

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



**PA 19-119**—sSB 924  
*Transportation Committee*

**AN ACT CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION NOTICE,  
THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION PLAN, CARRIERS, SCHOOL  
BUSES, THE MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD, RESERVED PARKING  
SPACES, AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES AND OTHER MOTOR VEHICLE  
STATUTES**

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### § 1 — DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV) COMPLIANCE NOTICE

*Permits DMV to send a compliance notice instead of a registration renewal application to individuals who are legally prevented from renewing*

Under prior law, DMV had to send renewal applications to all motor vehicle registrants at least 30 days before their registrations expired. For registrants who (1) are prohibited under existing law from having their registrations renewed because they have outstanding legal compliance issues or (2) owe fees or fines to DMV, the act authorizes DMV to instead send or transmit a notice detailing the outstanding compliance issues, including the amount of any fines owed, and stating that the registration will not be renewed until the issues are resolved or the fees or fines are paid in full. As is the case under existing law for renewal applications, the DMV commissioner is not required to send or transmit the compliance notice to a registrant by mail if the U.S. Postal Service has determined

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that mail cannot be delivered to that person at the address in DMV records.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### § 2 — DUAL VEHICLE PLATES ELIGIBILITY

*Makes a technical change related to dual plates*

The act makes technical changes, including requiring livery and taxi vehicles to meet passenger vehicle criteria in order to receive a dual vehicle plate, conforming to existing law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### §§ 3 & 4 — DISPLAY OF INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION PLAN (IRP) DOCUMENTS

*Adds protections for when IRP documents are displayed on an electronic device*

By law, Connecticut is a member of the IRP, which is an interstate compact under which interstate motor carriers can register their vehicles in only one of the states where they operate. The registration fee is then shared proportionately in all the states in which they travel according to the miles they travel in each state.

In conformity with an IRP amendment, the act adds protections for when vehicle registration and other IRP documents are displayed on an electronic device. It specifically allows motor carrier registrants to present those documents electronically on a cell phone or other electronic device, instead of in paper form, to people who are required or authorized to view them in connection with their employment (e.g., law enforcement officers and DMV personnel). Under the act, those viewing cannot examine any other content on the device, and presenting the documents electronically does not give consent for the viewer to do so. Additionally, the act exempts those who are required or authorized to view the documents from liability for any damage to a device provided to them for this purpose.

The act also expands the DMV commissioner's authority to enter into reciprocal agreements for apportioning interstate motor carrier registration fees to include U.S. territories or possessions, conforming to the IRP.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### §§ 5, 9 & 19-21 — DRIVER PHYSICAL QUALIFICATION STANDARDS AND SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY TRAINING

*Aligns the physical qualification standards for public passenger license endorsements and school bus and student transportation vehicle drivers with federal law; makes conforming, technical changes related to those standards as they apply to operating commercial vehicles; and eliminates an obsolete school transportation safety training requirement*

The act makes minor and technical changes related to certain driver physical

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qualification standards. It requires the physical qualification standards for people seeking a state-issued public passenger endorsement on their driver's license, and, more specifically, for school bus and student transportation vehicle drivers, to be the same as those under specified federal regulations, conforming to existing law and DMV practice.

Among other things, the act makes conforming, technical changes associated with those standards as they apply to operating commercial vehicles, including eligibility for commercial driver's licenses and commercial driver's instruction permits. The act also eliminates an obsolete requirement that DMV establish physical examination procedures for school bus and student transportation vehicle drivers in regulations.

By law, school bus and student transportation vehicle drivers must successfully complete a safety training course in order to transport school children. The act eliminates an obsolete requirement that this course be administered by the DMV commissioner. Under existing DMV regulations, such safety training must be administered or supervised by instructors approved by the DMV commissioner (Conn Agencies Regs. § 14-276a-1, et seq.).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### §§ 6 & 7 — CARRIERS TRANSPORTING STUDENTS AND THE SUSPENDED AND REVOKED DRIVER LIST

*Eliminates a requirement that DMV ensure that carriers transporting students are reviewing suspended and revoked driver lists and instead requires the carriers to register with DMV the name of the employee or agent reviewing the lists*

By law, DMV must periodically provide to school districts and school bus companies (i.e., carriers) a report listing the names and driver's license numbers of each public passenger endorsement holder whose license or endorsement has been suspended or revoked. Under existing law, carriers must review DMV's report at least once during the first and third week of each month.

The act eliminates the requirement that DMV ensure that each carrier is reviewing the report by (1) conducting random compliance audits of carriers to determine if they are reviewing the report, (2) maintaining a record of each time a carrier reviewed the report in the prior two years, and (3) making the record publicly available upon request. Instead it requires carriers to register with DMV on and after October 1, 2019, as the commissioner prescribes. The registration must provide the name of the carrier and the employee or agent responsible for checking the suspended and revoked driver list. If there is a material change to a carrier's registration the carrier must file an amendment with the commissioner within 30 calendar days after it knows, or reasonably should have known, of the change.

Failure to register is subject to a civil penalty of \$1,000 for a first violation and \$2,500 for each subsequent violation, but the DMV commissioner may reduce the penalty with appropriate justification. The same penalties apply under existing law to carriers who fail to review the commissioner's report.

The act also makes technical changes.

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EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### § 8 — IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICES (IID)

*Provides that the existing penalties for operating a motor vehicle not equipped with a required IID extend to anyone who (1) completes the terms of a license suspension; (2) is eligible for license reinstatement if he or she installs and uses an IID, but fails to install the IID; and (3) operates a motor vehicle*

By law, a person legally required to use an IID is prohibited from, among other things, driving a vehicle that (1) does not have a functioning IID or (2) the court has ordered the person not to operate. The act specifically provides that anyone who completes the terms of a license suspension and is eligible for reinstatement if the person installs and uses an IID, but who fails to do so, is prohibited from operating a vehicle until he or she has installed the device and had their license reinstated by the DMV commissioner. In doing so, the act provides that the existing penalties for operating a motor vehicle not equipped with a required IID extend to individuals who operate a motor vehicle in violation of this provision.

By law, a person who operates a motor vehicle not equipped with a required IID is subject to a \$500 to \$1,000 fine and imprisonment as follows:

1. for a first violation, up to one year, with a 30-day mandatory minimum;
2. for a second violation, up to two years, with a 120-day mandatory minimum; and
3. for a third violation, up to three years, with a one-year mandatory minimum.

In each case, the court is not required to impose the mandatory minimum sentence if it finds mitigating circumstances and states them in writing (CGS § 14-215(c)). Additionally, each court must report each conviction to the DMV commissioner and the commissioner must suspend, for a year, the driver's license or operating privilege of those reported as convicted.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

### § 10 — MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENSE MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD NOMINATIONS

*Eliminates the requirement that the DMV commissioner select board members from a certain nominees list*

By law, the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Medical Advisory Board advises the DMV commissioner on the medical aspects and concerns of licensing motor vehicle operators.

The act removes the requirement that the DMV commissioner's board appointments be made from a list of nominees submitted by the Connecticut State Medical Society, Connecticut Association of Optometrists, and other professional medical associations or organizations with physician assistants (PAs) or advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) as members. It instead allows those

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organizations to submit nominations for the commissioner's consideration. The act specifically requires board members to be medical professionals, which for this purpose, existing law defines as licensed physicians, PAs, APRNs, or optometrists.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

### §§ 11 & 12 — ACCESSIBLE PARKING PENALTIES

*Limits the use of cross hatches next to accessible parking to authorized vehicles and increases the underlying fines for illegal use of such parking areas*

The act generally restricts use of the cross hatches next to parking reserved for people with disabilities (i.e., accessible parking) to motor vehicles (1) displaying a special license plate or windshield placard and (2) being operated by or carrying as a passenger the person for whom the plate or placard was issued.

The act also raises the fines for violating existing law governing accessible parking from \$150 to \$250 for a first violation and from \$250 to \$500 for a subsequent violation and subjects people who unlawfully use the cross hatches next to such parking to the same penalties. By law, these fines apply unless another penalty or fine is provided (CGS § 14-253a).

Under existing law, a motor vehicle parked illegally in an accessible parking spot may be towed and impounded upon a third or subsequent violation. The act extends this penalty to a motor vehicle illegally using the cross hatch next to an accessible parking spot for a third or subsequent violation.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

### § 13 — CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS

*Extends the prohibition on crossing railroad tracks to include when warned of the approach of other equipment on the tracks*

Existing law prohibits people from crossing railroad tracks when warned of an approaching railroad locomotive, car, or train. The act also prohibits crossing when warned of other equipment on the tracks. A violation is an infraction.

The act also makes a technical change.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

### § 14 — OUT-OF-STATE REGISTRATION TASK FORCE

*Establishes a task force to study ways to prevent improper registration of vehicles out-of-state*

The act establishes a 12-member task force to study compliance with the state's motor vehicle registration laws. The task force must also develop recommendations to prevent Connecticut residents from registering motor vehicles out-of-state. Under the act, the task force must submit a report with its

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findings and recommendations to the Transportation Committee by January 1, 2020.

The task force consists of the DMV and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection commissioners, or their respective designees; two gubernatorial appointments; and eight legislative appointments. The House speaker appoints two members, one of whom is a member of a municipal tax assessors association. The Senate president appoints two members, one of whom is a municipal police chief. The House majority leader appoints a municipal tax assessor and the Senate majority leader appoints a municipal police department member, each of whom must serve a municipality with at least 75,000 residents. The House minority leader appoints a municipal police department member and the Senate minority leader appoints a municipal tax assessor, each of whom must serve a municipality with less than 75,000 residents.

Appointing authorities must make their appointments within 30 days after the act's passage and fill any vacancies. Legislative leaders may appoint legislators.

The act requires the House speaker and the Senate president to select the task force's chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule and hold the task force's first meeting within 60 days after the act's passage.

The Transportation Committee's administrative staff serves as task force staff. The task force terminates when it submits its report or January 1, 2020, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### § 15 — MOBILE TELEPHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE BY SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

*Permits school bus drivers to have non-emergency communications with school officials and specified medical or emergency professionals while driving under certain conditions*

Under existing law, school bus drivers, while driving a bus carrying passengers, may not use a hand-held mobile telephone or other electronic device, including those with hands-free accessories, except to (1) place emergency calls to school officials or (2) use such a telephone to have emergency communications with emergency response operators, hospitals, physicians' offices, health clinics, ambulance companies, fire departments, or police departments (CGS § 14-296aa).

The act additionally allows these drivers to use a hand-held mobile telephone or mobile electronic device in the same manner as a two-way radio for any real-time communication with school officials and those professionals and entities listed above.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

### § 16 — COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SERVICES STUDY

*Requires DMV and DAS to jointly study the current system for evaluating motor carriers providing commercial motor vehicle services to state or local governments*

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The act requires the DMV and Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioners to jointly study the current system used to evaluate motor carriers providing, or seeking to provide, the state or a municipality with commercial motor vehicle services and craft recommendations to make the system more efficient. By January 1, 2020, the commissioners must submit a report with the study results to the Transportation Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### § 17 — AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE (AV) PILOT PROGRAM

*Modifies certain requirements for operators under the AV pilot program and extends the program's initial reporting deadline*

The act eliminates the requirement under the existing AV pilot program that operators be seated in an AV's driver's seat while testing the vehicle. Instead, it specifies that the operator must be physically inside the AV in order to cause the automated driving system to engage. By law, unchanged by the act, the operator must monitor the AV's operation when testing it and also be capable of taking immediate manual control of it.

By law, the Office of Policy and Management secretary must annually report to the Transportation Committee on the pilot program's implementation and progress. The act extends the secretary's initial reporting deadline by 18 months, from January 1, 2019, to July 1, 2020.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### § 18 — AV TASK FORCE

*Modifies the AV task force's leadership and scheduling requirements and delays its reporting deadlines and termination date*

PA 17-69 created a task force to study AVs and related issues and develop legislative recommendations for regulating these vehicles.

Under prior law, if the task force's chairpersons were not selected by August 26, 2017, or they did not schedule a meeting by that date, any Transportation Committee chairperson was required to schedule the first meeting, act as its chairperson, and schedule any other meetings deemed necessary until (1) the Senate president and the House speaker selected the task force chairpersons and (2) those chairpersons scheduled a meeting. The act eliminates these provisions and instead authorizes any Transportation Committee chairperson to schedule task force meetings, as he or she deems necessary, and act as the task force chairperson until its members elect a chairperson from among its members. It requires that all subsequent meetings be held at the call of the elected chairperson or upon the request of a majority of the members.

The act also extends, by one year, the deadlines for the task force's reports. Under the act, the (1) interim report is due by July 1, 2020, rather than July 1, 2019, and (2) final report is due by January 1, 2021, rather than January 1, 2020. The act makes a conforming change by delaying the task force's termination date



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by one year, to January 1, 2021.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage