



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 397

January Session, 2023

House Bill No. 5353

House of Representatives, April 4, 2023

The Committee on Planning and Development reported through REP. KAVROS DEGRAW of the 17th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH TRAFFIC AUTHORITIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) Any municipality having a
2 population of not less than fifty thousand may, by vote of its legislative
3 body, establish a traffic authority and appoint one or more members to
4 serve on such traffic authority. The qualifications, terms of office and
5 compensation, if any, of any such members shall be prescribed by such
6 legislative body. A traffic authority established pursuant to this section
7 shall replace any existing traffic authority in such municipality and have
8 the same powers and duties as a traffic authority described in
9 subparagraphs (A) to (C), inclusive, of subdivision (7) of section 14-297
10 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

11 Sec. 2. Subdivision (7) of section 14-297 of the general statutes is
12 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
13 *2023*):

14 (7) "Traffic authority" means (A) the board of police commissioners
 15 of any city, town or borough, [or] (B) the city or town manager, [the]
 16 chief of police, [the] superintendent of police or any legally elected or
 17 appointed official or board [, or any official] having similar powers and
 18 duties, of any city, town or borough that has no board of police
 19 commissioners but has a regularly appointed police force, [or] (C) the
 20 board of selectmen of any town in which there is no city or borough with
 21 a regularly appointed police force, or (D) a traffic authority established
 22 pursuant to section 1 of this act, except that, with respect to state
 23 highways and bridges, "traffic authority" means the Office of the State
 24 Traffic Administration, provided nothing contained in this section shall
 25 be construed to limit or detract from the jurisdiction or authority of the
 26 Office of the State Traffic Administration to adopt regulations
 27 establishing a uniform system of traffic control signals, devices, signs
 28 and markings as provided in section 14-298, and the requirement that
 29 no installation of any traffic control signal light shall be made by any
 30 city, town or borough until the installation has been approved by the
 31 Office of the State Traffic Administration as provided in section 14-299;

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	New section
Sec. 2	July 1, 2023	14-297(7)

PD *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Various Municipalities	Cost	Potential	Potential

Explanation

The bill allows municipalities with a population of at least 50,000 to establish a local traffic authority. The municipality's legislative body has the authority to determine the required qualifications, terms and compensation of the local traffic authority. To the extent a municipality establishes compensation for the members, there will be a cost beginning in FY 24.

As of 2021, there were 19 municipalities with a population over 50,000, which therefore could be affected by the bill.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the cost established by the municipality's legislative body for the members' compensation.

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 5353*****AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH TRAFFIC AUTHORITIES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill allows certain municipalities to establish a separate entity to serve as their local traffic authority (LTA) instead of the board of police commissioners or other entity current law prescribes. It allows any municipality with a population of at least 50,000 to establish, by a vote of its legislative body, a separate traffic authority and appoint one or more members to serve on it.

An LTA established under the bill replaces the entity currently filling this role in the municipality and has all the powers and duties the law assigns to LTAs (see BACKGROUND). Legislative bodies that establish one must also set members' required qualifications, terms, and compensation, if any.

The bill also makes technical and minor changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

ENTITIES DESIGNATED AS A TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

As shown in the table below, current law designates different local bodies or officials to serve as a municipality's LTA, depending mainly on whether the municipality has a board of police commissioners. The bill allows these municipalities (with 50,000 or more people; see BACKGROUND) to alternatively establish a separate traffic authority, regardless of whether the municipality has a board of police commissioners.

Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, the Office of the State

Traffic Administration (OSTA) is the traffic authority for state roads and bridges and has authority over certain elements specified in law (e.g., traffic control signals).

Table: Entities Current Law Designates as Local Traffic Authorities

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Designated Entity</i>
City, town, or borough with police commissioners	Board of police commissioners
City, town, or borough without commissioners, but with a regularly appointed police force	City or town manager, police chief, police superintendent, or any elected or appointed official or board having similar powers and duties
Town without a city or borough that has a regularly appointed police force	Board of selectmen

BACKGROUND

Authority of the Local Traffic Authority

With respect to streets under their jurisdiction, the law generally gives LTAs authority (in some cases only with OSTA approval) to, among other things, (1) place and maintain traffic control signals, signs, markings, and other safety devices following OSTA regulations (CGS § 14-298); (2) set speed limits on roads and bridges, under certain conditions (CGS § 14-218a); (3) designate school zones (in which fines for certain violations may be doubled) and pedestrian safety zones (CGS §§ 14-212b & -307a); (4) designate one-way streets (CGS § 14-303); (5) allow golf carts to be driven on streets during daylight hours (CGS § 14-300g); and (6) adopt regulations necessary to exercise its authority (CGS § 14-312).

Authorized Municipalities

The Department of Public Health’s most recently released (2021) population estimates list the following 19 municipalities as having populations of at least 50,000: Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Fairfield, Greenwich, Hamden, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, Milford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, Stamford, Stratford, Waterbury, West Hartford, and West Haven.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 17 Nay 4 (03/20/2023)