The meeting was called to order at 12:12 PM by Chairman, Sen. Cassano S. S04.

The following committee members were present:

Senators: Cassano S. S04; Champagne D. S35; Cohen C. S12; Fonfara J. S01; Somers H. S18

Representatives: Arnone T. 058; Baker A. 124; Carney D. 023; Conley C. 040; D'Agostino M. 091; Delnicki T. 014; Dubitsky D. 047; France M. 042; Gucker K. 138; Haines I. 034; Hall J. 007; Kokoruda N. 101; McCarthy Vahey C. 133; Michel D. 146; Rojas J. 009; Stafstrom S. 129; Zawistowski T. 061

Absent were:

Senators: Bradley D. S23

Representatives:

Sen. Cassano convened the meeting and called for a brief recess. Upon ending the recess at 12:16 PM, he commented that this was hoped to be the next-to-last meeting of the Committee before the Joint Favorable deadline for the 2019 Session. He then announced the emergency and fire procedures for the hearing room to those in attendance, joking that the temperament of the committee was good enough that they shouldn’t need them.

Seeing no remarks from his Co-Chair or Ranking members, he moved on to section III on the agenda, Bills for Final Action.
On item 1, **S.B. No. 140** (COMM) AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR TAX RELIEF FOR CERTAIN ELDERLY HOMEOWNERS, a Consent Calendar was begun and the item was added.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 2, **S.B. No. 361** (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING A MUNICIPAL OPTION TO ESTABLISH A PROPERTY TAX CREDIT FOR DONATIONS TO CERTAIN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Hall. Rep. Zawistowski commented that this bill has some excellent goals supporting scholarships, but by giving a tax credit it pushes the cost onto other tax payers and turns into a de facto mandate. She stated she would be voting nay to flag the bill but this doesn’t mean it can’t be worked out in some other way. Seeing no other comments a roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Haines, Michel, Delnicki and Kokoruda and Sens. Champagne and Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 3, **S.B. No. 522** (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Zawistowski. Rep. Zawistowski commented to ask for verification that this bill involves Planning Commissions only and not combined Planning and Zoning Commissions, to which Sen. Cassano replied that that is correct. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Dubitsky and France, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then announced that the votes would be held open until 4PM.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 4, **S.B. No. 527** (COMM) AN ACT PERMITTING MUNICIPALITIES TO COMBINE THE PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS OF MULTIPLE ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITIES, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 5, **S.B. No. 548** (COMM) (File No. 716) AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE, which he announced the committee was going to hold [the bill would later be on the agenda for the following meeting, March 29, 2019].

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable Substitute on item 6, **Substitute for S.B. No. 972** (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES BY ADULT ADOPTED PERSONS, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Hall. Sen. Cassano commented that the difference in the substitute language was that the records in question would be handled at the municipal level by town officials, and that has been put into agreement. Rep. Kokoruda commented that versions of this bill have been floating around for years, and there was previously a compromise made in which those adult adoptees born after 1983 had access to their records, based on a phrase included on an adoption form starting in that year. She stated that she has problems with this bill for a few reasons: the first being procedural, that this bill prior to the substitute language was not really germane to this committee, though she gives credit that at least contrary to one previous year’s “dummy bill” this bill had an accurate title from the beginning. The second reason is that she’s a big fan of the Safe Haven program in which she describes that a parent can leave a baby at a hospital, with 30 days to change their mind, and no one will go after them. She believes this bill is counter to that program, and stated that the main goal of it and adoptions in the 1950s-70s pushed by Catholic Charities and similar organizations was to protect babies. She said that abortions were illegal but people could get them and
that the experience of a young person having a child was very different than today. She said that she looks at this bill as an attack on women who are a silent minority and are not testifying on their own behalf. She also believes that there could be an alternative registry for reunions or medical record access. She then made longer more detailed comments on several of these given reasons. Rep. Delnicki then commented that he had not planned on speaking on this bill but felt compelled to at this point. He identified himself as having been adopted, shortly after he was born, by his biological grandparents, when there was a stigma around that. His biological parents had divorced shortly after he was born, over 60 years ago in 1956. He described it as living in a different time, and that for lack of a better term there was a rampant level of discrimination being dealt with in the country, with people having to fight for their rights. He called it a civil right for a person to know their heritage if they wish to. He talked about receiving many letters from people in the area, including one from a neighbor about a half mile down the road from him, who recounted her trials of trying to get her original birth certificate because she wanted the knowledge and closure of knowing where she came from, her heritage, and who her parents were. He said he could not and would not speak on Catholic Charities or what deals they made back in those decades, but would talk on the civil rights of people today and how there’s an inherent civil right that every person should have the ability to know who their parents are, if they want that. He received his own original paperwork when he handled the estate of his biological grandparents who were his adoptive parents, and he says that this provides closure on what one’s life entailed and where one came from. He said he doesn’t see this bill as an attack on anyone, and respects the opinions of the other side, but supports this as a civil right. Rep. Zawistowski then commented that this is a difficult issue with challenges on both sides, but her concern is that this bill really belongs in the Public Health Committee, and possibly Judiciary, in spite of the substitute language putting this in the purview of town clerks. She stated that she would be voting no to flag the bill. Sen. Cassano then commented that he has sponsored this bill and that, as Rep. Kokoruda said, it has been before them a few times and been close to the point of passage but never quite made it. He said that times are changing, and one can often see ads on television for commercial DNA tests promising this same information. He described the current law as an agreement that was made with the Catholic Charities and adoption agencies which carved out a small period of birth years for separate treatment, and prior to this carve-out being made anyone could get their records [after reaching adulthood]. He said that he looks at this as very definitely a civil rights issue, because this smaller group of people was denied access and the rights to their birth certificates that people born either before or after them have. He says that he would rather people get records from their own town clerks’ offices than find information through commercial DNA services, and pointed out that the records already exist but are locked as a result of this agreement. He stated that the process in this bill was originally supposed to go through the State Department of Health before being changed to the municipal town clerks, with that change making it relevant to this committee in addition to Public Health. It was somewhat burdensome for that department, and he thinks this agreement is better for the birth mothers because in many cases it is still local. Finally he pointed out that the bill may end up referred to other committees moving forward and will hopefully go through the process, but it was their job to determine whether or not it should go through the beginning of the process. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Haines and Kokoruda and Sen. Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano reminded the committee that the votes would be held open until 4PM.
Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 7, **Substitute for S.B. No. 995 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF STANDARDS AND METHODS FOR PYRRHOTITE TESTING AT QUARRIES**, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 8, **Substitute for S.B. No. 1009 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT RELATED STATUTES**, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable Substitute on item 9, **Substitute for S.B. No. 1012 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAX APPEALS AND CONTINGENCY AGREEMENTS FOR EXPERT TESTIMONY IN SUCH APPEALS**, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Baker. Sen. Cassano commented that this bill was intended for larger commercial properties such as malls, where re-evaluations of property value are being done on a contingency basis by those who do not live in the state and are not licensed in the state, and it is extremely time consuming and expensive for municipalities to defend against. Rep. Dubitsky commented that this was essentially a continuation of a line of bills that they’ve seen over the last several years starting with prohibiting any agreements with landowners on a contingency basis and now limiting it to expert witnesses, and he does not believe they should be telling people what kind of agreements they should have, so he would be voting against it. Sen. Cassano responded by commenting that there are still contingency agreements in Connecticut, for example attorneys and others that are licensed in the state, and the bill was intended to address witnesses that are out of state and not licensed in state. Rep. McCarthy Vahey commented to emphasize that the Substitute Language no longer included a carve-out for certified public accountants. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Dubitsky, France, Stafstrom, and Kokoruda and Sen. Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then mentioned that they would be holding item 10.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 11, **S.B. No. 1073 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 12, **S.B. No. 1074 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then mentioned that they would be skipping item 13.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 14, **S.B. No. 1081 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL SET-ASIDE REQUIREMENTS**, which was made by Rep. Zawistowski and seconded by Rep. McCarthy Vahey. Sen. Cassano asked if there was any discussion and mentioned that there had been testimony provided which had concerns on this bill. Rep. Arnone requested that there be a roll call vote on this item, and mentioned that there had been issues raised in the testimony on this bill. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Dubitsky, France, Stafstrom, Michel, Hall, and Gucker, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 15, **H.B. No. 5229 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF SIGNS BY ZONING COMMISSIONS**, which was added to the Consent Calendar.
Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 16, H.B. No. 5643 (COMM) an Act requiring a study of the obstacles to merging or consolidating municipal fire districts and fire departments, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 17, H.B. No. 6040 (COMM) an Act requiring the inspection of certain residential buildings by a home inspector and an engineer prior to the transfer of title (GL, PD), which was made by Rep. Baker and seconded by Sen. Champagne. Sen. Cassano commented that this was part of a package of bills on crumbling concrete foundations submitted by Representative Luxenberg. Rep. Zawistowski stated that she has some concerns about the costs that would be incurred by the sellers of such properties, that it was possible for buyers and sellers to get these reports already and that she didn’t see how compelling them to do so added any value, and that they already had a stressed real estate market and she thinks this would add to the problem. She said that she would be voting no to flag the bill but that didn’t mean they couldn’t work something out. Rep. Delnicki then commented that one thing that came out loud and clear during the Public Hearing on the crumbling foundation issue held on March 8 was that there should be no more victims of the issue. He stated that if anything a clean bill of health from an inspector would actually bolster the sale of a property, and for that reason he would be supporting this bill. Rep. McCarthy Vahey noted that she shares some of Rep. Zawistowski’s concerns. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Carney, Haines and Kokoruda and Sen. Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 18, H.B. No. 6349 (COMM) an Act requiring the provision of information concerning certain insurance policies prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, which was made by Rep. Delnicki and seconded by Rep. McCarthy Vahey. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Dubitsky and France, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 19, H.B. No. 6352 (COMM) an Act concerning the zoning of community residences and child-care residential facilities, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Sen. Champagne. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay was Rep. Stafstrom, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable Substitute on item 20, Substitute for H.B. No. 6749 (COMM) an Act to reorganize the zoning enabling act and promote municipal compliance, which was made by Rep. Rojas and seconded by Rep. Hall. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Carney, Haines, Delnicki and Kokoruda, and Sens. Champagne and Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 21, H.B. No. 6754 (COMM) an Act concerning reimbursement for the purchase of body-worn electronic recording equipment, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 22, H.B. No. 6939 (COMM) an Act concerning the establishment of municipal cultural districts, which was added to the Consent Calendar.
Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 24, \textit{H.B. No. 7277 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF LAND BANK AUTHORITIES}, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Sen. Champagne. A roll call vote was then held with all present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable Substitute on item 25, \textit{Substitute for H.B. No. 7360 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NONSTATE PUBLIC EMPLOYER HEALTH CARE PLANS}, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Hall. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Carney, Haines, Delnicki and Kokoruda, and Sens. Champagne and Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then moved on to item 26, \textit{H.B. No. 7363 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING BUILDINGS}, which was added to the Consent Calendar.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 27, \textit{H.B. No. 7364 (RAISED) AN ACT VALIDATING THE DECEMBER 11, 2018, REFERENDUM IN THE TOWN OF GROTON}, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Arnone. A roll call vote was then held with all present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Action, Joint Favorable on item 28, \textit{H.B. No. 7365 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL DATA REPORTING}, which was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Zawistowski. A roll call vote was then held. Present and voting nay were Reps. Zawistowski, Dubitsky, France, Carney, Haines, Delnicki and Kokoruda, and Sens. Champagne and Somers, with all others who were present voting yea.

Sen. Cassano then entertained a motion for Final Actions, Joint Favorable or Joint Favorable Substitute respectively, on the items on the Consent Calendar (see items above for bill nos. and titles): 1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 22, and 26. The motion was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey and seconded by Rep. Zawistowski. A roll call vote was then held with all present voting yea.

A motion was duly made and seconded at 1:41PM to recess the meeting until 4PM, at which point it was promptly adjourned.

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<tr>
<th>Edward Waters</th>
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<td>Assistant Clerk</td>
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