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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

**HB 6676**

### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ON STATE PARKWAYS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill increases, from \$50 to \$500, the fine per violation for anyone who operates a commercial motor vehicle on a state parkway where the vehicle is not allowed. The law generally prohibits commercial motor vehicles from entering and using state highways designated as parkways (i.e., the Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways and the Milford Parkway).

Under existing Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA) regulations, a “commercial motor vehicle” is any motor vehicle designed for the transporting of merchandise or freight and bearing a commercial registration (Conn. Agencies Regs., § 14-298-236).

The bill requires violators to follow the Superior Court’s Centralized Infractions Bureau’s procedures for payments or not guilty pleas (e.g., the fine may be paid by mail).

The bill also makes a conforming change.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Parkways***

By law, a “parkway” is any state highway receiving special treatment in landscaping and marginal planting, especially designed for, and devoted exclusively to, the use and accommodation of noncommercial motor vehicle traffic and to which access may be allowed only at highway intersections designated by the Department of Transportation commissioner and designed to eliminate cross traffic of vehicles (CGA § 13a-26(a)). By law, OSTA has authority to adopt regulations on the use

of state highways (including parkways), considering public safety and convenience, the width and character of the highways, and the density and character of traffic (CGS § 14-298).

**Centralized Infractions Bureau’s Procedures**

By law, under the bureau’s procedures, a Connecticut resident who commits an infraction or certain violations may plead not guilty or pay the set fine and any additional fee or cost. Violators who are nonresidents may do the same if they are residents of a state that has reciprocity with Connecticut’s Department of Motor Vehicles commissioner regarding driver’s license suspension. Otherwise, the law prohibits a nonresident violator from pleading or paying by mail but instead requires him or her to post a bond with the local police issuing the summons in the amount of the fine and any additional fees or costs (CGS § 51-164n).

**Related Bill**

sSB 15 (File 420), favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, (1) increases the fine for driving commercial vehicles on parkways from \$50 to \$500 for a first violation and \$1,000 for subsequent violations and (2) requires the fines to be assessed against commercial vehicle owners or lessees.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 36    Nay 1    (03/27/2023)