



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL DIGIOVANCARLO
SEVENTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-8267
FAX: (860) 240-0206
E-MAIL: Michael.DiGiovancarlo@cga.ct.gov

MEMBER

COMMERCE COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
VETERANS' COMMITTEE

March 8, 2021

Chairman Lemar, Vice Chairman Cassano, and members of the Transportation Committee:

I am State Representative Michael DiGiovancarlo of the 74th District in Waterbury testifying on my behalf, as well as State Representative Ron Napoli of the 73rd District in Waterbury and Rep. Geraldo Reyes of the 76th District in Waterbury.

I would like to kindly urge your strong consideration and support of H.B. 6569 - AAC MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION, specifically Section 2, lines 65 through 114 - pertaining to the change in both the registration grace period and fee scale change.

As a community police officer in Waterbury, I have testified before this committee three times in the past five years to address the abuse of individuals using out of state plates, rather than registering in the state of CT, to avoid paying motor vehicle taxes in Connecticut and also those registering in other Connecticut towns to avoid Waterbury's mill rate.

The current structure of our registration process is *not* working. According to the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA), 912 tickets were issued over the last ten years since 2011 but approximately 95% of those same tickets were dismissed. To provide perspective, operators of out-of-state vehicles who are residing in Connecticut permanently and have failed to register in the state of CT are to be fined \$1000 dollars for violating our state's current grace period laws. Furthermore, according to OFA, the Department of Motor Vehicles cannot enforce the infractions – the task is thus left to local municipalities to enforce.

If as much as 70% of the 912 tickets issued were completely enforced, the state should have expected ideally \$638,400 over the course of 10 years. This, however, is certainly not the case. Instead, only \$5,381 was accrued for the – over ten years. **See Figure 1.** If the infractions were *not* dismissed for those ordered against out-of-state violating the current grace period law, the state should have expected a projected revenue that is at bare minimum double of what is seen at the end of ten years within the course of two years. **See Figure 2.**

Based on my conversations with the CT Judicial Branch, OFA, the Office of Legislative Research and the Chief State's Attorney Rich Colangelo, I believe the issue with the current law is the current fee structure, specifically the \$1,000 ticket, contributes to a higher rate of dismissal since it poses a heavier on the individual. With nearly 90% of all issued violations being dismissed, it not only makes local enforcement, who track these vehicles, essentially ineffective but it also an incredible waste of resources at the municipal level. In its current form, this law poses a high price to enforce with practically no benefit to the state at all – if anything, the enforcement of this law poses a greater cost to municipalities, emergency services, the state, and, most importantly, taxpayers than any profit that current legislative language affords.

Because of this, I am pleased to see a 3-tiered approach in this bill to remedy this issue and also the allowance of the resident to register in our state in a timely manner. This bill will:

1. Reduce the grace period to align with other states across the nation and especially those in New England.
2. Create a tiered approach to fees associated with violations with the aim to enhance the likelihood that the courts do not dismiss as many issued tickets
 - First offense - \$50;
 - Second Offense - \$250,
 - Third offense - \$1,000 and car may be towed.
3. Provide remittance of higher revenue to the ticket-issuing local municipalities

Not only will this bill address this ongoing concern, it also creates a taskforce in Section 1 to study and determine best practices and policies to prevent Connecticut residents from registering their cars in other states to avoid the motor vehicle taxes in our state. This is a loophole that needs to be looked at and closed as soon as possible.

I thank you Chairman Lemar, Vice Chairman Cassano, and members of the Transportation Committee and ask you to support this important piece of legislation.

Figure 1: CGS 14-12(a)(2) Infractions

(60-Day Registration Requirement)

Fiscal Year*	Tickets Issued	Non-dismissed Violations	Tickets Dismissed	Percentage of Tickets Dismissed	Total Revenue
2011	67	6	61	91.04%	\$688
2012	93	6	87	93.55%	\$277
2013	56	7	49	87.50%	\$682
2014	56	4	52	92.86%	\$302
2015	187	9	178	95.19%	\$415
2016	135	5	130	96.30%	\$1,272
2017	89	2	87	97.75%	\$70
2018	85	3	82	96.47%	\$1,075
2019	66	2	64	96.97%	\$450
2020	78	3	75	96.15%	\$150
TOTAL	912	47	865	94.85%	\$5,381

*Data reflects the fiscal year of case disposition, not necessarily the year tickets were issued.

Percentage of Tickets Dismissed In Pursuit of CGS 14-12(a)(2) Infractions Over Last 10 Years

