Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-870
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF DRONES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT.
Vote Date: 3/19/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/7/2019
File No.: 

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Public Safety & Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
Surveillance technology is somewhat new in regards to public safety, and this bill seeks to help regulate the usage of drones by law enforcement agencies. S.B. 870 also proposes the time frame in which law enforcement officers are able to report findings by the drone. The proposed bill requires the information obtained by a drone to be reported in a time frame within 5 years.

***Proposed Substitute Language
The substitute language proposes that a 12 member task force is established to examine the use of drones by law enforcement agencies***

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Christine Perra Rapillo, Chief Public Defender, Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services
In her testimony, Christine Perra Rapillo expressed that the Chief Public Defenders office is not opposed to S.B. 870; however, they have concerns with certain aspects of the bill. They believe that if evidence is collected from a drone, that law enforcement agents conduct the process of obtaining a warrant/assessing information they receive in a reasonable time frame.

State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice
The Division of Criminal Justice testified that they oppose S.B. 870. They are concerned with the fact that this bill imposes regulations on law enforcement agencies, but no one else. They expressed that the proponents of this bill are already covered by case law. They stressed that this bill could prevent law enforcement agents from effectively doing their job. The way the
current language for S.B. is written, situations in which a drone would be best utilized might not be permitted.

**State of Connecticut Judicial Branch**
The State of Connecticut Judicial Branch testified that if the committee reports favorably on S.B. 870, that they make revisions to statute C.G.S. § 54-33a and C.G.S § 54-33c.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**David McGuire, Executive Director, ACLU CT**
David McGuire testified that reporting from police drones are an integral part of public safety, and that they attribute to accountability. The ACLU proposed several recommendations that they believe will positively impact the bill. They believe the provisions will further protect the public’s privacy and as well as promote transparency.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Robert Mara, Sergeant, Vernon Police Department**
The town of Vernon police department testified that they consider S.B. 870 to be troublesome, and counter-productive in regards to the duties of police officers. They stressed that the enactment of this bill might deter their ability to save lives. They recommend that the State of Connecticut enact a task force in order to thoroughly develop guidelines for the use of drones.

**Reported by: Nicoletta Blevins, Assistant Clerk 4/1/2019**