AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (Effective October 1, 2019) (a) The Attorney General may investigate any allegation that a person has:

2 (1) Interfered with or attempted to interfere with, by threat, intimidation or coercion, another person's exercise or enjoyment of rights secured by the state Constitution or the United States Constitution or by the laws of this state or of the United States, including, but not limited to, through the commission of an act that constitutes a violation of section 53a-181j, 53a-181k or 53a-181l of the general statutes; or

3 (2) Repeatedly or, in a manner violating the public interest, subjected, or caused to be subjected, another person to the deprivation of rights, privileges or immunities secured or protected by the state Constitution or the United States Constitution or by the laws of this state or of the United States.
(b) In conducting investigations under this section, the Attorney General may issue subpoenas and interrogatories, and otherwise gather information, to the extent provided in, and subject to the provisions of, section 35-42 of the general statutes.

(c) Whenever a person is alleged to be committing an act described in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section, the Attorney General, in his or her discretion, may (1) intervene in or bring a proceeding before any appropriate agency, board or commission, and (2) intervene in or bring a civil action seeking appropriate relief.

(d) If the Attorney General brings a civil action pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the Attorney General may (1) file such action in the name of the state and on behalf of persons affected in this state, and (2) seek injunctive or declaratory relief, compensatory or punitive damages on behalf of any aggrieved person to the extent authorized by applicable law, civil penalties not to exceed ten thousand dollars per violation, reasonable attorney's fees, investigation costs, litigation costs in an amount to be determined by the court and such other relief as may be available under the law.

(e) In lieu of bringing a civil action under this section, the Attorney General may accept an assurance of the discontinuance of any allegedly unlawful or unconstitutional practice. Thereafter, any evidence of a violation of such assurance shall constitute prima facie proof of violation of the applicable law or right in any action commenced by the Attorney General.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

| Section 1 | October 1, 2019 | New section |

Statement of Purpose:
To clarify the Attorney General's authority to (1) investigate allegations that an individual's civil rights are being violated, and (2) initiate legal proceedings in response to such allegations.
[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]