

Transportation Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6654

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE OF MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY RECALLS.

Vote Date: 3/17/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/15/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Transportation Committee

CO-SPONSORS:

Sen. Tony Hwang, 28th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Automakers are required by federal law to identify safety-related defects in their products, notify car owners, and repair safety-related defects free of cost. However, consumers are not required to participate in completion recalls. Therefore, this bill requires repair professionals with imperative notifications to the owner of the motor vehicle regarding safety-related recalls to expand pre-existing systems in place to notify owners of potential safety-related defects in their motor vehicle. Additionally, there are millions of cars on United States' roadways that have unrepaired safety defects, and expanded checks, per this bill, would assist in raising recall completion rates, saving lives.

PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

[Section 14-164b](#) of the general statutes is repealed and the following summary of the proposed substitute language is in place of it. In lines 52-53, it was mentioned that "Open recall" would have the same meaning as provided in section 1 of this bill and inserted as addendum number 6. Line 54 which was previously addendum 6 was switched to addendum 7. [Subsection 14-164c](#) of the general statutes is repealed and the following summary of the proposed substitute language is in place of it. Addendum 'b' was changed to addendum 1 to add addendum 2 encapsulating lines 77-91; this addition was added to require licensed dealer and/or repairer to check information made available by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to judge whether or not a motor vehicle being inspected is subject to an

open recall to increase recall completion rates as well as giving written notice to the motor vehicle owner.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Tony Guerrero, Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

Commissioner, Tony Guerrero, expressed that their agency's revisions are to be carried out by their emissions vendor; they would omit the need for legislation. However, in regard to the consumers protection and awareness, the Department of Motor Vehicles supports the intent of this legislation.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Craig Orlan, Director of State and Local Government Affairs, American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

Mr. Orlan, on behalf of Honda, strongly supports this legislation for the desire to improve Connecticut's vehicle recall completion rates. Honda further states that "Under federal law, vehicle manufacturers are required to identify safety-related defects in their products, notify owners of those defects, and provide consumers with the ability to have those defects repaired at no cost to them." In conjunction with this statement, they further stated that there are systemic challenges that impair this obligation and as a result, there are "millions of vehicles currently travel on U.S. roadways with unrepaired safety defects. This puts drivers, passengers, and other road users at risk of death or serious injury." Car owner stagnation falls under two categories: lack of awareness and lack of urgency, however, safety defects emerge later in the car's life and switch hands frequently; automakers aren't informed when vehicles are sold in secondary markets. Therefore, people who buy these cars are not appropriately notified of safety defects, and subsequently "impacts disadvantaged communities and communities of color, since those communities rely more heavily on the used car market to obtain vehicles. These communities also tend to struggle more with housing insecurity, making it very difficult for OEMs to match vehicle information with the current addresses of owners in a timely manner." Honda believes the most logical starting point to make Connecticut's roads safer, would be to perform additional checks for open safety recalls based on similar programs such as a vehicle safety recall notification program which utilizes the state's existing vehicle registration renewal process; recall information regarding safety defects is included with registration renewal notices. This program has been proven to increase recall completion rates.

Wayne Weikel, Senior Director, State Government Affairs, Auto Alliance

Wayne Weikel states that due to the participation of safety recalls being voluntary under federal law, they support this legislation to boost completion rates. They further state that there must be a regimented process in which the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) should "include open recall information as part of each vehicle's periodic registration process." Additionally, they suggest that language should be included to force consumer actions to attain free repairs completed on their motor vehicle, if they refuse, then they will be barred from the re-registration of their vehicle if a recall remains unsolved after the car owner was made cognizant of the problem during their previous registration period. To back up their language suggestions, they included that some states such as Ohio, Maryland, and California received funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to support

their pilot programs, for example, their successful notification program which over the first two years, Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administration notified over a million car owners and about 400,000 completion recalls – this includes older vehicles as well which are attributed to significantly lower recall completion rates.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Reported by: Gregory Chipchak

Date: 3/23/2023