Bill No.: HB-7299
Title: AN ACT MAKING CHANGES TO DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION ENFORCEMENT STATUTES.
Vote Date: 3/21/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/12/2019

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
General Law Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
HB 7299 makes multiple modifications to already existing Department of Consumer Protection licensing and enforcement statutes. This bill was raised in order to address the multiple challenges that have been encountered in the marketplace. The proposed substitute language for this bill (LCO # 6462) provides minor technical changes in wording.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
Michelle Seagull, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection:
Commissioner Seagull testified about the multiple changes that are being proposed to the Department of Consumer Protection’s licensing and enforcement statutes scheduled to take effect October 1, 2019. Sections 1-14 of the bill addresses mobile fueling, displaying licenses, food warehouses, inspections, liquor law violations, and community association managers who are unregistered.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Timothy Moriarty, Council Representative, Eastern Millwrights Regional Council:
Timothy Moriarty offered support for HB 7299, specifically Section 23 which addresses “Millwright Work.” In addition to supporting this section of the bill he recommended that the committee make minor clarifications to the section as to ensure that a well-intentioned proposal doesn’t encroach on the jurisdiction of the millwrights.
Matthew Albertelli:
This testimony was submitted by an aspiring entrepreneur from Connecticut with a background in commodities. He offered support for HB 7299, and specifically Section 3 (8) and Section 4 (a) which addresses mobile fueling. His main reasons for support is that it provides a safe and reliable means for consumers to fuel their vehicles; it provides greater efficiency for the overall transportation fleet, mobile fueling is a more cost competitive option for customers, less congestion on the roadways during peak traffic hours, and it’s a more environmentally friendly method of fueling. In regards to the success of mobile fueling, he stated that its success is demonstrated by the fact that both the National Fire Protection Association and The Connecticut Fire Marshall’s Office have incorporated chapters on mobile fueling into their latest release of their codes and standards. Finally, he states that mobile fueling is a way to bring new jobs and opportunity to the state and provide the citizens of Connecticut better fueling options.

Joyce A. Wojtas on behalf of the Mechanical Contractors Association of CT (MCACT):
Joyce Wojtas testified in support of HB7299, Section 11, subsections (24), (25), and (26) which addresses “Inspection and Testing.” MCACT supports this bill because of the importance of having a professionally licensed individual perform inspections and tests on piping and heating or cooling equipment. This bill is in the interest of public safety by ensuring that only knowledgeable and appropriately licensed people perform all inspections and tests on systems that they install, maintain, and repair.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Roger Nelson, Connecticut Fire Marshals Association
This written testimony was submitted in opposition to Section 4 of HB 7299 which addresses mobile fueling. Gasoline is much different than delivering home heating oil or diesel fuel to a remote location because it is a lot more dangerous. The Connecticut Fire Marshals Association has several serious questions that need to be addressed in regards to this proposal. These questions involve the inspection of the delivery vehicles and what standards and criteria should be met. Other serious questions and concerns include: “Where will the gasoline be dispensed?” “How close to a building or property line is the gasoline being dispensed?” What will be the level of training for the operators of dispensing vehicles?” “What types of vehicles will be certified for fuel dispensing?” and “What will be the safety precautions?” The owners of service stations are subject to provisions and safety precautions that are put in place to prevent spills and to maintain a controlled environment in the event of an incident. Mobile fueling is not only a licensing concern but also a safety concern to the first responders and the citizens of Connecticut.

Christian A. Herb, President, Connecticut Energy Marketing Association:
This testimony was submitted in opposition to Section 4 of HB 7299 as it pertains to mobile fueling. This proposal has no regard for public safety or the environment as there are no measures or provisions put in place to ensure the health and safety of the motorist who is refueling. Additionally there are no spill prevention standards to prevent leaking fuel from damaging the environment. Allowing public mobile refueling places the public at risk for fires and explosions because unlike the service stations there is no fire suppression equipment to prevent or address incidents. There is no language to ensure that fires or explosions are dealt with if they were to occur nor is there any language that addresses spill prevention or leak detection. EPA standards mandate that employees and managers undergo extensive
operator training on spill and leak detection response. In addition to the training, tens of thousands of dollars are spent per service station location to comply with environmental laws to protect the environment. Allowing mobile fueling without these requirements will lead to leaks that will go unaddressed.

**Steve Guvevan, Connecticut Petroleum Council:**
This testimony was written in opposition to Sections 3&4 of HB 7299 dealing with mobile fueling because it doesn’t include the necessary safety or government regulations which will lead to unsafe operation of a dangerous fuel. In his written testimony it states that Connecticut Petroleum Council does not oppose the concept of mobile re-fueling and would be in support of the concept if the necessary safety standards and government approvals are put in place. The Council recommends that these changes be made to Section 4 and is willing to work with the Department of Consumer Protection and the General Law Committee.

Reported by:  Jeff Lucas, Committee Clerk  Date: 03/29/2019