

Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-919

AN ACT CONCERNING IMMUNITY FROM CRIMINAL PROSECUTION FOR A MINOR WHO POSSESSES ALCOHOL WHEN THE MINOR SEEKS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO PREVENT THE DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY

Title: OF ANOTHER PERSON.

Vote Date: 3/29/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/15/2021

File No.: 487

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Nicole Klarides-Ditria, 105th Dist.

Rep. Craig C. Fishbein, 90th Dist.

Rep. Christine Conley, 40th Dist.

Rep. Joe Polletta, 68th Dist.

Rep. Jeff Currey, 11th Dist.

Rep. Whit Betts, 78th Dist.

Rep. Tom O'Dea, 125th Dist.

Sen. Saud Anwar, 3rd Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill provides immunity to minors in possession of alcohol when the minor contacts law enforcement to prevent death or serious injury of another person. The bill is intended to alleviate the risk of legal and collateral consequences for teenagers and young adults who are illegally in possession of alcohol and fear the legal ramifications when deciding whether to seek potentially life-saving emergency assistance for a peer. Providing immunity under these conditions supports the goal of diverting minors and emerging adults from arrest and court involvement, which results in reduced recidivism and better long-term outcomes for youth.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

State of Connecticut, Division of Criminal Justice; supports this bill stating that the public will be served best when minors do not hesitate or decline to call the authorities out of fear of being charged with possession of alcohol as a minor.

Office of the Chief Public Defender, Director of Delinquency and Child Protection, Susan I. Hamilton; supports this bill stating that providing immunity under these conditions reflects the importance of protecting public health and safety while also supporting youth who take steps to help another person who is endangered. It is also stated that this bill aligns with brain science research adopted by the Supreme Courts of the United States and Connecticut alike that recognizes the limitations of the adolescent brain and its impact on decision-making and that this is common sense policy.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut General Assembly, State Representative, Nicole Klarides-Ditria; supports this bill stating that this law will encourage youth to do the right thing. It is stated that teenagers are not learning responsibility through fear; and they will only learn responsibility through establishing confidence in routine action.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None stated.

Reported by: Rose Hirschl

Date: