

# Commerce Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-265

AN ACT CONCERNING EXPEDITED PERMITTING BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR BUSINESS INITIATION,

**Title:** EXPANSION OR NEW PRODUCTION.

**Vote Date:** 3/22/2018

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/8/2018

**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Commerce Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

Requires DEEP commissioner to meet with and appraise certain permit applications about the information needed to process the permit and when DEEP expects to decide the application. To help businesses get permitting through DEEP done faster and more efficiently.

**Substitute language:** requires DEEP to report annually on the number of applications received during the previous year that were designated as needed to establish or expand a business or produce a new product and a comparison of the average estimated time to process these applications and the average actual processing time. Changes to ensure the bills effectiveness is monitored.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Commissioner Klee, DEEP:** Opposes the bill stating its redundancy. DEEP uses LEAN methods to streamline application processes. It also allows applicants to request pre-application meetings to discuss permitting processes and issues. DEEP is also not equipped to distinguish and track permit applications based on the bill's variables.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Eric Brown, CBIA:** Supports the bill. The bill authorizes DEEP to prioritize for processing permits needed to start new businesses, expand existing ones, or launch new products.

Activities covered by existing permits will also continue as long as there are no changes in the activity.

**Wallingford Economic Development Commission**: Supports the bill stating that permitting costs and uncertainty are barriers toward starting new businesses, expanding existing ones, or launching new products. DEEP can be reluctant to commit to a deadline to review and issue a permit. They recommend specifically requiring DEEP to contact applicants and report on expedited permitting.

**Executive Director Bobman, Bristol Recourse Recovery Facility**: Supports the bill. DEEP's reluctance to commit to a permitting deadline "can be the death knell for implementing new product lines or processes," with negative revenue and economic consequences.

**Mr. Steir, Kaman Corporation**: Supports the bill. Suggests the need for a third-party to help DEEP and businesses work out business and regulatory goals. The process is currently too slow for businesses.

**Paul Pescatello, Executive Director, Senior Council & Executive Director, Connecticut Bioscience Growth Council**: In support of the bill.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Leah Schmalz, Chief Program Officer, Connecticut Fund for the Environment**: Opposes the bill. The bill's changes will "overly burden a resource strapped agency and could result in inadequate environmental review." DEEP already has pre-application reviews and would be required to redeploy staff and extend processing time.

**Reported by: Stevie Hoyt**

**Date: 3/26/18**