vehicle registration or right of operation
110 of a motor vehicle in this state has been suspended or revoked by the
111 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall pay a restoration fee of one
112 hundred seventy-five dollars to said commissioner prior to the issuance
113 to such person of a new registration or the restoration of such

114 registration or such right of operation. Such restoration fee shall be in
115 addition to any other fees provided by law. The commissioner shall
116 deposit fifty dollars of such fee in the school bus seat belt account
117 established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

118 (c) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, on and
119 after July 1, 2005, the first two hundred fifty thousand dollars of
120 revenues collected from the payment of restoration fees under this
121 section shall be appropriated to the Department of Motor Vehicles for
122 the payment of costs, including, but not limited to, the cost of computer
123 reprogramming, incurred by the department in establishing procedures
124 for the suspension of operator's licenses or nonresident operating
125 privileges under subdivision (2) of subsection (e) of section 14-227b.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	14-111(a)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	14-140
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	14-50b

Statement of Purpose:

To (1) prohibit the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles from suspending a license solely for failing to pay fines, fees or other charges resulting from a motor vehicle infraction or violation or for failure to appear for any scheduled court appearance with regard to any such infraction or violation, and (2) restore the operator's license of any person whose license was suspended for such failure.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]