



House of Representatives

File No. 790

General Assembly

January Session, 2023

(Reprint of File No. 397)

House Bill No. 5353
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 19, 2023

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

13 Sec. 2. Subdivision (7) of section 14-297 of the general statutes is

14 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
15 *2023*):

16 (7) "Traffic authority" means (A) the board of police commissioners
17 of any city, town or borough, [or] (B) the city or town manager, [the]
18 chief of police, [the] superintendent of police or any legally elected or
19 appointed official or board [, or any official] having similar powers and
20 duties, of any city, town or borough that has no board of police
21 commissioners but has a regularly appointed police force, [or] (C) the
22 board of selectmen of any town in which there is no city or borough with
23 a regularly appointed police force, or (D) a traffic authority established
24 pursuant to section 1 of this act, except that, with respect to state
25 highways and bridges, "traffic authority" means the Office of the State
26 Traffic Administration, provided nothing contained in this section shall
27 be construed to limit or detract from the jurisdiction or authority of the
28 Office of the State Traffic Administration to adopt regulations
29 establishing a uniform system of traffic control signals, devices, signs
30 and markings as provided in section 14-298, and the requirement that
31 no installation of any traffic control signal light shall be made by any
32 city, town or borough until the installation has been approved by the
33 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	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2023</i>	14-297(7)

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.

House "A" makes technical changes to the original bill and has no fiscal impact.

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 (as amended by House "A")******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 specifies that municipalities may establish an LTA regardless of whether the municipality's charter or home rule ordinance, or a special act states otherwise.

The bill also makes technical and minor changes.

*House Amendment "A" allows municipalities to establish an LTA described by the bill regardless of whether the municipality's charter or home rule ordinance, or a special act, states otherwise.

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 LTAs

Jurisdiction	Designated Entity
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 recent population estimates (2021) 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)

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 25 Nay 11 (04/19/2023)