



State of Connecticut  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

IN SUPPORT OF:

**S.B. NO. 1143: AN ACT CONCERNING TRAFFIC STOP INFORMATION**

IN OPPOSITION TO:

**H.B. NO. 6665: AN ACT CONCERNING REVIEW OF TRAFFIC STOP COMPLAINTS  
AND THE COLLECTION OF TRAFFIC STOP INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO  
IMMIGRATION STATUS**

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
March 23, 2013

The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully recommends the Committee's **JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT** for **S.B. No. 1143, An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information**, and **NO ACTION** on **H.B. No. 6665, An Act Concerning Review of Traffic Stop Complaints and the Collection of Traffic Stop Information With Respect to Immigration Status**. The Division wishes to express its appreciation to the Committee, the members of the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project Advisory Board, and all others who have devoted so much time and effort to developing the concepts incorporated in S.B. No. 1143.

S.B. No. 1143 reflects the consensus judgment of the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project Advisory Board, a diverse group of 26 members including representatives from law enforcement, the Departments of Transportation and Motor Vehicles, the African American Affairs Commission, the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, the Division of Public Defender Services, Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the American Civil Liberties Union, the NAACP, Central Connecticut State University and the University of New Haven, on how to make the collection and analysis of traffic stop information more meaningful.

S.B. No. 1143 addresses shortfalls in the current law by requiring all law enforcement agencies that conduct traffic stops to collect and submit data regarding those stops. Presently, several agencies that conduct stops are not required to collect data. The bill requires the collected data to be submitted to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) on a monthly basis and in a form specified by OPM so that it can be properly analyzed. As the Committee is aware, the failure to require data to be submitted in a standardized fashion made analysis of the data difficult, if not impossible.

The bill also requires the police to collect new data elements which should allow for more meaningful analysis by OPM. The Committee should be aware that care was taken to make sure that the new requirements were not so burdensome to police as to prevent them from performing their law enforcement functions. In short, the Division of Criminal Justice supports S.B. No. 1143.

The Division does not, however, support H.B. No. 6665, the provisions of which were not considered by the advisory group. Rather than identifying what information should be collected and how that information should be analyzed, H.B. No. 6665 attempts to limit what investigative steps an officer can take during a traffic stop. The provision of the bill which seeks to prevent an officer from requesting any identification or documentation other than an operator's license, certificate of motor vehicle registration, or automobile insurance card makes no sense. There are many times when an officer stops someone for a motor vehicle violation and a person has neither a driver's license, a registration, or an insurance card. This bill would seem to prevent the officer from making a reasonable request for other identifying information simply so the officer could identify the person to whom he or she is speaking.

Further, H.B. No. 6665 would prevent the officer from inquiring about the immigration status of the driver, seemingly under any circumstances – at least the bill would authorize the police to inquire about the immigration status of the passenger upon reasonable suspicion to believe that the passenger had committed a crime. While the question of a person's immigration status is not normally the subject of inquiry at a traffic stop there certainly could be circumstances where it could be relevant. It is important to note that traffic stops for seemingly minor motor vehicle violations can result in investigations and arrests for major offenses. It should be noted that three of the 9/11 hijackers - Hani Hanjour, Ziad Jarrah, and Mohammad Atta - were stopped by local or state police officers for traffic violations in the months leading up to 9/11, including Jarrah on September 9, 2001, just two days before the murders of 3,000. We have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to now provide police officers with more information on subjects of police encounters. To do anything that would deny them access to that information or to limit their ability to use it is dangerous and foolish. Given the scope of what can result from a traffic stop the legislature should not limit the ability of the police to take appropriate investigative measures. The Division recommends NO ACTION on H.B. No. 6665.