Public Hearing-March 3, 2023
Planning and Development Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto
Department of Transportation

H.B. 5353 - AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

The Department of Transportation (CTDOT) respectfully offers the following comments on House Bill 5353: An Act Concerning Certain Municipal Traffic Authorities.

This bill would authorize any municipality with a population of fifty thousand or more to establish a traffic authority independent of such municipality's board of police commissioners or other municipal official or body.

Under Section 14-297, “Traffic authority” means the board of police commissioners of any city, town or borough, or the city or town manager, the chief of police, the superintendent of police or any legally elected or appointed official or board, or any official having similar powers and duties, of any city, town or borough that has no board of police commissioners but has a regularly appointed force, or the board of selectmen of any town in which there is no city or borough with a regularly appointed police force.

In the Office of the State Traffic Administration’s (OSTA) opinion, there is flexibility under the current statute that permits a municipality to choose or replace a traffic authority. If a municipality desires to change its current traffic authority, they need to complete and sign the appropriate Local Traffic Authority (LTA) form which is available upon request from the OSTA. The OSTA processes numerous changes a year and a listing of the current LTA’s and their titles for all municipalities can be found here.

If the committee moves forward with drafting the proposed bill, it is OSTA’s recommendation that the language specify that the traffic authority have similar professional credentials as noted in Section 14-297. It would be undesirable for a municipality to establish a traffic authority which does not have training and/or experience in one of the following areas: law enforcement, engineering, public works, or executive municipal administration (e.g., Mayor, Selectman, Town Manager).

For further information or questions, please contact Anne Kleza (anne.kleza@ct.gov) at the Department of Transportation at (860) 594-3015.