

Transportation Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

11:00 AM in Zoom and YouTube Live

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 AM by Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096.

The following committee members were present:

Senators: Cassano S. S04; Daugherty Abrams M. S13; Haskell W. S26; Lopes R. S06; Martin H. S31; Osten C. S19; Somers H. S18

Representatives: Berger-Girvalo A. 111; Blumenthal M. 147; Carney D. 023; Chafee B. 033; Concepcion J. 004; Conley C. 040; Dauphinais A. 044; Devlin L. 134; Goupil C. 035; Haines I. 034; Harrison C. 069; Labriola D. 131; Lemar R. 096; McCarthy Vahey C. 133; Meskers S. 150; Michel D. 146; Morrin Bello A. 028; O'Dea T. 125; Rebimbas R. 070; Reyes G. 075; Rosario C. 128; Simms T. 140; Smith B. 048; Steinberg J. 136; Thomas S. 143; Zawistowski T. 061; Zupkus L. 089

Absent were:

Senators: Kissel J. S07; Needleman N. S33

Representatives:

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to draft the four pieces of legislation within item number three of the agenda.

A motion to draft the first piece of legislation (SB 127) was made by Sen. Osten C. S19., and seconded by Sen. Haskell W. S26. The item then moved to discussion.

Sen. Somers H. S18. expressed concerns with the procedure through which the bill had previously followed—specifically noting that said concerns were not related to the bill's merit, but to the previous chair having stated that the bill would not be brought forward.

Rep. Zupkus L. 089. questioned the intent of the legislation—in specific, whether it was focused on offering different licensing to EV manufacturers in contrast to that which is offered to franchised car dealerships. Rep. Lemar R. 096. answered yes—then elaborated, clarifying that these businesses do not utilize dealerships or franchises but instead sell vehicles directly to the consumer; furthermore, he explained that the legislation hopes to allow this business model to function in Connecticut, as it does in many surrounding states.

Sen. Osten C. S19. expressed that this was a procedural vote on the drafting of legislative language to address the concerns voiced at the public hearing, clarifying that it was not a vote on the bill itself.

Sen. Martin H. S31. expressed his understanding that this is a procedural vote, then noted his concern over companies bypassing the current franchise legislation on account of it having been put in place for consumer protection.

Sen. Haskell W. S26. noted his commitment to the passing of this legislation, then encouraged committee members and stakeholders to express their concerns so that they could be properly addressed in the writing of the legislation.

Rep. Dauphinais A. 044. expressed her concerns with the legislation's procedural issues. Rep. Lemar R. 096. answered by explaining the vote was not to pass bill but to draft the legislative language.

Rep. Meskers S. 150. thanked the committee for bringing forward the bill and expressed concern with the distribution model of electric vehicles. He also expressed concern in regards to the economic impact of not passing the legislation.

Rep. Thomas S. 143. reiterated the procedural aspect of the vote.

Rep. Zupkus expressed understanding with the procedural aspect of the legislation, then noted that this was a business decision and that she possessed a desire for “fairness”.

The motion was passed by roll call vote 28-7.

The vote was held open until 1 p.m. in order to accommodate committee members who were in other meetings at the time.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to draft the second piece of legislation (HB 576).

The motion was made by Rep. McCarthy Vahey C. 133, and seconded by Rep. Carney D. 023.

Rep. Carney D. 023. made a motion to move the item to the consent calendar.

The motion was moved to the consent calendar with no opposition.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to draft the third piece of legislation (SB 241).

The motion was made by Rep. Carney D. 023,, and seconded by Sen. Somers H. S18.

Rep. Carney D. 023. made a motion to move the item to the consent calendar.

The motion was moved to the consent calendar with no opposition.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to draft the fourth piece of legislation (SB 605).

The motion was made by Sen. Somers S18., and seconded by Rep. Meskers S. 150

Rep. Carney D. 023. made a motion to move the item to the consent calendar.

The motion was moved to the consent calendar with no opposition.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. called for a voice vote on the consent items under section III ("Bills to be Drafted").

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to vote to JF Substitute SB 608, under section IV ("Bills for Final Action").

The motion was made by Sen. Cassano S. S04., and seconded by Rep. Simms T. 140.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. noted that, within the language of the bill, there may be technical issues that need to be addressed moving forward; nonetheless, he expressed his desire to expedite the bill.

Sen. Haskell W. S26. expressed gratefulness to both the bipartisan group of lawmakers and to the family of the child that lost their life. He then noted that he supported the desire to expedite the bill.

Rep. Carney D. 023. echoed the comments made by the chairs.

Rep. Morrin Bello A. 028 questioned lines 47-51—how it would be reworded, in specific. Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. explained that they had looked at this section extensively and will continue to do so in the future.

Sen. Martin H. S31 asked a procedural question regarding an identical piece of legislation coming out of the Children's Committee. Chairman, Rep. Lemar 096 answered that they will seek the best product and work with the Children's Committee.

The motion passed by roll call vote 36-0.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. entertained motions to vote to JF Substitute HB 6485.

The motion was made by Rep. Michel D. 146., and seconded by Rep. Simms T. 140.

Chairperson, Rep. Lemar R. 096. offered explanation regarding the legislation.

Rep. Dauphinais A. 044 questioned the changes that would come from this bill. Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. noted that this would designate e-bikes as vehicles.

Rep. Zupkus L. 089. questioned the rebate board for the CHEAPR commission. Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096. gave an overview of the Cheapr program. Rep. Zupkus L. 089 asked where the grant funding comes from. Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. answered.

Rep. McCarthy-Vahey C. 133. Expressed support for the study to be completed.

Sen. Martin H. S31. expressed understanding for clarifying the e-bike portion of this legislation, and that he does not understand the study portion of the legislation.

The motion passed by roll call vote 34-0.

Chairman, Rep. Lemar R. 096 called the meeting to recess at 12:11 pm.

The voting was held open until 1:10 pm.

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Ian Bond
Assistant Clerk

Phil Mainiero
Committee Clerk