
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 258

AN ACT CONCERNING POLICE PATROL VEHICLES THAT REQUIRE DASHBOARD CAMERAS AND THE ACQUISITION OF A MINE-RESISTANT, AMBUSH-PROTECTED VEHICLE.

SUMMARY

Under existing law, beginning July 1, 2022, each state and local law enforcement unit must require the use of dashboard cameras with a remote recorder in each police patrol vehicle used by any of the police officers it employs (see BACKGROUND) (CGS § 29-6d(c)). This bill modifies the current definition of “police patrol vehicle” to explicitly exclude the following types of vehicles: (1) administrative vehicles with a body camera-wearing occupant, (2) bicycles, (3) motor scooters, (4) all-terrain vehicles, (5) electric personal assistive mobility devices, and (6) animal control vehicles. Therefore, a “police patrol vehicle” is any state or local police vehicle besides these excluded vehicles.

Also, existing law prohibits law enforcement agencies (i.e., State Police and municipal police departments) from acquiring certain military equipment (i.e., controlled equipment), including mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles (CGS § 7-294jj). Regardless of this law, the bill allows the West Haven municipal police department to acquire, by January 1, 2023, one mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle from the Farmington municipal police department. The bill specifies that the West Haven municipal police department is otherwise subject to existing law governing controlled equipment (e.g., law enforcement agencies that may keep controlled equipment are prohibited from using it for crowd management or intimidation tactics).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provision explicitly excluding certain vehicles from the “police patrol vehicle” definition is effective July 1, 2022.

BACKGROUND

Definitions

By law, a “law enforcement unit” is any state or municipal agency or department (or tribal agency or department created and governed under a memorandum of agreement) whose primary functions include enforcing criminal or traffic laws; preserving public order; protecting life and property; or preventing, detecting, or investigating crime. A “police officer” is a sworn member of a law enforcement unit or any member of that unit who performs police duties. A “dashboard camera with a remote recorder” is a camera that (1) attaches to a dashboard or windshield of a police vehicle, (2) electronically records video of the view through the vehicle’s windshield, and (3) has an electronic audio recorder that may be operated remotely (CGS § 29-6d(a)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23 Nay 1 (03/15/2022)