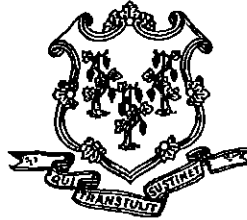


SENATOR MARTIN M. LOONEY  
MAJORITY LEADER  
Eleventh District  
*New Haven & Hamden*



State of Connecticut  
SENATE

State Capitol  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591  
132 Fort Hale Road  
New Haven, Connecticut 06512  
Home: 203-468-8829  
Capitol: 860-240-8600  
Toll-free: 1-800-842-1420  
[www.SenatorLooney.cga.ct.gov](http://www.SenatorLooney.cga.ct.gov)

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Good Afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am gratified that Gov. Malloy has proposed and expressed strong support for several of these proposals that would make our justice system more rational as well create savings for the state.

H.B. 6391 AN ACT CONCERNING PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OFFENSES, OFFENDER RISK REDUCTION EARNED CREDITS AND HOME CONFINEMENT FOR CERTAIN NONVIOLENT DRUG OFFENDERS would require the use of an ignition interlock device by a person convicted for the first time of drunken driving and would give judges the discretion in certain cases to sentence a person convicted of drunken driving to house arrest and monitoring by a global positioning system device and an alcohol consumption device rather than sending such person to prison. While DUI represents a serious violation of the law, a conventional prison sentence is not necessarily the best cost-effective punishment and deterrent. The ignition interlock allows these violators to remain productive citizens and keeps our state

safe from intoxicated drivers. In addition, the bill would allow home confinement for certain non-violent drug offenses.

Finally, this bill would restore good-time credit for inmates. Under this plan, an inmate who exhibits good conduct, obeys the rules, and participates in certain re-entry education programs may earn credits to reduce his or her sentence. Rehabilitating prisoners is in the interest of everyone in the state. These common sense changes to our laws regarding driving under the influence, drug possession, home confinement, and goodtime credits would restore reasonable judicial discretion and improve the rationality of our justice system.

S.B. 953, AN ACT CONCERNING NONVIOLENT DRUG POSSESSION OFFENSES and S.B. 1014 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY FOR CERTAIN NONVIOLENT DRUG OFFENSES represent a compassionate and pragmatic policy. Our state should not encourage illegal drug possession and use; however, possession of small amounts of illicit substances and related paraphernalia for personal use should not leave a person with a life-long criminal record. In addition, the bill would create budgetary savings in these challenging times since it would reduce costs to police departments, the court system, and the offices of the public defenders and the states' attorneys. These proposals would provide additional cost effective reforms to the justice system by allowing the court and correctional personnel to assess offenders who are convicted or plead guilty to nonviolent crimes and consider using home confinement with a GPS monitoring device in lieu of incarceration. These bills would allow for treatment and punishment that would improve the chances of these nonviolent offenders

returning as productive members of our society. This approach would underscore the principle of proportionality in our criminal justice system and would represent a public policy that prison is primarily a place for offenders who are truly dangerous and not for those whose conduct simply merits some punishment. The courts and the department of corrections have a great deal of skill and experience in reform and punishment of offenders; we should put this skill and experience to good use in a manner that would increase the rationality of our justice system as well as ease the state's budget crisis.

S.B. 952 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENHANCED PENALTY FOR THE SALE OR POSSESSION OF DRUGS NEAR SCHOOLS, DAY CARE CENTERS AND PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS. This bill addresses the issue that in cities such as New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport there are very few places which are not within 1500 feet of a school, a day care center, or public housing. This urban density creates a situation in which almost any sale or possession of illegal substances in the cities is subject to the enhanced penalty while such activities in many parts of suburban communities of larger area are subject to lesser penalties. The bill would lower the distance to 200 feet and make the enhanced penalties apply only when the facilities such as schools and day care centers are in fact open. This legislation would also allow judges more discretion regarding the use of the increased penalty which is appropriate in these situations. I believe that this change would more effectively achieve the intent of the statute.

S.B. 1015 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PALLIATIVE USE OF MARIJUANA. And H.B. 6566 AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMPASSIONATE USE OF MARIJUANA would legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes for our

citizens with debilitating medical conditions. These citizens deserve compassion rather than arrest, fines, court costs, property forfeiture, incarceration, probation and criminal records. Ideally, I believe that research should be done to compare the effects of marijuana relative to other available treatments; this approach, which might lead to a national policy shift, also represents the view of a panel formed by the Institute of Medicine. However this is not likely in the near term and our citizens suffering from these diseases need our assistance now. I hope that the bill passed by the Judiciary Committee will contain the language in the New Mexico bill which allows for legal production. I believe that one flaw in the bill passed in 2007 (but vetoed by the governor) was that the marijuana had to be procured illegally. I hope that we can alter that provision this time.

Thank you for raising these important issues.