



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 398

January Session, 2013

House Bill No. 6007

House of Representatives, April 8, 2013

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through REP. DARGAN of the 115th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING "BLUE ALERTS".

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2013*) (a) The Department of
2 Emergency Services and Public Protection shall establish an emergency
3 alert system to assist law enforcement agencies in the apprehension of
4 persons suspected of killing or seriously injuring peace officers or in
5 the location of missing peace officers. The department shall develop
6 and implement policies and procedures for the operation and
7 administration of the system including, but not limited to, procedures
8 for a law enforcement agency to request activation of the system and
9 guidelines to ensure that the dissemination of information will not
10 compromise the investigation of the offense or disappearance or
11 violate the privacy of the peace officer who is the subject of the alert or
12 of the officer's next-of-kin.

13 (b) The department may activate the system and issue an alert only
14 if it determines, after consultation with the law enforcement agency
15 requesting such activation, that:

16 (1) A peace officer: (A) Has been assaulted by another person
 17 resulting in such officer's death or serious physical injury or has been
 18 assaulted by another person with a deadly weapon, and the person
 19 suspected of such assault (i) has not been apprehended, and (ii) poses
 20 an imminent threat to the public or other peace officers, or (B) is
 21 missing while in the performance of such officer's duties under
 22 circumstances warranting concern for such officer's safety;

23 (2) Sufficient descriptive information is available to disseminate to
 24 the public concerning (A) the suspect or the suspect's vehicle or other
 25 means of escape, or (B) the circumstances of the peace officer's
 26 disappearance; and

27 (3) Dissemination of such information to the public could assist in
 28 apprehending the suspect, locating the missing peace officer or
 29 averting injury to any other person.

30 (c) As used in this section, "peace officer", "serious physical injury"
 31 and "deadly weapon" have the same meanings as provided in section
 32 53a-3 of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2013	New section

PS *Joint Favorable*

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.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

There is no fiscal impact arising from the establishment of an alert system to be used when a peace officer is injured, killed, or missing in the line of duty. The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection can implement the new system using existing infrastructure.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 6007*****AN ACT CONCERNING "BLUE ALERTS".*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to establish an emergency alert system to help law enforcement agencies (1) apprehend anyone suspected of killing or seriously injuring a peace officer or (2) locate a missing peace officer. (The system is known as Blue Alert – see BACKGROUND.)

DESPP must develop and implement policies and procedures for operating and administering the system. This includes procedures governing requests by law enforcement agencies to activate the system and guidelines to ensure that the dissemination of information does not (1) compromise the investigation of the offense or disappearance or (2) violate the privacy of the peace officer who is the subject of the alert or of the officer's next-of-kin.

The bill specifies when DESPP may activate the system.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

BLUE ALERT ACTIVATION

DESPP may activate the Blue Alert system only if it determines, after consulting with the law enforcement agency requesting activation, that:

1. a peace officer (a) was assaulted and killed by someone or suffered serious physical injury or was assaulted with a deadly weapon by a suspect who has not been apprehended and poses an imminent threat to the public or other peace officers or (b) is

missing while performing his or her duties under circumstances warranting concern for his or her safety;

2. sufficient descriptive information is available to disseminate to the public about the (a) suspect or his or her vehicle or other means of escape or (b) circumstances of the peace officer's disappearance; and
3. disseminating the information to the public could help apprehend the suspect, locate the missing officer, or avert injury to any other person.

BACKGROUND

Peace Officers

By law "peace officers" are state or local police officers, Division of Criminal Justice inspectors, state marshals exercising statutory authority, judicial marshals performing their duties, conservation officers or special conservation officers, constables who performs criminal law enforcement duties, appointed special policemen, adult probation officers, Department of Correction officials authorized to make arrests in a correctional institution or facility, investigators in the State Treasurer's office, and federal narcotics agents (CGS § 53a-3).

Deadly Weapon

A "deadly weapon" is any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles (CGS § 53a-3).

Emergency Alert System

Blue Alerts are similar to AMBER Alerts, but have a different purpose. Instead of being used to find missing or endangered children, Blue Alerts are used to alert the public when a law enforcement officer has been killed, seriously injured, or missing and a suspect, considered an imminent threat, is at large. Blue Alerts alert the public of the possible danger and solicit the public's assistance in apprehending the suspect.

Currently, at least 15 states have Blue Alert laws, including California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Legislation is pending in several other states.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 0 (03/21/2013)