AN ACT CONCERNING REVISION OF CERTAIN HUNTING AND FISHING RELATED STATUTES.

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

Section 1. Section 26-86 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective from passage):

(a) Any deer, moose or black bear killed or seriously wounded as the result of a collision with a motor vehicle may, after inspection of such deer, moose or black bear by the local police authorities, state police or conservation officer and after issuance of a copy of a wildlife kill incident report, become the property of the operator of such motor vehicle or any other person if such operator declines possession.

(b) Any deer, moose or black bear seriously wounded as a result of a collision with a motor vehicle may, after inspection of such deer, moose or black bear by the local police authorities, state police or conservation officer, be euthanized by such authority or officer or by a veterinarian licensed in this state.

Sec. 2. Section 26-86c of the general statutes is repealed and the
No person may hunt deer or small game with a bow and arrow under the provisions of this chapter without a valid permit issued by the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection pursuant to this section or section 26-86a for persons hunting deer with bow and arrow under private land deer permits issued free to qualifying landowners, or their husbands or wives, parents, grandparents, lineal descendants or siblings under that section. The fee for such bow and arrow permit to hunt deer and small game shall be forty-one dollars for residents and one hundred thirty-five dollars for nonresidents, or nineteen dollars for any person twelve years of age or older but under sixteen years of age, except that any nonresident who is an active full-time member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, may purchase a bow and arrow permit to hunt deer and small game for the same fee as is charged a resident of the state. Permits to hunt with a bow and arrow under the provisions of this chapter shall be issued only to qualified applicants therefor by the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, in such form as said commissioner prescribes. Applications shall be made on forms furnished by the commissioner containing such information as he may require and all such application forms shall have printed thereon: "I declare under the penalties of false statement that the statements herein made by me are true and correct." Any person who makes any material false statement on such application form shall be guilty of false statement and shall be subject to the penalties provided for false statement and said offense shall be deemed to have been committed in the town in which the applicant resides. No such application shall contain any material false statement. [On and after January 1, 2002, permits to hunt with a bow and arrow under the provisions of this chapter shall be issued only to qualified applicants who have successfully completed the conservation education bow hunting course as specified in section 26-31 or an equivalent course in another state.] No person shall carry any firearm of any kind while hunting with a bow and arrow pursuant to this section or section 26-86a. For purposes of this section and section 26-86a, "bow and arrow"
means a bow with a draw weight of not less than forty pounds and an arrowhead that has two or more blades and that is not less than seven-eighths of an inch at its widest point.

Sec. 3. Section 26-31 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2020):

(a) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall formulate conservation courses of instruction in safe trapping, hunting and archery practices and the handling and use of traps and hunting implements, including bow and arrow, for such persons as are applying for a license to hunt with firearms or to hunt with bow and arrow or trap [for the first time and for minors who fall within the provisions of section 26-38], and shall designate one or more competent persons or organizations to give such instruction. Any person or organization so designated shall give such instruction online or in a classroom to any person requesting the same and shall, upon the successful completion thereof, recommend to the commissioner issuance of a certificate of completion to such person. Successful completion of such instruction for hunting license applicants shall include, but not be limited to, achieving a passing grade on an examination formulated by the commissioner, which shall include correctly stating in writing, or reciting orally, the regulations for hunting in proximity to buildings occupied by persons or domestic animals or used for storage of flammable or combustible materials and the regulations for shooting towards persons, buildings or animals. Any such person or organization may charge any person taking a course of instruction a reasonable fee, established by the commissioner.

(b) No firearms hunting, [archery hunting or] trapping license or archery hunting permit shall be issued to any person unless he presents proof in the form of a license or certified copy thereof that he has held a similar resident license or permit to hunt with firearms or with bow and arrow or to trap within five years from the date of application in any state or country or possession thereof, or unless he presents to the town clerk a certificate of completion issued under subsection (a) of this
section or an equivalent, as deemed by the commissioner, of such certificate. Each town clerk shall transmit all such certificates presented to him to the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection in connection with his report to the commissioner under section 26-36.

(c) Any person who obtains a firearms hunting, archery hunting or trapping license or archery hunting permit by giving false information or by presenting a fraudulent hunting certificate shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars or more than one hundred dollars and such license or permit, or any such subsequent license procured by such person on the basis of any fraudulent statement or act in procuring such original license or permit, shall be revoked and shall not be reissued for one year from the date of such revocation.

(d) Any certified conservation education-firearms safety instructor while giving such instruction and any person scheduled to receive such instruction may possess and transport shotguns and rifles on Sunday and on said day may discharge such firearms on any state-owned property with prior approval of the agency controlling such property and on any privately owned property with the permission of the owner, the provisions of section 26-73 to the contrary notwithstanding.

(e) There is annually appropriated to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection from the General Fund the sum of fifty thousand dollars to be used by said department for the purchase of supplies and materials and necessary personal services in carrying out the provisions of this section.

(f) Any person who has been refused a certificate of completion under the provisions of subsection (a) of this section may appeal from such refusal to the commissioner, who shall make the final determination on issuance of such certificate to the applicant.

(g) Any holder of a hunting license which has been suspended under section 26-61, for a hunting safety violation [as identified by the commissioner in the Hunting and Trapping Guide published annually by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection] or any
holder of such a license which has been suspended under section 26-62
shall successfully complete a remedial hunter education course
formulated by the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
Protection and show proof that the hunter has successfully completed a
conservation education-firearms safety course or its equivalent, as
deemed by the commissioner, prior to any reinstatement of such license.

Sec. 4. Section 26-85 of the general statutes is repealed and the
following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective from passage):

No person shall use or attempt to use or possess any jacklight night
vision enhancement device for the purpose of taking any deer. For the
purpose of establishing a prima facie case under the provisions of this
section, a jacklight night vision enhancement device shall be construed
as any artificial light, thermal imaging or electronic light intensification
scope or camera when used in conjunction with any rifle larger than a
twenty-two long rifle, or with a shotgun and ball shells or shot larger
than No. 2 shot or with a bow and arrow or crossbow, in any area
frequented by deer or where deer are known to be present, or in any
deer habitat, and possession of such articles in any such place, or any
road, lane or passageway adjacent to such place, by any person during
the period from one-half hour after sunset to sunrise shall be prima facie
evidence of a violation of this section. Any person who kills or wounds
any deer with any firearm or other weapon by the aid or use of any
artificial light night vision enhancement device during the period from
one-half hour after sunset to sunrise shall be subject to the provisions of
this section. Any person who violates any provision of this section shall
be fined not less than two hundred dollars nor more than five hundred
dollars or be imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more than six
months or be both fined and imprisoned, for the first offense, and for
each subsequent offense shall be fined not less than two hundred dollars
nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than one
year, or be both fined and imprisoned. Any firearm, shell, cartridge and
any other weapon and portable lights device, batteries and any other
device used, or intended to be used by, and found by the trial court to
have been in the possession of, any person charged with a violation of
any provision of this section, when such person is convicted, or upon
the forfeiture of any bond taken upon any such complaint, shall be
ordered by the trial court to be forfeited to the state and all such articles
shall, by order of said court, be turned over to the commissioner and
may be retained for use by the department or assigned by the
commissioner to any other state agency, may be sold at public auction
by the Commissioner of Administrative Services at the request of the
commissioner or may be destroyed at the discretion of the
commissioner. The proceeds of any such sale shall be paid to the State
Treasurer and by him credited to the General Fund. If a motor vehicle is
used to transport such person to or toward or away from the place
where the illegal act was committed, the operator's license of such
person or, if he has no such license, the privilege to obtain such license
shall be suspended by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for a period
of one year from the date of such conviction or forfeiture of such bond.
Said commissioner, after a hearing is held thereon, may issue to such
person a restricted, limited operator's license if such license is required
by such person to earn a livelihood. Said commissioner shall suspend
such license for the remainder of the original suspension period if such
restricted license is used for purposes other than those determined by
said commissioner.

Sec. 5. Subsection (h) of section 26-30 of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective from
passage):

(h) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection may
issue a group fishing license to any tax-exempt organization qualified
under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any
subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States,
as amended from time to time, for the purpose of conducting a group
fishing event or events for persons: (1) With a service-related or other
disability who receive services at a facility of the United States
Department of Veterans Affairs Connecticut Healthcare System, (2) who
receive mental health or addiction services from: (A) The Department of
Mental Health and Addiction Services, (B) state-operated facilities, as
defined in section 17a-458, or (C) programs or facilities funded by the
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, as provided for
in sections 17a-468b, 17a-469, 17a-673 and 17a-676, (3) with intellectual
disability who receive services from the Department of Developmental
Services, as provided for in section 17a-217, or from facilities licensed by
the Department of Developmental Services, as provided for in section
17a-227, (4) diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder who receive
services from the Department of Social Services, or (5) receiving care
from the Department of Children and Families, as provided for in
section 17a-94, or from programs or child-care facilities licensed
pursuant to section 17a-145 or 17a-147. Any such organization shall
conduct not more than fifty such events, including marine and inland
water events, in any calendar year and each such event shall be limited
to not more than [fifty] one hundred persons. Application for such a
group fishing license shall be submitted once per calendar year on a
form prescribed by the commissioner and with the necessary fee and
shall provide such information as required by the commissioner. All
fishing activities conducted pursuant to such group license shall be
supervised by staff or volunteers of the organization conducting the
event or events. Such staff or volunteers shall possess such group fishing
license at the site of any such event or events. Each such staff member
or volunteer shall have a license to fish. Such organization shall, not later
than ten days after such group fishing event, report to the commissioner,
on forms provided by the commissioner, information on the results of
such event. Such information shall include, but not be limited to, the
total: (A) Number of participants, (B) hours fished, (C) number of each
species caught, and (D) number of each species not released. Such
organization shall not charge a fee to any person that participates in any
such group fishing event conducted pursuant to such group fishing
license and any such group fishing event shall not be used by such
organization as a fund raising event.

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

| Section 1 | from passage | 26-86 |
Statement of Purpose:
To revise certain fishing and hunting related statutes concerning motor vehicle deer strikes, bow and arrow hunting, the use of night vision devices and veteran fishing events.

[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.]