



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IN SUPPORT OF:

H.B. 6569 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

March 8, 2021

The Division of Criminal Justice supports H.B. 6569, An Act Concerning Motor Vehicle Registration, and respectfully recommends the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE Report for this bill. Specifically, the Division supports Sections 2 and 3 of the bill, which seek to remedy the problem of residents failing to register their vehicles in this state.

Currently, the penalty for failing to register a vehicle is a \$1,000 fine – regardless of how long the owner has maintained residency. This proposal seeks to revise this structure in three meaningful ways. First, the proposal provides that the owner of the vehicle would not have a hard deadline in which to complete registration after establishing residency. Rather, an owner would not be in violation so long as they have *scheduled* an appointment with the Department of Motor Vehicles within the first 30 days of residency – it would not require that the date of the actual appointment to be within those 30 days. This provides some leeway for new residents who, perhaps through scheduling issues, cannot register the vehicle within their first month of residency.

Second, it creates a tiered infraction system so that if the owner fails to schedule an appointment to register the vehicle between 30 and 60 days of establishing residency, it would be a \$50 fine; if the owner fails to schedule an appointment between 60 and 90 days after residency, it would be a \$250 fine; and if more than 90 days have passed and the resident has not scheduled an appointment to register the vehicle, only then would the \$1,000 fine would be imposed. Finally, this bill also seeks to allow, though not require, the law enforcement officer to have the vehicle towed in those circumstances where the owner has established residency within the state and failed to even schedule an appointment for registering after three months.

The Division is supportive of the balance contained within this proposal to ensure that vehicles are properly registered with our state so that our municipalities may receive property taxes and the vehicles comply with our emission requirements, while lowering the initial fine(s) for any such owner who fails to register, or fails to schedule an appointment, within their first two months of residency.

In conclusion, the Division of Criminal Justice supports H.B. 6569 and respectfully recommends the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT. 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.