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## OLR Bill Analysis

### SB 1154

#### ***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill makes several unrelated changes in the government administration statutes. Specifically, the bill

1. exempts from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act any whistleblower complaints filed with the state auditors (by law, individuals with knowledge of corruption or fraud in state agencies may report it to the auditors for review) (existing law exempts the complainant's name and the investigation records (§ 1));
2. authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to do background checks from federal and out-of-state criminal databases for school bus and student transportation drivers periodically, including when renewing their licenses (§ 2);
3. requires the local legislative body (or the board of selectmen in a municipality governed by a board) or regional board of education to hold a public meeting on an audit that is non-compliant or shows certain irregularities before submitting a corrective action plan (§ 3); and
4. makes minor changes that replace statutory references to "comprehensive annual financial reports" with "annual comprehensive financial reports" (§§ 4-8).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023

#### **§ 2 — CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION DRIVERS**

The bill authorizes the motor vehicles commissioner to periodically do background checks on someone with his or her operator's license with a public passenger endorsement to drive a school bus or student transportation vehicle, including when they renew. Existing law authorizes the commissioner to do checks as part of the initial application. In practice, DMV periodically compares the list of student transportation drivers against the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's criminal database, but it does not do national or out-of-state background checks after the initial application.

### **§ 3 — PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR MUNICIPAL AUDITS**

Under existing law, an independent auditor must submit a report to the Office of Policy and Management secretary after an annual municipal financial audit or a single or program-specific audit (CGS § 7-393). If the secretary finds (1) the audit was not properly prepared and the entity did not have permission to file a non-compliant report or (2) evidence of unsound or irregular financial practices, management letter comments, or lack of standard internal controls, he must report his findings to certain officials. Depending on the entity, the report must be provided to the (1) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and clerk of the municipality, (2) superintendent of schools for a regional school district, or (3) CEO of the audited agency. The CEO or superintendent must then attest to and explain the secretary's findings and submit a written corrective action plan.

The bill requires that a public meeting be held to discuss the secretary's findings and potential causes of the audit's noted discrepancies. The corrective action plan must take into account what was discussed at the meeting.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 3 (03/22/2023)