



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IN SUPPORT OF:

**H.B. No. 6669 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILES AND MOTOR
VEHICLE THEFT, INVESTIGATIONS OF CERTAIN PENDING JUVENILE
MATTERS AND REPORTING OF REQUESTS TO DETAIN ARRESTED JUVENILES.**

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

March 30, 2021

The Division of Criminal Justice supports H.B. 6669, An Act Concerning Juveniles and Motor Vehicle Theft, Investigations of Certain Pending Juvenile Matters and Reporting of Requests to Detain Arrested Juveniles. While this bill will not be a cure-all for the issues troubling the juvenile system, the Division is appreciative of this first step in doing so.

The Division has put forth several legislative proposals in recent years in an effort to curb the increase in juvenile crimes. While there is no doubt that juvenile offenses have increased significantly in this state, the reports the Division has reviewed suggest the real issue is the repeat, serious juvenile offender. Meaning, it is not so much an increase in the number of juveniles committing crimes, rather, an increase in the number of crimes committed by a small fraction of the juvenile offenders.

News reports and anecdotal stories have brought motor vehicle crimes committed by juveniles to the forefront of the conversation. What once started with entering and robbing unlocked vehicles, has progressed to breaking windows, stealing vehicles, and even carjacking. Perhaps most worrisome, is the fact that firearms have become increasingly present in these incidents.

The Division is aware of incidents in which adults utilize juveniles in these criminal acts specifically for their juvenile status. Section 1 of this bill would seek to lessen this occurrence, since those adults could be charged with a Class D Felony for recruiting juveniles to commit crimes.

Section 3 of this bill seeks to create a new statute to provide for the electronic monitoring of juveniles charged with a delinquency for motor vehicle offenses while the matter is pending. While the Division is very supportive of this new section, it recommends an accompanying subsection that would provide the juvenile court with the ability to sanction any such juvenile who removes their monitoring device. Currently, there is no statute that would govern violations of

conditions placed pre-adjudication – only while on probation. The Division’s recommendation for a subsection (b) to Section 3 is that removal of the monitoring device would trigger a referral to the local law enforcement agency to locate and detain the juvenile for presentment at the immediate next sitting of the juvenile court, which shall hold a hearing to consider additional conditions of release.

The Division also is very supportive of Section 5 of the bill, which would require the Judicial Branch to compile data on the requests to detain juveniles, as well as the reasons for denying any such requests. The Division is hopeful that such data will be informative to the Committee, so that it may continue to create effective legislation in this area.

In conclusion, the Division of Criminal Justice supports H.B. 6669 and respectfully recommends the Committee’s support for substitute language to create a subsection to Section 3, as detailed herein. We thank the Committee for affording this opportunity to provide input on this matter and would be happy to provide any additional information the Committee might require or to answer any questions that you might have.