



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES STATE OF CONNECTICUT

165 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106-1658

## Raised Bill 6390

### An Act Exempting State Emergency Response and Law Enforcement Vehicles from Certain Emission and Fuel Standards

Public Safety and Security Committee  
February 10, 2009

Good morning Senator Stillman, Representative Dargan, Ranking Members and other distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. I am Brenda Sisco, Commissioner of Administrative Services. I am here today to testify **in support of House Bill 6390**.

This bill concerns the fleet standards for state law enforcement and emergency vehicles. DAS believes that the changes in this bill are practical in that they recognize the reality that *all* law enforcement and emergency vehicles have specialized fleet requirements, not only those driven by our State Police Department. These changes will also make state law more consistent with federal law.

Currently, both state and federal laws set emission, gas mileage and other standards for vehicles purchased by DAS Fleet Operations. State law, C.G.S. § 4a-67d, directs DAS to purchase only Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs), hybrids or plug-in electric vehicles unless an exemption exists under the law. It also imposes strict gas mileage and emissions standards on the state fleet. Federal law (the Energy Policy Act, or EPAct) sets additional guidelines for state vehicle purchases, mandating that 75% of new fleet purchases be AFVs (hybrids are not recognized), unless an exclusion exists.

Both state and federal law exempt state police vehicles from their energy and emission standards, recognizing that these vehicles cannot practically meet the strict goals. Law enforcement vehicles used for activities such as chase and the apprehension of suspects have special operating needs, such as more engine power, and greater weight capacity to accommodate equipment like gun boxes and cages.

However, while the federal law excludes all law enforcement and emergency response vehicles<sup>1</sup> from its strict fleet standards, state law only narrowly excludes Department of Public Safety vehicles. House Bill 6390 would make state law consistent with federal law in this regard.

<sup>1</sup> Law Enforcement vehicle: A vehicle primarily operated by a police officer or other law enforcement officer and which is used for the purpose of law enforcement activities, including but not limited to, chase, apprehension and surveillance of people engaged in or potentially engaged in unlawful activities.

Emergency Response vehicle: A vehicle that is legally authorized by a government authority to exceed the speed limit to transport people and equipment to and from situations in which speed is required in order to save lives or property, such as a rescue vehicle, fire truck or ambulance. (10 CFR 490.2)

This amendment makes sense because in fact not all law enforcement and emergency response vehicles belong to the Department of Public Safety. For example, DMV, DEP, DOC and UCONN all have law enforcement responsibilities. In order to carry out their mandated responsibilities, these agencies also use law enforcement and emergency vehicles that have special operating needs; they too need vehicles that chase and apprehend, and that carry heavy equipment such as cages, gun boxes and specialized electronics.

Because the state's law enforcement and emergency response fleet extends beyond the Department of Public Safety, the exemption in 4a-67d should not be limited to State Police vehicles.

I thank the Public Safety & Security Committee for raising this bill, and I'd be happy to answer any questions that you may have.