

## Public Safety and Security Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5152

AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF MARIJUANA-IMPAIRED DRIVING AND

**Title:** METHODS TO DETECT MARIJUANA-IMPAIRED DRIVING.

**Vote Date:** 3/19/2019

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/14/2019

**File No.:**

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### **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Public Safety and Security Committee  
Rep. Gail Lavielle, 143rd Dist.  
Rep. Craig C. Fishbein, 90th Dist.  
Rep. Mike France, 42nd Dist.  
Rep. Tami Zawistowski, 61st Dist.  
Rep. Charles J. Ferraro, 117th Dist.  
Rep. Brenda L. Kupchick, 132nd Dist.  
Rep. Fred Camillo, 151st Dist.  
Rep. J.P. Sredzinski, 112th Dist.

### **REASONS FOR BILL:**

The objective of H.B. 5152 is to administer a study to detect the signs of a motorist who is driving under the influence of marijuana. With the possibility of marijuana being legalized, a study into accurate roadside testing must be conducted.

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

#### **[James Rovella, Commissioner Designee, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection](#)**

Commissioner Rovella testified that law enforcement agencies go through extensive training to determine if a motorist is under the influence of marijuana. He expressed that every Connecticut State Trooper has been certified in detecting if a driver is under the influence of both legal and illegal drugs. He also highlighted the fact that the Connecticut state police have 12 troopers that are certified as Drug Recognition Experts. These individuals have had intense and thorough training provided by the Department of Transportation.

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

### **Scott Sansom, Chief, The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association**

The CT Police Chiefs Association (CPCA) believes that this bill is going to be positive attribute for law enforcement when trying to detect if someone is under the influence of marijuana. He expressed that the CPCA is obligated to advocate on behalf of the public and that a study into the detection of a driver under the influence is imperative to the states well-being.

### **Gail Lavielle, Representative, Connecticut General Assembly**

Representative Lavielle expressed that Connecticut should be open to experimenting with new testing procedures in regards to an individual being under the influence of marijuana while driving. She testified on the importance of making sure the public is aware of new developments regarding testing, and that Connecticut should be proactive in researching the methods other states have implemented in regards to roadside marijuana testing.

### **David McGuire, Executive Director, ACLU CT**

David McGuire testified that although the ACLU supports the bill and is concerned with public safety, they are concerned with the bill violating driver's civil liberties. The ACLU expressed that they are concerned with faulty roadside tests being administered, and that it is imperative that scientifically accurate tests are being given. The ACLU is concerned that roadside tests are also in violation of the fourth amendment, as well as harming people with disabilities as well as people of color. Although they have concerns with the current standards of roadside testing, they expressed that this bill is the first step in the right direction to validating which tests would be best to administer.

### **Amy Parmenter, Manager of Public and Government Affairs, AAA Allied Group**

Amy Parmenter testified that currently there is not a definite way to determine if a motorist is under the influence of marijuana. She stressed that legalizing marijuana before the potential highway safety hazards are addressed, could have detrimental consequences.

### **William Church**

In his testimony, William Church shared his story regarding the death of his son. He expressed that his son was killed by a drugged and drunk driver. He has since spent his time advocating for laws that will make Connecticut roads safer. He stated that there is not a clear way to determine if an individual is under the influence of marijuana, and that if marijuana is going to be legalized, this bill is imperative.

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

None was expressed for H.B. 5152

**Reported by: Nicoletta Blevins, Assistant Clerk 4/2/2019**