



2023 Acts Affecting Transportation

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Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting transportation enacted during the 2023 legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp>.

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden.

Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, House Clerk's Office, or General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

Table of Contents

Accessible Transportation	6
Accessibility at Bus Stops.....	6
Accessible Parking Advisory Council.....	6
Accessible Parking Placard Changes.....	6
Northwest Nonmedical Transportation Pilot Program.....	6
Notice on DOT-Funded Travel Training Programs.....	7
Study on Nonmedical Transportation Services for People With an Intellectual Disability.....	7
Study on Transportation Needs for People With IDD	7
Transportation for Nursing Home Residents	7
Video Presentation on Interacting With People With Disabilities	8
Airports and Aviation.....	8
Aircraft Liability Insurance Requirement	8
Aircraft Registration	8
Aviation Fuel Taxation and Tax Moratorium.....	9
Connecticut Airport and Aviation Account Funding	9
Local Approval of Municipal Airport Sale or Lease to CAA	9
New CAA Annual Report.....	10
Various Airport and Aviation Law Changes.....	10
Boats, Ports, and Harbors	10
Boats and Aquatic Invasive Species Fee.....	10
Connecticut Port Authority and Building Permitting Process	10
Connecticut Port Authority Contracting	11
Clean Transportation and Electric Vehicles	11
Hydrogen Plan and Projects	11
Medium and Heavy-Duty Truck Voucher Program	11
Transportation Sector Carbon Dioxide Reduction Target.....	12
Department of Transportation Operation.....	12
Intersection Control Evaluation Policy	12
Major Traffic Generator Certificates	12
Noise Barrier Study	12
Tire-Derived Asphalt.....	13
Vegetation Management Plan.....	13
Driver Education and Driving Schools	13
Cannabis Education Required in Eight-Hour Course	13
Driving School License Background Checks	13
Drug-Impaired Driving Public Awareness Campaign	14
Safety Course After Traffic Violations	14

Safety Video Upon License Renewal	14
Wrong-Way Driving Education	14
Driver’s Licenses, Registrations, and Certificates of Title.....	15
Driver’s Licenses or ID Cards for Incarcerated Individuals	15
Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse.....	15
Duplicate Registration Fee	15
Knowledge Test Languages	15
Taiwan Driver Training Reciprocity Report	16
For-Hire Transportation.....	16
Livery Vehicle Changes.....	16
Taxi Service at Bradley Airport	16
Highways and Parkways	16
Limited Access Highway Speed Limit	16
Vehicles Allowed on State Parkways	16
Local Traffic Authorities (LTA).....	17
Mandatory Annual LTA Training	17
Traffic Control Signal Revisions	17
Motor Vehicle Dealers and Repairers.....	17
Asset Protection and Excess Wear and Use Waivers	17
Dealer and Repairer Certificates of Approval	17
Dealer Electronic Registration Filing.....	18
Dealer Plates	18
Limited Repairer License Eliminated.....	18
Notice of Open Safety Recalls.....	18
Motor Vehicle Violations and Traffic Stops	19
Car Seat Violation Fine Cancellation	19
Criminal Records Erasure and Motor Vehicle Violations.....	19
Penalties for Crimes and Violations Related to Driver’s Licenses, Registrations, and License Plates	19
Penalties for Recurring Motor Vehicle License Violations.....	19
Police Informing Drivers of the Purpose of a Traffic Stop	20
Public Transportation and Transit Oriented Development.....	20
Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA).....	20
Connecticut Public Transportation Council	20
Modernizing Bus Stops and Shelters	21
Shore Line East Competitive Procurement	21
Shore Line East Rail Study	21
Study of State Property That Could be Developed as Housing.....	21
School Buses.....	22

GPS Use on School Buses	22
School Bus Driver Shortage Study	22
School Bus Endorsement Road Tests	22
Traffic Safety	22
Automated Enforcement	22
Idaho Stop and Right Turn on Red Study	23
“Move Over” Law Expansion	23
Seat Belt Use Promotion	23
“Street Takeovers” and Street Racing Law Changes	23
Vision Zero Distinction for Schools	24
Wrong-Way Driving Countermeasures	24
Transportation Planning	24
Equity Proposals in DOT Capital Plan	24
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Consolidation Study	25
Trucking	25
Diesel Fuel Tax Rate Freeze	25
Fine for Commercial Vehicles on Parkways	25
Highway Use Tax Reporting Frequency.....	25
Miscellaneous	26
Catalytic Converters	26
Decibel Level Testing.....	26
Emergency Contact Database Study	26
Emergency Lights for Volunteer Ambulance Associations and Constables.....	26
Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form Task Force.....	27

Accessible Transportation

Accessibility at Bus Stops

The bus stop and shelter modernization plans that the Department of Transportation (DOT) and transit districts must adopt under a new law (see “Public Transportation” below) must ensure that all bus stops and shelters are constructed and maintained in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act’s (ADA) accessibility guidelines. The law also requires, beginning July 1, 2024, each bus stop or shelter that DOT or a transit district constructs to be built according to the plans and in compliance with the ADA guidelines ([PA 23-137](#), § 22, effective upon passage).

Accessible Parking Advisory Council

A new law creates an Accessible Parking Advisory Council within the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and tasks the council with, among other things, (1) developing a strategy to deter, detect, and prevent fraud and misuse related to windshield placard issuance and (2) recommending best practices for policies and regulations on placard issuance, use, and enforcement. The council consists of the DMV and Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) commissioners; two medical professionals who certify placard applications in the course of their employment; a disability advocacy organization representative; a municipal planner; two accessible parking users or advocates; a municipal police officer; and any other members the council opts to include. The council must annually report to the legislature by January 1, starting in 2025 ([PA 23-40](#), § 36, effective upon passage).

Accessible Parking Placard Changes

A new law conforms statute to current DMV practice by requiring the commissioner to check the Department of Public Health (DPH) state death registry at least monthly (rather than periodically as under prior law) and cancel placards issued to deceased people identified in the registry. It also requires that beginning October 1, 2023, new windshield parking placards bear the words “Accessibility Parking Permit” instead of “parking permit for persons with disabilities,” but specifies that valid existing placards remain so until they expire ([PA 23-40](#), §§ 33-35, effective October 1, 2023).

Northwest Nonmedical Transportation Pilot Program

This year, the legislature passed a law establishing a Department of Developmental Services (DDS) pilot program to provide nonmedical transportation services for people with an intellectual disability in the northwestern region of Connecticut. The services must (1) include transportation to and from work, educational facilities, stores, and other places located within a 20-mile radius of the

residence of a person with an intellectual disability and (2) be provided at least two days per week. By December 1, 2023, the department must issue a request for proposals (RFP) to select a transportation provider for implementing and operating the program and must begin reporting annually on the program by January 1, 2025 ([PA 23-137](#), § 23, effective upon passage).

Notice on DOT-Funded Travel Training Programs

Under a new law, by January 1, 2024, DOT must (1) create a notice on the training programs it funds that instruct how to safely use commuter railroad systems and public transit services and (2) give the notice to DDS and the State Education Resource Center. DDS must then give this notice to its service providers and the center must publish the notice on its website ([PA 23-137](#), § 24, effective upon passage).

Study on Nonmedical Transportation Services for People With an Intellectual Disability

The legislature passed a law requiring DOT to study ways to provide nonmedical transportation services to and from work, educational facilities, stores, and other places for people with an intellectual disability. The methods studied must include, among other things, (1) issuing an RFP for providing these services to those whose transportation needs are not currently serviced by public transportation and (2) providing incentives, such as DDS payments or tax credits, to employers who arrange or pay for transportation to and from work for their employees with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) or to employees who arrange this transportation for their coworkers. The study must include certain cost and feasibility analyses and is due by July 1, 2025 ([PA 23-137](#), § 21, effective upon passage).

Study on Transportation Needs for People With IDD

Under a new law, DOT must study the demand and need for statewide and local transportation services for people with IDD, including autism spectrum disorder. Among other things, the study must address (1) expanding the operating hours for commuter rail and state-funded public transit services; (2) determining the daily transportation needs of people with IDD and how accessible using transit services is for them; and (3) a specific analysis of each transit district's services that identifies underserved locations, specific routes for possible expansion, and associated costs. The study is due January 1, 2025 ([PA 23-137](#), § 20, effective upon passage).

Transportation for Nursing Home Residents

A new law authorizes nursing homes to transport nonambulatory residents to their family members' homes under certain conditions if the nursing home has available vehicles. The transportation must

be approved five business days in advance by a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse and the family member must live within 15 miles of the nursing home. The act also requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to evaluate whether this transportation qualifies for federal funding as a health-related social need and report to the Council on Medical Assistance Program Oversight on its evaluation by October 1, 2023 ([PA 23-186](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2023).

Video Presentation on Interacting With People With Disabilities

A new law requires DMV, in consultation with DDS, DSS, ADS, and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, to create a video presentation that instructs and gives best practices on ways to appropriately interact with people with disabilities who may be receiving services from the departments. They must post their video presentation and any other training resources on ways to appropriately interact with people with IDD on their respective websites. Beginning January 1, 2024, before issuing or renewing a driver's license with a public passenger endorsement, DMV must require applicants to watch the video ([PA 23-137](#), § 25, effective October 1, 2023).

Airports and Aviation

Aircraft Liability Insurance Requirement

Beginning October 1, 2023, a new law prohibits people from operating, or owners from allowing someone to operate, aircraft based or hangered in the state without liability insurance coverage. Specifically, the policy must cover the owner and pilot for claims by passengers or other people for bodily injuries, death, or property damage that may arise from the aircraft's operation in the amount of at least (1) \$500,000 per accident and (2) \$100,000 per passenger seat. Aircraft owners must provide proof of this insurance when requested by airport officials or law enforcement, and in-state air navigation facility owners and operators must keep a list of the aircraft based or hangered at their facilities that includes each aircraft's liability insurance information. The new law's requirements do not apply to aircraft subject to federal liability insurance requirements ([PA 23-135](#), § 30, effective October 1, 2023).

Aircraft Registration

By law, aircraft owners must annually register their aircraft with the municipality in which is it based or primarily used. The legislature enacted a new law that generally eliminates the Connecticut Airport Authority's (CAA) role in administering the registration program, specifically repealing requirements that CAA (1) establish the aircraft registration program and (2) adopt any necessary rules and procedures for implementing it. It retains requirements that CAA prepare and distribute registration decals and forms to municipalities, but it eliminates the specific information the forms

must contain. It also makes changes related to information reporting by municipalities to CAA and by aircraft owners and airports to municipalities ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 16-19 & 22, effective July 1, 2023).

Aviation Fuel Taxation and Tax Moratorium

This session the legislature exempted aviation fuel from the 8.1% petroleum products gross earnings tax (PGET) starting July 1, 2023, and created a new aviation fuel tax that takes effect July 1, 2025, effectively creating a moratorium on the taxation of aviation fuel for FYs 24 and 25. The new aviation fuel excise tax is 15 cents per gallon and applies to the (1) first sale in the state by companies distributing aviation fuel in the state and (2) in-state use or consumption of fuel by companies that import aviation fuel into the state or cause it to be imported (but fuel may be taxed only one time). The new tax rate must be adjusted every four years according to changes in the consumer price index. Revenue from the aviation fuel tax must be deposited in the Connecticut airport and aviation account (see below) ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 368, 370 & 371, effective July 1, 2023).

Connecticut Airport and Aviation Account Funding

The Connecticut airport and aviation account is an account dedicated to airport and aviation purposes and, in practice, CAA uses the account's funds for CAA-owned and municipal general aviation airports. Under prior law, PGET revenue from aviation fuel sources funded the account.

The budget implementer act transfers, from the Special Transportation Fund to the Connecticut airport and aviation account, \$8 million in each year of the aviation fuel tax moratorium (i.e., FYs 24 and 25). But the transfer is contingent on CAA's executive director (1) entering into a management agreement with Bridgeport for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of Sikorsky Airport and (2) giving written notice that the agreement was executed to the comptroller and Stratford's chief elected official.

Starting July 1, 2025, the Department of Revenue Services (DRS) commissioner must deposit into the account all the revenue received from the new aviation fuel tax ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 369 & 371, effective July 1, 2023).

Local Approval of Municipal Airport Sale or Lease to CAA

Under a new law, any CAA purchase or lease of an airport owned or controlled by a municipality or one of its political subdivisions must be approved by the legislative bodies of the municipality that owns or controls the airport and the one in which the airport is located, and the approval may not be unreasonably withheld. The new law specifies that this provision does not displace or supersede existing agreements executed between a municipality or one of its political subdivisions that owns

or controls an airport and the municipality in which the airport is located regarding the airport ([PA 23-135](#), § 52, as amended by [PA 23-204](#), § 260; effective July 1, 2023).

New CAA Annual Report

Starting by October 1, 2023, a new law requires CAA’s executive director to annually report to the Transportation and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees on each airport it oversees. The report must (1) summarize each airport’s operating and capital revenue and expenditures for the prior fiscal year and (2) give an overview of any acquisition, closure, or expansion plans in the coming year ([PA 23-204](#), § 396, effective July 1, 2023).

Various Airport and Aviation Law Changes

A new law makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes to laws related to airports and aviation. These changes include (1) specifying documentation that must be given to CAA when seeking a certificate of approval or license for an air navigation facility; (2) requiring publicly owned airport owners and operators, rather than CAA, to consider specified criteria and develop and revise the approach plans for their airports; and (3) eliminating obsolete or federally preempted language ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 16-31 & 53, effective July 1, 2023).

Boats, Ports, and Harbors

Boats and Aquatic Invasive Species Fee

Beginning October 1, 2024, a new law (1) decouples the collection of the state Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) fee, which certain boaters pay, from the boat registration process and (2) eliminates a two-tiered fee schedule based on a boater’s state residency. In doing so, it removes DMV involvement in collecting the fee. The new law replaces the current fee structure with a \$7 AIS stamp for individuals and a \$20 AIS decal for vessels, with a limited exception for marine dealers, engine manufacturers, and surveyors. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is responsible for issuing these stamps and decals ([PA 23-154](#), effective October 1, 2024).

Connecticut Port Authority and Building Permitting Process

New legislation applies to the Connecticut Port Authority (CPA) the law that requires state agencies and CAA to obtain building permits and certificates of occupancy for certain large-scale construction projects from the State Building Inspector. Specifically, they must do so for state and authority buildings and structures, or additions to them, that (1) include residential occupancies for at least 25 people or (2) exceed certain statutory threshold limits and require an independent structural review ([PA 23-204](#), § 113, effective upon passage).

Connecticut Port Authority Contracting

A new law makes several changes affecting CPA's contracting procedures. It requires public bidding for any CPA project to construct, renovate, or alter CPA-owned or -leased buildings or facilities that is overseen by a construction manager (e.g., a general contractor) and financed in whole or in part by the state.

It prohibits the construction manager from bidding on these projects' elements. The new law also prohibits CPA from paying success fees under any contract or agreement it enters, amends, or extends on or after July 1, 2023, if it is financed in whole or in part by the state (including matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance, or guarantees). It generally requires CPA to follow the same procedures as state agencies when entering into certain goods and services contracts (e.g., using competitive bidding or competitive negotiation when purchasing goods and services).

Lastly, the legislature made permanent the State Contracting Standards Board's authority over CPA ([PA 23-91](#), various effective dates).

Clean Transportation and Electric Vehicles

Hydrogen Plan and Projects

A new law addresses projects or activities that advance hydrogen use in the state by (1) requiring DEEP to develop a hydrogen strategic plan and seek federal funding for hydrogen projects and (2) extending certain wage and workforce requirements to hydrogen projects. The act requires DEEP's strategic plan to prioritize the application of hydrogen produced from renewable energy to aviation, maritime shipping, ferry transportation, heavy-duty trucking, and high-temperature industrial processes ([PA 23-156](#), effective July 1, 2023, except the requirement that DEEP seek federal funding is effective upon passage).

Medium and Heavy-Duty Truck Voucher Program

The legislature made changes to the law authorizing DEEP to establish a voucher program to support the use of zero-emission technology in medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Specifically, it (1) delays, from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024, the date on and after which DEEP may establish the program; (2) generally expands the program to cover more vehicles by changing the vehicle classification system used to determine eligibility; (3) limits the program for medium-duty passenger vehicles to those sold for use by a commercial or institutional fleet; and (4) specifies that vehicles are ineligible for vouchers if they are eligible for incentives through the Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate program ([PA 23-135](#), § 38, effective upon passage).

Transportation Sector Carbon Dioxide Reduction Target

Starting by October 1, 2030, a new law requires DOT, in consultation with DEEP, to biennially establish a transportation carbon reduction target for the state that sets the maximum amount of carbon dioxide emissions allowed from the transportation sector. DOT must develop a plan to ensure that transportation projects included in its Statewide Transportation Improvement Program do not exceed the emissions reduction target, and the department must determine the methodology for calculating the carbon dioxide emissions expected from projects. Starting by January 1, 2025, DOT must begin reporting on its work to develop the plan and implement the reduction target ([PA 23-135](#), § 32, effective July 1, 2023).

Department of Transportation Operation

Intersection Control Evaluation Policy

Starting July 1, 2024, a new law requires DOT to adopt an intersection control evaluation policy to use when evaluating new intersection construction and modifications to existing intersections. The policy must (1) have a decision-making framework with specific, performance-based criteria to screen intersection alternatives and identify an optimal solution and (2) require consistent documentation of each intersection evaluation ([PA 23-116](#), § 2, effective upon passage).

Major Traffic Generator Certificates

By law, entities building, expanding, or establishing certain major traffic generating developments must get a certificate from the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA), and local building officials may not issue a building or foundation permit to these entities until they show their certificate. A new law additionally prohibits local building officials from issuing a certificate of occupancy for these developments until conditions of the OSTA certificate have been met. By law, OSTA may (1) order entities who have not met conditions listed in the certificate to stop development and (2) bring action in court if the conditions are not met ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 3 & 4, effective July 1, 2023).

Noise Barrier Study

Under a new law, DOT must do a statewide evaluation to determine the feasibility and reasonableness of constructing noise barriers for Type II projects (i.e., retrofits). The department must also establish a priority rating system to rank the projects and use the system to create a project priority list. By February 1, 2024, DOT must report the evaluation's results, a description of the priority ranking system, and the priority list to the Transportation Committee ([PA 23-135](#), § 34, effective upon passage).

Tire-Derived Asphalt

New legislation requires the DOT commissioner to (1) do needed laboratory testing related to a pilot program on using tire-derived asphalt on primary state roadways and (2) report to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2025, on the efficacy and suitability of using tire-derived asphalt on these roads ([PA 23-62](#), § 2, effective upon passage).

Vegetation Management Plan

A new law requires DOT to develop guidelines on tree and vegetation management, removal, and replacement along state highways to use for maintenance and construction projects. The guidelines' goal must be to ensure that projects' impacts on the environment, landscape, and noise pollution are balanced or outweighed by measures taken to avoid or minimize these impacts. The guidelines must address, among other things, DOT's general roadside vegetation management activities (including mowing and herbicide use); beautification, enhancements, and the effect on scenic roads; and the work's environmental impact. The new law requires the DOT commissioner to submit the guidelines to the Transportation and Environment committees by January 1, 2024, and the committees must hold a joint public hearing during which the commissioner must present the guidelines ([PA 23-135](#), § 33, effective upon passage).

Driver Education and Driving Schools

Cannabis Education Required in Eight-Hour Course

By law, adult instruction permit and youth instruction permit holders must complete an eight-hour safe driving practices course before getting a driver's license, which must include at least four hours related to drugs and alcohol. A new law (1) specifically requires that the drugs covered include cannabis and (2) requires that the course include a video presentation specific to cannabis's impact on drivers and how ingesting cannabis can impair motor function, reaction time, perception, and peripheral vision ([PA 23-40](#), § 27, effective October 1, 2023).

Driving School License Background Checks

The legislature passed a law specifically requiring that driver's school licensees be fingerprinted and undergo a state and national criminal records check and a review of the state child abuse and neglect registry when renewing their license, in addition to when they initially apply ([PA 23-40](#), § 14, effective July 1, 2023).

Drug-Impaired Driving Public Awareness Campaign

A new law requires DOT, in collaboration with DPH and local health departments or district departments of health, to conduct a public awareness campaign about the dangers of driving while under the influence of certain over-the-counter drugs and prescription drugs, with an emphasis on opioids and cannabis. The campaign must include outreach to pharmacies, hospitals, substance abuse treatment facilities, cannabis dispensary facilities, hybrid retailers, and retailers that can communicate information about these dangers to drivers who are receiving or purchasing these drugs ([PA 23-116](#), § 8, effective upon passage).

Safety Course After Traffic Violations

By law, people charged with motor vehicle violations that are processed by the Centralized Infractions Bureau (CIB) may either (1) pay the fine and any additional fees, which is considered a plea of no contest (*nolo contendere*), or (2) plead not guilty and be scheduled for a hearing. If a person pleads not guilty to the CIB and is scheduled for a hearing, the person may, at a subsequent Superior Court proceeding, reach an agreement with a prosecutorial official on the fine amount and elect to pay the fine without appearing before a judicial authority.

A new law allows prosecutorial officials, as a part of this agreement, to require that the person attend a driving safety course. Any course required must address the nature of the violation and be offered or approved by the chief state's attorney ([PA 23-116](#), § 4, effective October 1, 2023).

Safety Video Upon License Renewal

Under a new law, DMV must (1) develop a safety video on state traffic laws and ways to drive safely and reduce transportation-related deaths and injuries; (2) require people to watch it upon every other renewal and when transferring a license from another jurisdiction; and (3) provide other safety materials to people transferring a license from another jurisdiction ([PA 23-116](#), §§ 5 & 7, effective January 1, 2024).

Wrong-Way Driving Education

As part of the new law on wrong-way driving, the legislature addressed wrong-way driving public awareness and education by requiring that information on ways to reduce wrong-way driving incidents and information on actions drivers should take when encountering a wrong-way driver be included in (1) a DOT public awareness campaign and (2) driver education program curriculum ([PA 23-51](#), §§ 1-3, effective October 1, 2023).

Driver's Licenses, Registrations, and Certificates of Title

Driver's Licenses or ID Cards for Incarcerated Individuals

A new law requires the Department of Correction and DMV commissioners to proactively ensure that eligible incarcerated individuals with sentences of at least one year have a DMV-issued identity card or driver's license when they are released from a correctional facility. (Under prior law the incarcerated individual had to request the card or license.) It also requires the DMV commissioner, by January 1, 2025, to conduct a feasibility study on expanding the allowable forms of identification an incarcerated individual may use to get an ID card or driver's license. The commissioner must then implement any modifications he determines are feasible ([PA 23-88](#), effective April 1, 2024).

Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse

The legislature made several changes related to the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse laws to conform to federal law. These include (1) matching the deadline for DMV to begin complying with federal laws requiring them to check the clearinghouse (this is a later date than under prior state law) and (2) incorporating requirements related to commercial learner's permits (CLPs). The clearinghouse is an online database maintained by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration that gives employers and government agencies access to information about commercial driver's license (CDL) and CLP holders' drug and alcohol program violations ([PA 23-40](#), § 1, effective upon passage).

Duplicate Registration Fee

The legislature limited the application of the \$20 fee for a duplicate registration certificate to those provided at a DMV office or by a contractor. In doing so, it eliminates the fee for duplicate certificates provided online, conforming to current agency practice ([PA 23-40](#), § 40, effective upon passage).

Knowledge Test Languages

The legislature expanded immigrant and refugee access to the class D driver's license knowledge test requiring the DMV commissioner to administer the test in at least 26 additional languages that he finds are responsive to the language needs of emerging immigrant and refugee populations. The commissioner must (1) select the languages after consulting with advocacy and assistance organizations for refugees, immigrants, and other English language learners and (2) have the tests reviewed by a fluent speaker. By February 1, 2024, DMV must report to the Transportation Committee on the languages selected and the number of requests for tests in these languages ([PA 23-40](#), §§ 27 & 28, effective October 1, 2023, except the report requirement is effective upon passage).

Taiwan Driver Training Reciprocity Report

By February 1, 2024, a new law requires the DMV commissioner to submit a status report to the Transportation Committee about a reciprocal agreement with Taiwan for recognizing driver training requirements ([PA 23-40](#), § 29, effective upon passage).

For-Hire Transportation

Livery Vehicle Changes

A new law makes several changes related to DOT regulation of livery vehicles. It allows livery permittees to apply for two additional vehicles annually through an existing expedited process and eliminates the requirement that owners and operators display their livery permits in their vehicles. It also expands DOT's authority to make reasonable regulations and impose penalties related to livery service. Under the new law, the DOT commissioner may (1) make regulations related to livery permittee management and staffing, in addition to the things he can regulate under existing law (e.g., fares and service), and (2) order corrective actions for violations, including attendance at a driver retraining program ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 11 & 12, effective October 1, 2023).

Taxi Service at Bradley Airport

A new law eliminates requirements that taxi certificate holders, in order to solicit, receive, and discharge passengers at Bradley Airport, provide proof that they provided active service for at least two years since getting the certificate that was adequate within the certificate's specified territory. Under the new law, certificate holders need only prove that their services have been active and compliant with all relevant laws and regulations ([PA 23-135](#), § 29, effective July 1, 2023).

Highways and Parkways

Limited Access Highway Speed Limit

A new law gives OSTA more discretion in setting speed limits on limited access highways by eliminating the requirement that the speed limit be 65 mph on suitable multi-lane, limited access highways. Instead, under the new law, OSTA must set a suitable speed limit, up to 65 mph, taking various specified factors into account ([PA 23-135](#), § 6, effective October 1, 2023).

Vehicles Allowed on State Parkways

The legislature made exceptions to the general prohibition on commercial traffic on the Merritt and Wilbur Cross parkways for (1) vehicles weighing 7,500 pounds or less with branding, logos, or advertising on them and (2) commercial motor vehicles used by licensed automobile clubs to

provide roadside assistance to vehicles on the parkways, as long as they adhere to the parkway's length, height, and width requirements ([PA 23-135](#), § 13, effective upon passage).

Local Traffic Authorities (LTA)

Mandatory Annual LTA Training

Starting by January 1, 2024, a new law requires local traffic authorities, or their appointed representatives, to annually complete one LTA training at UConn's Connecticut Training and Technical Assistance Center. UConn must offer this training at least three times per year. The training must cover the authorities' powers and responsibilities, traffic control device installation, and applicable statutes and OSTA regulations ([PA 23-135](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2023).

Traffic Control Signal Revisions

By law, LTAs must get OSTA's approval before their town, city, or borough may install any traffic control signal light. A new law expands this authority, requiring LTAs to get OSTA approval before revising a traffic control signal light ([PA 23-135](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2023).

Motor Vehicle Dealers and Repairers

Asset Protection and Excess Wear and Use Waivers

This session, the legislature passed a new law containing a provision setting requirements for motor vehicle guaranteed asset protection (GAP) waivers and excess wear and use waivers offered by entities other than a bank or credit union (collectively, "debt waivers"). Among other things, it (1) sets the refund amount available (i.e., full, partial, or none) and the terms for each when a debt waiver is cancelled and (2) caps any applicable debt waiver cancellation fee at \$50 ([PA 23-126](#), § 7, effective October 1, 2023, and applicable to debt waivers entered into on or after January 1, 2024).

Dealer and Repairer Certificates of Approval

A new law transfers authority to issue dealer and repairer certificates of approval from the municipality's zoning board of appeals (or if the municipality does not have one, the entity designated by local law) to its zoning enforcement official. (These certificates indicate the municipality has determined the location is suitable and has also been approved by the local building official and fire marshal.) Under the law, the zoning enforcement official must determine whether the proposed location and use complies with the municipality's zoning regulations. Prior law specified no criteria for the zoning board of appeals, or other designated municipal entity, to consider when reviewing these applications ([PA 23-40](#), § 30, effective July 1, 2023).

Dealer Electronic Registration Filing

A new law potentially increases the number of car dealers who must file applications for permanent vehicle registrations electronically. It does so by requiring dealers who provide registration services to file electronically if the DMV commissioner determines a dealer files, on average, at least five applications monthly (rather than at least seven, as under prior law) ([PA 23-40](#), § 23, effective July 1, 2023).

Dealer Plates

By law, rather than requiring car dealers and repairers to register each vehicle they own or temporarily possess, DMV issues them a general distinguishing number and mark and registration certificates and license plates containing the general mark. A new law allows the DMV commissioner to issue these as he deems necessary, rather than based on sales transactions and annual limits specified in law ([PA 23-40](#), § 6, effective January 1, 2024).

Limited Repairer License Eliminated

Beginning January 1, 2024, a new law eliminates the separate license for limited repairers, instead requiring these businesses to get repairer's licenses. The law makes all limited repairer licenses issued before that date valid until they expire and requires DMV to notify limited repairers within 30 days after the law takes effect (i.e., July 12, 2023) about the change and how to get a repairer's license ([PA 23-40](#), §§ 2-5 & 7-13, effective January 1, 2024, except the notice provision is effective upon passage).

Notice of Open Safety Recalls

A new law requires repairers, certain businesses, and emissions inspectors to check whether a vehicle is subject to an open safety recall when they provide services for the vehicle and give the vehicle's owner written notice of any open recall. This requirement applies to (1) licensed repairers and businesses that change a vehicle's oil or tires and tubes, when performing repair work or changing the oil, tires, or tubes and (2) an authorized emissions inspector when doing an inspection. The law specifies that those subject to this requirement and their employees are not liable for any act or omission related to the law's notice requirements ([PA 23-40](#), §§ 24-26, effective October 1, 2023).

Motor Vehicle Violations and Traffic Stops

Car Seat Violation Fine Cancellation

By law, people transporting children must secure them as the law requires (e.g., in a car seat or booster seat), and a first violation of this requirement is an infraction. A new law allows the court, within 14 days after the violation but before imposing the fine, to not impose the fine on a first-time violator if he or she shows proof of acquiring, renting, or buying a car seat or booster seat appropriate for the child he or she transports ([PA 23-40](#), §15, effective October 1, 2023).

Criminal Records Erasure and Motor Vehicle Violations

Existing law provides a process, not yet fully operational, to erase records of most misdemeanor convictions and certain felony convictions after a specified period following the person's most recent conviction. This session, the legislature made various changes to this law, such as specifying that motor vehicle violations are generally covered by the law in the same way as misdemeanors or felonies (i.e., either seven or 10 years after the person's most recent conviction).

The new laws provide an exception for driving under the influence (DUI), by making it ineligible for erasure until 10 years after the person's most recent conviction in all cases (even for a first conviction, which has criminal penalties comparable to a misdemeanor). The new laws also make a DUI conviction ineligible for erasure if the defendant has a second DUI conviction within the following 10 years ([PA 23-134](#), as amended by [PA 23-169](#), § 2 and [PA 23-204](#), § 119, most provisions effective July 1, 2023).

Penalties for Crimes and Violations Related to Driver's Licenses, Registrations, and License Plates

A new law makes various changes to penalties for the unlawful use or transfer or counterfeiting of license plates, registrations, and driver's licenses. Among other things, it increases the maximum penalty for selling a state-issued driver's license to a class D misdemeanor; lowers to an infraction the penalties for using a registration or driver's license issued to someone else or using a registration on a vehicle other than the one for which it was issued; and classifies other violations as either infractions or class D misdemeanors ([PA 23-40](#), §§ 16-18 & 20-22, effective October 1, 2023).

Penalties for Recurring Motor Vehicle License Violations

Existing law allows the court to impose a 90-day minimum prison sentence for the following recurring vehicular violations: (1) motor vehicle operator license violations and (2) operating a motor vehicle without a valid license or registration. A new law limits this only to situations with an

absence of any court-determined mitigating circumstances. Under existing law and unchanged by the new law, a person is subject to larger fines and longer incarceration periods for operating a motor vehicle (1) in violation of a limitation placed by the DMV commissioner or a court order or (2) during the period the person's operator's license or right to operate a motor vehicle in this state is under suspension or revocation for committing specified crimes ([PA 23-47](#), §§ 5 & 6, effective October 1, 2023).

Police Informing Drivers of the Purpose of a Traffic Stop

The Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act requires police officers to record the statutory reason for stopping a vehicle for every stop. A new law further requires them to verbally tell the vehicle's driver the purpose for the stop before it is completed. Police officers under the act are sworn members of an local police department or the State Police; appointed constables who perform criminal law enforcement duties; special police officers appointed under law (e.g., public assistance fraud investigators); or any members of a law enforcement unit who perform police duties ([PA 23-95](#), effective upon passage).

Public Transportation and Transit Oriented Development

Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA)

MRDA is a quasi-public agency authorized to stimulate economic development and transit-oriented development. A new law also makes one of MRDA's purposes to provide financial support and technical assistance to municipalities to develop "housing growth zones." These are areas around a central business district or passenger transit station in which local zoning regulations facilitate substantial new housing development. The new law eliminates the provision in prior law creating mandatory member municipalities and limiting optional membership to larger municipalities. In doing so, the new law allows any municipality outside the Capital Region Development Authority's jurisdiction to work with MRDA.

The new law also appropriates \$600,000 in both FYs 24 and 25 from the General Fund to the Department of Economic and Community Development for MRDA's expenses ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 1, 31 & 194-198, effective dates vary). Additionally, the legislature authorized \$60 million in bonding to capitalize MRDA ([PA 23-205](#), § 92, effective July 1, 2023).

Connecticut Public Transportation Council

A new law renames the Commuter Rail Council as the Connecticut Public Transportation Council and modifies its composition to include bus user representation, and generally broadens its charge to studying and investigating all aspects of commuter rail and public bus service operation,

monitoring their performance, and recommending changes to improve these services' efficiency, equity, and quality. The new law adds a requirement that DOT report certain information monthly and make quarterly presentations to the council. It also requires the council to (1) submit a report on its structure by February 1, 2024, and (2) present its annual report to the Transportation Committee ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 7-9, effective July 1, 2023, except the report provision is effective upon passage).

Modernizing Bus Stops and Shelters

Under a new law, DOT and each transit district must jointly develop plans to modernize and maintain bus stops and shelters. The plans must address, among other things, (1) sidewalks, appropriate curb cuts and ramps, shelter, lighting, and signage that provides real-time service information and (2) ways to ensure the stops and shelters are safe and maintained. The plans are due July 1, 2024 ([PA 23-137](#), § 22, effective upon passage).

Shore Line East Competitive Procurement

A new law authorizes and directs the DOT commissioner to select one or more operators for Shore Line East rail service through a competitive process and enter into a contract with the one or ones selected ([PA 23-204](#), § 65, effective upon passage).

Shore Line East Rail Study

The legislature extended the deadline, from January 1, 2023, to December 1, 2023, for the DOT commissioner to submit the results of a study on the feasibility of various Shore Line East rail line initiatives to the Transportation Committee. These initiatives include (1) extending the line to Rhode Island; (2) establishing a new train station in Groton and Stonington borough; and (3) extending ground transportation systems in the eastern region and providing connection between them and the rail lines ([PA 23-135](#), § 10, effective upon passage).

Study of State Property That Could be Developed as Housing

A new law requires the Office of Policy and Management secretary, in consultation with the administrative services and transportation commissioners, to study whether any state-owned real property (excluding conserved lands) is available and suitable for developing as housing. The study must focus on property that is suited to transit-oriented and affordable housing development and must be submitted to the legislature by January 1, 2024 ([PA 23-204](#), § 200, effective October 1, 2023).

School Buses

GPS Use on School Buses

A new law provides an exception to the distracted driving law for drivers using certain mobile devices for navigation. Existing law generally prohibits school bus drivers from using any mobile electronic device, including with hands-free devices, except in an emergency. But under the new law, drivers may use a mobile electronic device with a video display if it is (1) used as a global positioning system (GPS) or for navigation; (2) securely attached inside the school bus dashboard near the driver; and (3) has been approved by DMV ([PA 23-40](#), § 37, effective July 1, 2023).

School Bus Driver Shortage Study

A new law requires the DMV commissioner to study and make recommendations on policies or initiatives to respond to the nationwide school bus driver shortage. The study must consider, at a minimum, increasing CDL validity from four to five years and streamlining the licensing and renewal processes for a public passenger endorsement to operate a school bus. By February 1, 2024, the commissioner must submit the study's results and recommendations to the Transportation Committee ([PA 23-40](#), § 39, effective upon passage).

School Bus Endorsement Road Tests

A new law requires DMV to prioritize scheduling road tests for people seeking or renewing a public passenger endorsement to drive a school bus ([PA 23-40](#), § 38, effective July 1, 2023).

Traffic Safety

Automated Enforcement

In response to a recent rise in traffic deaths, the legislature passed a law allowing municipalities to use speed and red light cameras if they (1) adopt an ordinance meeting the law's requirements and (2) have a speed and red light camera plan approved by DOT every three years. DOT must develop guidelines and evaluation criteria that ensure cameras are installed only where they are likely to improve traffic safety and that their distribution is equitable.

Under the new law, municipalities must (1) hold a public hearing on camera plans and receive legislative body approval before submitting them to DOT for approval and (2) notify the public about a camera's location through public awareness campaigns, signage, and mobile navigation apps. Municipalities may charge a fine of up to \$50 for a first violation and \$75 for subsequent violations, and any revenue received must be used for transportation infrastructure and mobility improvements or to pay the cameras' operating costs. The new law also addresses ticket issuance

and processing, data privacy, and data reporting, among other provisions ([PA 23-116](#), §§ 10-14 & 16-18, most provisions effective October 1, 2023).

Idaho Stop and Right Turn on Red Study

Under a new law, the DOT commissioner must study (1) allowing bicyclists to treat a stop sign as a yield sign and a red light as a stop sign (known as the “Idaho Stop”) and (2) prohibiting motor vehicle drivers from making a right turn at a red lights. By February 1, 2024, the commissioner must report to the Transportation Committee on the study’s results and recommend whether changes to the law are advisable ([PA 23-116](#), § 1, effective upon passage).

“Move Over” Law Expansion

The state’s “move over” law requires drivers approaching emergency vehicles that are stationary or moving slowly in the shoulder, lane, or breakdown lane to immediately slow down and, if traveling in the adjacent lane, move over one lane unless doing so is unsafe. The legislature expanded this law by (1) requiring drivers approaching emergency vehicles on two-lanes roads (those with two lanes proceeding in opposite directions) to slow down until safely clear of the emergency vehicle (under prior law, it only applied on roads with at least two lanes proceeding in the same direction) and (2) applying the enhanced penalties for violations that cause the death of or injury to an emergency vehicle driver to include emergency vehicle occupants ([PA 23-40](#), § 32, effective October 1, 2023).

Seat Belt Use Promotion

Under a new law, DOT must collaborate with DPH and the Education, Social Services, and Veterans Affairs departments to establish a program promoting seatbelt use among vulnerable communities that DOT identifies as less likely to wear a seat belt. The program may include things like peer-to-peer education and outreach to parents and community organizations ([PA 23-116](#), § 15, effective upon passage).

“Street Takeovers” and Street Racing Law Changes

The legislature incorporated “street takeovers” into the law prohibiting street racing and other related actions and makes various additional changes to this law, including classifying various penalties. Under the new law, a “street takeover” means taking over a portion of a public road or parking area by blocking or impeding regular traffic flow with intent to cause disorder or create a nuisance for other road or parking area users. Operating a motor vehicle on a public road or in a parking area for a street takeover is a class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a class D felony for a subsequent offense.

Among its other changes, the new law adds a prohibition on knowingly inciting or recruiting by any means (including social media) before the event, anyone to participate in the performance of a street race, contest, demonstration of skill or speed, or street takeover. Violations of this prohibition are class B misdemeanors ([PA 23-135](#), § 39, as amended by [PA 23-203](#), § 4, both effective October 1, 2023).

Vision Zero Distinction for Schools

A new law requires DOT, in consultation with the State Board of Education and DMV, to award an exemplary “Vision Zero” program distinction to local and regional boards of education offering programs that give students in grades six to 12 opportunities to learn about the importance of practicing safe driving habits, pedestrian safety skills, and the Vision Zero Council’s mission. DOT must award this distinction upon a school board’s request, which a board may submit by providing DOT with details about its program at a time and in the way DOT prescribes. DOT must also make information about the distinction available on its website ([PA 23-116](#), § 3, effective upon passage).

Wrong-Way Driving Countermeasures

A new law addresses the recent uptick in wrong-way driving accidents and deaths. Among other things, it requires DOT to expand its installation of systems that alert drivers with flashing lights when they are going the wrong way to at least 120 additional exit ramps that the department determines are high-risk for wrong-way driving incidents ([PA 23-51](#), most provisions effective October 1, 2023).

This year’s bond act also authorizes up to \$20 million in special tax obligation (STO) bonds in each of FYs 24 and 25 (\$40 million total) for purchasing, installing, and implementing advanced wrong-way driving technology and other wrong-way driving countermeasures ([PA 23-205](#), §§ 40 & 46, effective July 1, 2023, for FY 24 authorization and July 1, 2024, for FY 25 authorization).

Transportation Planning

Equity Proposals in DOT Capital Plan

A new law requires DOT, when developing its next five-year capital plan, to examine proposals from the Vision Zero Council’s equity subcommittee and consider infrastructure that specifically protects vulnerable highway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities ([PA 23-116](#), § 9, effective upon passage).

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Consolidation Study

Under a new law, the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations must study and make recommendations on consolidating MPOs to increase consistency and efficiency in transportation planning. The study is due to the governor and Transportation Committee by January 1, 2024, and it must, among other things, (1) recommend a minimum population to be represented by an MPO; (2) recommend MPOs that can be consolidated or reconfigured; and (3) identify benefits the state and municipalities may receive from consolidating MPOs and barriers they may encounter while planning and during MPO consolidation ([SA 23-13](#), effective upon passage).

Trucking

Diesel Fuel Tax Rate Freeze

By law, the motor vehicle fuels tax rate for diesel fuel is the sum of two components: the (1) flat rate (29 cents) and (2) variable rate, which is annually calculated by DRS every fiscal year and equals the product of the average wholesale per-gallon price of diesel for the prior year multiplied by the petroleum products gross earnings tax (PGET) rate (8.1%). Due to high diesel prices in 2022, the diesel tax rate was expected to increase significantly from the current rate of 49.2 cents per gallon when DRS recalculated the rate for FY 24. The budget implementer act instead temporarily freezes the rate at the current 49.2 cents for FY 24 ([PA 23-204](#), § 367, effective upon passage).

Fine for Commercial Vehicles on Parkways

A new law (1) increases the fine for driving commercial motor vehicles on state parkways and (2) prohibits commercial vehicle owners and lessees from allowing these vehicles to be driven on parkways. Under prior law, a violation was an infraction. The new law makes violations punishable by a fine of \$500 for a first offense and \$1,000 for any subsequent offense. The fines must be assessed against the (1) commercial vehicle owner, when the owner, owner's agent, or owner's employee was the driver, or (2) commercial vehicle lessee, when the lessee, lessee's agent, or the lessee's employee was the driver ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 14 & 15, effective October 1, 2023).

Highway Use Tax Reporting Frequency

The budget implementer act changes how frequently carriers subject to the highway use tax (i.e., highway use fee or HUF) must file returns and remit payment. Under prior law, carriers had to do so monthly, but the act instead requires that they do so on a quarterly basis beginning with the fourth calendar quarter of 2023. Under the act, returns and payments are due by the last day of the month following a calendar quarter (i.e., January 31, April 30, July 31, and October 31) ([PA 23-204](#), § 366, effective upon passage).

Miscellaneous

Catalytic Converters

A new law directs the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) and DMV commissioners to pursue, individually or jointly, agreements with other states to create a regional approach to addressing catalytic converter theft. Under the act, the agreements may have provisions on information sharing, enforcement coordination, and aligning laws regarding the sale of converters and punishment for their theft. The act also creates a task force to study Connecticut's catalytic converter laws, which must submit a report with its findings and recommendations to the Public Safety and Security Committee by January 1, 2024 ([SA 23-20](#), effective upon passage).

Decibel Level Testing

From October 1, 2023, until October 1, 2024, a new law requires DMV to establish a pilot program at five selected official emission inspection stations to test different methodologies for inspecting the maximum decibel level produced by a motor vehicle during an emission inspection and report back on the program by January 1, 2025. The new law also extended two related deadlines for the DMV commissioner to (1) submit an implementation plan for a statewide decibel level testing program at official emissions inspection stations, from January 1, 2023, to October 1, 2023, and (2) with the advice of DEEP, amend current regulations setting maximum vehicle decibel levels and related testing procedures and submit them to the Regulation Review Committee by October 1, 2024 ([PA 23-135](#), §§ 35-37, various effective dates).

Emergency Contact Database Study

A new law requires the DMV and DESPP commissioners to study the feasibility of establishing and maintaining an emergency contact information database or, alternatively, revising motor vehicle records to add emergency contact information. The database or record revision must allow Connecticut driver's license, permit, and identity card holders to provide information for at least one emergency contact and be accessible to police officers when they need to notify the contact in the case of an accident or emergency. The study is due to the Transportation, Public Safety, and Appropriations committees by February 1, 2024 ([PA 23-40](#), § 19, effective October 1, 2023).

Emergency Lights for Volunteer Ambulance Associations and Constables

A new law allows vehicles operated by volunteer ambulance associations' or companies' active members to use flashing green or flashing blue lights while on the way to or at the scene of an emergency. Under prior law, they were only allowed to use steady green or flashing green lights. The

new law also authorizes the DMV commissioner to issue permits allowing appointed or elected constables to use flashing red lights on a stationary vehicle as a warning signal during traffic directing operations ([PA 23-135](#), § 40, effective October 1, 2023).

Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form Task Force

A new law extends appointment, meeting, and reporting deadlines for a 13-member task force responsible for examining the uniform motor vehicle accident report form and considering changes to it to address issues such as its length and the time investigators need to complete it. Under the act, the task force must submit a report with its findings and recommendations to the Public Safety and Security Committee by January 1, 2024, rather than January 1, 2023, as under prior law ([SA 23-2](#), effective upon passage).

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