House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 410

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7119

House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through REP. BOYD of the 50th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE FIRE PREVENTION CODE, THE STATE FIRE SAFETY CODE, THE REPORTING OF IDENTIFYING INFORMATION, THE STATE BUILDING CODE, ORDERS OF BUILDING INSPECTORS AND LOCAL FIRE MARSHALS AND ELEVATOR INSPECTIONS.

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

Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 29-349 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall have exclusive jurisdiction **[**in the preparation of and may enforce reasonable regulations for**]** over explosives and blasting agents. The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, regarding the safe and convenient storage, transportation and use of explosives and blasting agents used in connection therewith. **[**, which**]** Such regulations shall (1) deal in particular with the quantity and character of explosives and blasting agents to be stored, transported and used, the proximity of such storage

to inhabited dwellings or other occupied buildings, public highways and railroad tracks, the character and construction of suitable magazines for such storage, protective measures to secure such stored explosives and blasting agents and the abatement of any hazard that may arise incident to the storage, transportation or use of such explosives and blasting agents, and (2) be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code.

Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 29-357 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall have exclusive jurisdiction over fireworks and the indoor use of pyrotechnics, sparklers and fountains for special effects. Said commissioner shall adopt **[**reasonable**]** regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, which shall (1) establish a procedure for the granting of permits for supervised displays of fireworks or for the indoor use of pyrotechnics, sparklers and fountains for special effects by municipalities, fair associations, amusement parks, other organizations or groups of individuals or artisans in pursuit of their trade, and (2) be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code. Such permit may be issued upon application to said commissioner and after **[**(1)**]** (A) inspection of the site of such display or use by the local fire marshal to determine compliance with the requirements of such regulations, and **[**(2)**]** (B) approval of the chiefs of the police and fire departments, or, if there is no police or fire department, of the first selectman, of the municipality wherein the display is to be held as is provided in this section. No such display shall be handled or fired by any person until such person has been granted a certificate of competency by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in respect to which a fee of two hundred dollars shall be payable to the State Treasurer when issued and which may be renewed every three years upon payment of a fee of one hundred ninety dollars payable to the State Treasurer, provided such certificate may be suspended or revoked by said commissioner at any time for cause. Such certificate of competency

shall attest to the fact that such operator is competent to fire a display. Such display shall be of such a character and so located, discharged or fired as in the opinion of the chiefs of the police and fire departments or such selectman, after proper inspection, will not be hazardous to property or endanger any person or persons. In an aerial bomb, no salute, report or maroon may be used that is composed of a formula of chlorate of potash, sulphur, black needle antimony and dark aluminum. Formulas that may be used in a salute, report or maroon are as follows: **[**(A)**]** (i) Perchlorate of potash, black needle antimony and dark aluminum, and **[**(B)**]** (ii) perchlorate of potash, dark aluminum and sulphur. No high explosive such as dynamite, fulminate of mercury or other stimulator for detonating shall be used in any aerial bomb or other pyrotechnics. Application for permits shall be made in writing at least fifteen days prior to the date of display, on such notice as the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection by regulation prescribes, on forms furnished by the commissioner, and a fee of one hundred dollars shall be payable to the State Treasurer with each such application. After such permit has been granted, sales, possession, use and distribution of fireworks for such display shall be lawful for that purpose only. No permit granted hereunder shall be transferable. Any permit issued under the provisions of this section may be suspended or revoked by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection or the local fire marshal for violation by the permittee of any provision of the general statutes, any regulation or any ordinance relating to fireworks.

Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 29-357a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall have exclusive jurisdiction over supervised displays of special effects produced by pyrotechnics or flame producing devices. Said commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, which shall (1) establish a procedure for the granting of permits for supervised displays of special effects produced

by pyrotechnics, including sparklers and fountains, or flame producing devices by municipalities, fair associations, amusement parks, other organizations or groups of individuals or artisans in pursuit of their trade, **[**. Such regulations shall**]** (2) include provisions for determining the competency of persons intending to discharge or fire such special effects, and (3) be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code. Such regulations shall not apply to ceremonial activities that include minimal use of pyrotechnics or flame producing devices.

Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 29-367 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall have exclusive jurisdiction over rockets propelled by rocket motors. Said commissioner shall adopt **[**, and may amend, reasonable**]** regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, concerning the safe design, construction, manufacture, testing, certification, storage, sale, shipping, operation and launching of rockets propelled by rocket motors, including, but not limited to, solid, liquid and cold propellant, hybrid, steam or pressurized liquid rocket motors. Such regulations shall (1) include provisions for the prevention of injury to life and damage to property and protection of hazards incident to the design, construction, manufacture, testing, storage, sale, shipping, operation and launching of such rockets, and (2) be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code. The commissioner shall enforce such regulations.

Sec. 5. Subsections (b) and (c) of section 29-291a of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) There is established an advisory committee consisting of **[**nine**]** eleven persons appointed by the State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal shall appoint (1) two members selected from a list of individuals submitted by the Codes and Standards Committee from the membership of said committee, **[**and**]** (2) seven members representing local fire marshals, deputy fire marshals and fire inspectors selected

from a list of individuals submitted by the Connecticut Fire Marshals Association, and (3) two members selected from a list of individuals submitted by the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit of the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

(c) The State Fire Marshal or the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, as appropriate, may issue official interpretations of the State Fire Prevention Code **[**, including interpretations of the applicability of any provision of the code,**]** upon the request of any person. The State Fire Marshal and the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall jointly compile and index each interpretation and shall publish such interpretations at periodic intervals not exceeding four months.

Sec. 6. Section 47a-6a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(a) As used in this section: **[**,**]**

(1) **[**"address"**]** "Address" means a location as described by the full street number, if any, the street name, the city or town, and the state, and not a mailing address such as a post office box; **[**,**]**

(2) **[**"dwelling unit"**]** "Dwelling unit" means any house or building, or portion thereof, which is rented, leased or hired out to be occupied, or is arranged or designed to be occupied, or is occupied, as the home or residence of one or more persons, living independently of each other, and doing their cooking upon the premises, and having a common right in the halls, stairways or yards; **[**,**]**

(3) **[**"agent in charge"**]** "Agent in charge" or "agent" means **[**one**]** an individual who manages real **[**estate**]** property, including, but not limited to, the collection of rents and supervision and maintenance of such property, including for the purpose of compliance with state law and local codes;

(4) **[**"controlling participant"**]** "Controlling participant" means an

individual [that] who exercises day-to-day financial or operational control; [, and]

(5) ["project-based housing provider"] "Project-based housing provider" means a property owner who contracts with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide housing to tenants under the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program, 42 USC 1437f(o);

(6) "Identifying information" means proof of an individual's name, date of birth, current residential address, motor vehicle operator's license number or other identification number issued by any government agency or entity;

(7) "Nonresident owner" means an individual, corporation, partnership, trust or other legally recognized entity who does not reside at rental real property and who is (A) an owner, as defined in section 47a-1, of such real property, or (B) the controlling participant of the entity that owns such real property; and

(8) "Population" means the number of persons according to the most recent federal decennial census.

(b) Any municipality may, and any municipality with a population of twenty-five thousand or more shall, require the nonresident owner or project-based housing provider of occupied or vacant rental real property to report to the tax assessor, or other municipal [office] officer designated by the municipality, the current residential address of the nonresident owner or project-based housing provider of such property, if the nonresident owner or project-based housing provider is an individual, or the current residential address of the agent in charge of the building, if the nonresident owner or project-based housing provider is a corporation, partnership, trust or other legally recognized entity owning rental real property in the state. If the nonresident [owners] owner or project-based housing [providers are] provider is a corporation, partnership, trust or other legally recognized entity owning rental real property in the state, such report shall also include

identifying information and the current residential address of each controlling participant associated with the property. If such residential address changes, notice of the new residential address shall be provided by such nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent in charge of the building to the office of the tax assessor or other designated municipal office not more than twenty-one days after the date that the address change occurred. If the nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent fails to file an address under this section, the address to which the municipality mails property tax bills for the rental real property shall be deemed to be the nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent's current address. Such address may be used for compliance with the provisions of subsection **[**(c)**]** (d) of this section.

(c) In addition to the residential address required pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, any municipality with a population of twenty-five thousand or more shall require the nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent in charge, as applicable, to report to the tax assessor, or other municipal officer designated by the municipality, accurate identifying information concerning such nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent in charge.

[(c)**]** (d) Service of state or municipal orders relating to maintenance of such rental real property or compliance with state law and local codes concerning such real property directed to the nonresident owner, project-based housing provider or agent at the address on file, or deemed to be on file in accordance with the provisions of this section, shall be sufficient proof of service of notice of such orders in any subsequent criminal or civil action against the owner, project-based housing provider or agent for failure to comply with the orders. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to limit the validity of any other means of giving notice of such orders that may be used by the state or **[**such**]** a municipality.

[(d)**]** (e) Any person who violates any provision of this section shall have committed **[**an infraction**]** a violation and shall be fined not less

than two hundred fifty dollars nor more than one thousand dollars.

[(e)**]** (f) Any report provided to a tax assessor pursuant to subsection (b) or (c) of this section **[**on or after October 1, 2023,**]** shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed under chapter 14.

Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 47a-7 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(a) A landlord shall: (1) Comply with the requirements of chapter 368o and all applicable building and housing codes materially affecting health and safety of both the state or any political subdivision thereof; (2) make all repairs and do whatever is necessary to put and keep the premises in a fit and habitable condition, except where the premises are intentionally rendered unfit or uninhabitable by the tenant, a member of **[**his**]** such tenant's family or other person on the premises with **[**his**]** such tenant's consent, in which case such duty shall be the responsibility of **[**the**]** such tenant; (3) keep all common areas of the premises in a clean and safe condition; (4) maintain in good and safe working order and condition all electrical, plumbing, sanitary, heating, ventilating and other facilities and appliances and elevators, supplied or required to be supplied by him; (5) provide and maintain appropriate receptacles for the removal of ashes, garbage, rubbish and other waste incidental to the occupancy of the dwelling unit and arrange for their removal; **[**and**]** (6) supply running water and reasonable amounts of hot water at all times and reasonable heat except if the building which includes the dwelling unit is not required by law to be equipped for that purpose or if the dwelling unit is so constructed that heat or hot water is generated by an installation within the exclusive control of the tenant or supplied by a direct public utility connection; and (7) comply with the requirements of section 47a-6a, as amended by this act.

Sec. 8. Section 29-254a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

Any person who violates any provision of the State Building Code

shall, (1) for the first offense, be fined not less than two hundred dollars **[**or**]** nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both, and (2) for any subsequent offense, be fined not less than five hundred dollars nor more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both.

Sec. 9. Subsection (e) of section 29-291c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(e) In addition to the fine prescribed in subsection (a) of this section, any person who violates any provision of the State Fire Prevention Code or Fire Safety Code shall, (1) for a first offense, be fined not less than two hundred dollars **[**or**]** nor more than one thousand dollars or be imprisoned not more than six months, or both, and (2) for any subsequent offense, be fined not less than five hundred dollars nor more than two thousand dollars or be imprisoned not more than six months, or both.

Sec. 10. Section 29-394 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

Any person who, by himself or his agent, fails to comply with the written order of a building inspector for the provision of additional exit facilities in a building, the repair or alteration of a building or the removal of a building or any portion thereof, shall, (1) for a first offense, be fined not less than two hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both, and (2) for any subsequent offense, be fined not less than five hundred dollars nor more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both.

Sec. 11. Subsection (a) of section 29-306 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(a) (1) When the local fire marshal ascertains that there exists in any

building, or upon any premises, [(1)] (A) combustible or explosive matter, dangerous accumulation of rubbish or any flammable material especially liable to fire, that is so situated as to endanger life or property, [(2)] (B) obstructions or conditions that present a fire hazard to the occupants or interfere with their egress in case of fire, or [(3)] (C) a condition in violation of the statutes relating to fire prevention or safety, or any regulation made pursuant thereto, the remedy of which requires construction or a change in structure, the local fire marshal shall order such materials to be immediately removed or the conditions remedied by the owner or occupant of such building or premises. Any such removal or remedy shall be in conformance with all building codes, ordinances, rules and regulations of the municipality involved.

(2) Any person, [firm or] corporation, partnership, trust or other legal entity which violates any provision of this subsection shall, for a first offense, be fined [not more than one] two hundred fifty dollars [or be imprisoned not more than three months, or both, and, in addition, may be fined fifty dollars a day for each day's continuance of each violation, to be recovered in a proper action in the name of the state] and, for a subsequent offense, be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

Sec. 12. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) The State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee shall, jointly, with the approval of the Commissioner of Administrative Services, include in the amendments to the State Building Code next adopted after October 1, 2025, provisions that:

(1) Allow a residential building consisting of not more than six stories and containing less than twenty-five dwelling units to install and maintain a passenger elevator that is of sufficient size to accommodate two persons, one of whom uses a wheelchair; and

(2) Define the terms "high tunnels" and "hoop homes" and classify such high tunnels and hoop homes as temporary agricultural structures.

Sec. 13. Section 29-253 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

(a) [The] Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the State Building Code, including any amendment to said code adopted by the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee, shall be the building code for all towns, cities and boroughs.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2026, the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee shall jointly develop and promulgate a model ordinance that establishes a set of energy-efficiency requirements with respect to buildings or building projects that are more stringent than the energy-efficiency requirements of the State Building Code. Said inspector and committee shall consider input from the public and interested parties in the process of developing such model ordinance. A town, city or borough may, by ordinance, adopt such model ordinance and the adopted ordinance shall supersede the energy-efficiency requirements of the State Building Code. The remaining provisions of the State Building Code shall apply to such town, city or borough.

[(b)] (c) Nothing in this section shall prevent any town, city or borough from adopting an ordinance governing the demolition of buildings deemed to be unsafe. As used in this subsection, "unsafe building" means a building that constitutes a fire hazard or is otherwise dangerous to human life or the public welfare.

Sec. 14. Section 29-195 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

[Each] (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, each elevator or escalator shall be thoroughly inspected by a department elevator inspector at least once each eighteen months, except elevators located in private residences shall be inspected upon the request of the owner. More frequent inspections of any elevator or escalator shall be made if the condition thereof indicates that additional inspections are necessary or desirable.

(b) Each elevator at a privately owned multifamily housing project, as defined in section 29-453a, shall be thoroughly inspected by a

department elevator inspector at least once each twelve months. For each such inspection, the department elevator inspector shall submit a report to the State Building Inspector that describes the status of each elevator at such housing project, describes the status of any elevator repair and estimates the duration of time during which any inoperable elevator at such housing project is expected to remain inoperable.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*from passage*	29-349(a)
Sec. 2	*from passage*	29-357(b)
Sec. 3	*from passage*	29-357a(a)
Sec. 4	*from passage*	29-367(a)
Sec. 5	*from passage*	29-291a(b) and (c)
Sec. 6	*October 1, 2025*	47a-6a
Sec. 7	*October 1, 2025*	47a-7(a)
Sec. 8	*October 1, 2025*	29-254a
Sec. 9	*October 1, 2025*	29-291c(e)
Sec. 10	*October 1, 2025*	29-394
Sec. 11	*October 1, 2025*	29-306(a)
Sec. 12	*October 1, 2025*	New section
Sec. 13	*October 1, 2025*	29-253
Sec. 14	*October 1, 2025*	29-195

PS *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 $	FY 27 $
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection	GF - Cost	88,500	86,000
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal
Judicial Dept. (Probation)	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal
Department of Administrative Services	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below
Department of Administrative Services	GF - Cost	205,000	205,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits[1]	GF - Cost	118,466	118,466

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 $	FY 27 $
Various Municipalities	Potential Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below

Explanation

Sections 1 through 5 requires Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's (DESPP) regulations on explosives, fireworks, pyrotechnics, and rockets to be consistent with the State Fire Prevention

[1]The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

Code and allows the DESPP to issue official interpretations of the State Fire Prevention Code. This results in a cost of $88,500 in FY 26 and $86,000 in FY 27 to DESPP and $35,011 in FY 26 and FY 27 to the State Comptroller – Fringe Benefits. To redraft and update these regulations, DESPP will need to hire a staff attorney with a starting salary of $86,000. There is also a one-time equipment cost of $2,500 in FY 26.

Sections 6 and 7 require certain owners and providers of rental property to provide identifying information to the town in municipalities with a population of 25,000 or more. Failure to provide this information results in a fine of $250 to $1,000. This results in a potential revenue gain to municipalities with a population of 25,000 or more beginning in FY 26 to the extent that fines are collected.[2]

Sections 8, 9 and 10 increase penalties for repeat violations of certain building codes. This results in a potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines.[3]

Section 11 creates a new class A misdemeanor for repeat violators of certain fire hazard laws, which results in a potential cost to the Judicial Department for probation and a potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines. On average, the marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than $600[4] each year for adults.

Section 13 results in a potential cost to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to the extent the model ordinance developed by the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee differs from current ordinances and is adopted by municipalities. Potential costs include hiring additional staff with the

[2] According to the Department of Public Health, 44 towns had a population of 25,000 or greater in 2023.

[3] In FY 20 – 24, a total of 240 charges were recorded and $5,000 in fines was collected under CG§ 29-306, 29-254a, 29-291c, and 29-394. No charges were recorded, nor revenue collected under 47a-6a.

[4] Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant. This does not include a cost for additional supervision by a probation officer unless a new offense is anticipated to result in enough additional offenders to require additional probation officers.

necessary expertise to develop, modify, and interpret the model ordinance and administrative staff to provide training, respond to questions, and provide other administrative support related to the model ordinance.

Section 14 results in a cost of $205,000 to DAS in FY 26 and FY 27 for salary expenses and $83,456 in FY 26 and FY 27 to the State Comptroller – Fringe Benefits to hire two elevator inspectors to inspect each elevator in privately owned multifamily projects in the state every twelve months.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the actual number of violations and inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7119

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE FIRE PREVENTION CODE, THE STATE FIRE SAFETY CODE, THE REPORTING OF IDENTIFYING INFORMATION, THE STATE BUILDING CODE, ORDERS OF BUILDING INSPECTORS AND LOCAL FIRE MARSHALS AND ELEVATOR INSPECTIONS.

SUMMARY

This bill makes several changes to laws regarding the state building and fire codes and responsibilities for nonresident owners and landlords. Principally, the bill:

1. requires Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) regulations on explosives, fireworks, pyrotechnics, and rockets to be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code (§§ 1-4);

2. increases the membership of the state fire marshal's advisory committee to include two individuals suggested by DESPP's Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (§ 5);

3. allows the DESPP commissioner to issue official interpretations of the State Fire Prevention Code, instead of only the state fire marshal being able to do so (§ 5);

4. requires nonresident owners and certain federally contracted providers of rental real property in municipalities with 25,000 or more people to provide their identifying information to the town, and landlords to comply (§§ 6 & 7);

5. increases potential fines for subsequent violations of (a) the State Building Code, State Fire Prevention Code, or Fire Safety Code or (b) ignoring a building inspector's written order (§§ 8-10);

6. modifies penalties for people who create fire hazards that endanger life or property (§ 11);

7. requires the State Building Code to be amended to (a) specifically allow the installation of elevators of a certain size in residential buildings with six or fewer floors and less than 25 residential units and (b) define certain terms related to temporary agricultural structures (§ 12);

8. tasks the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee (CSC) with creating and sharing a model ordinance with stricter energy-efficiency requirements than the State Building Code that supersede the code's comparable requirements for municipalities that adopt the ordinance (§ 13); and

9. requires age-restricted privately owned multifamily housing projects to have their elevators inspected at least once every 12 months by a Department of Administrative Services (DAS) elevator inspector (§ 14).

The bill also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, except the provisions on DESPP's regulations and the state fire marshal are effective upon passage.

§§ 1-4 — DESPP'S REGULATIONS FOR EXPLOSIVES, FIREWORKS, PYROTECHNICS, AND ROCKETS

Existing law gives the DESPP commissioner regulatory authority over the use of explosives and blasting agents; fireworks; indoor pyrotechnics, sparklers, and fountains for special effects; supervised special effect displays with pyrotechnics or flame producing devices; and rockets propelled by rocket motors.

The bill requires that the regulations concerning the use of these products be consistent with the State Fire Prevention Code. It also specifies that the commissioner has exclusive jurisdiction over them all,

instead of only explosives and blasting agents as under current law.

§ 5 — STATE FIRE MARSHAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The bill expands the membership of the state fire marshal's advisory committee from 9 to 11 members by including two individuals from a list DESPP's Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit submits to the state fire marshal. By law, this committee coordinates with the state fire marshal on the State Fire Prevention Code's adoption and administration.

Currently, the committee consists of two individuals from a list of Codes and Standards Committee members that committee submits and the other seven represent local fire marshals, deputy fire marshals, and fire inspectors, selected from a list provided by the Connecticut Fire Marshals Association. By law, unchanged by the bill, the state fire marshal appoints the members to the committee.

§ 5 — STATE FIRE PREVENTION CODE INTERPRETATION

The bill allows the DESPP commissioner, instead of only the state fire marshal, to issue official interpretations of the State Fire Prevention Code, upon request.

Correspondingly, the bill requires the commissioner to jointly compile, index, and publish the code interpretations with the state fire marshal, instead of the fire marshal doing this on her own. By law, these interpretations must be published at least quarterly.

§§ 6 & 7 — NONRESIDENT OWNERS OR LANDLORDS OF RENTAL REAL PROPERTY

The bill requires municipalities with a population of at least 25,000 based on the most recent decennial census ("covered municipalities," for this bill analysis) to require certain residential property owners and landlords to report specified information to the municipality, such as their current residential address. Existing law allows, but does not require, all municipalities to do so.

The bill also requires the reports to covered municipalities to include

other identifying information for the owner, landlord, or agent in charge of the building. Under current law, this requirement applies only to certain individuals associated with a business entity that owns rental property.

Additionally, under the bill, violators commit a violation punishable by a $250 to $1,000 fine, rather than an infraction.

The bill adds complying with the modified reporting requirement to the law's list of landlord responsibilities. Under existing law, (1) rental agreements cannot allow landlords to receive rent payments for any period during which the landlord is noncompliant with these responsibilities (CGS § 47a-4a) and (2) a tenant who claims that the landlord failed to perform his or her legal duties may generally bring an action in Superior Court to seek relief (CGS § 47a-14h).

Municipal Landlord Identification Requirements

Current law allows municipalities to require nonresident property owners and landlords renting to federal Housing Choice Voucher program participants (also known as "project-based housing providers" or PBHPs) to report certain information to the tax assessor or another designated municipal officer. This information must include the following:

1. the owner's or PBHP's current residential address, if they are an individual, or

2. the current residential address of (a) the agent in charge of the building and (b) each person who exercises day-to-day financial or operational control of the property (the "controlling participants"), if the owner or PBHP is a business entity that owns rental property in the state.

For business entities, this report must also include identifying information for the controlling participants.

Identifying Information and Nonresident Owners

Current law does not define "identifying information," but under the bill it is proof of a person's name, birth date, current residential address, and driver's license number or other government-issued identification number. The bill also defines nonresident owner, which is a person (or entity) who does not live at the residential rental property and is either (1) an owner or (2) a controlling participant.

Covered Municipalities

Under the bill, covered municipalities must require nonresident property owners and PBHPs to report the information described above to them. For these municipalities, the bill also expands the reporting requirement to include accurate identifying information for the nonresident owner, PBHP, or agent in charge. Under current law, reports provided to a tax assessor on or after October 1, 2023, are exempt from disclosure under the state's Freedom of Information Act. The bill makes these reports exempt regardless of when they were provided.

Violations of Reporting Requirement

Under the bill, a person who violates the reporting requirement discussed above commits a violation punishable by a $250 to $1,000 fine, rather than an infraction as under current law. (Infractions are punishable by fines, usually set by Superior Court judges, of between $35 and $90, plus a $20 or $35 surcharge and an additional fee based on the amount of the fine.)

Existing law also allows municipalities to adopt an ordinance setting a civil penalty for violations of the reporting requirement. The penalty cannot exceed $500 for a first violation and $1,000 for subsequent violations. Anyone who is assessed a civil penalty may appeal to the Superior Court (CGS § 47a-6b).

§§ 8-11 — BUILDING CODE AND FIRE-RELATED VIOLATIONS

Increased Fines for Repeat Code or Building Inspector Order Violations

Under current law, violations of the State Building Code, State Fire Prevention Code, and Fire Safety Code are punishable by a fine of $200

to $1,000, up to six months in prison, or both. The same penalties apply for violating a building inspector's written order to provide exit facilities or to repair, alter, or remove part of a building.

The bill increases the possible fine for subsequent violations to $500 to $2,000, while keeping the same maximum prison term.

As under existing law, fire code-related violations may also be subject to a fine of $50 per day for each day the violation continues.

Increased Penalties for Fire Hazards

Under current law, anyone who (1) stores combustible materials in a way that poses an increased fire risk to people or property; (2) creates an environment that poses a fire risk or would interfere with people exiting a premise in the case of a fire; or (3) violates any laws on fire prevention or safety can be fined up to $100, imprisoned up to three months, or both, and fined an additional $50 for each day the conditions remain at the premises.

Under the bill, first-time violators can be fined up to $250 but are no longer subject to possible daily fines or imprisonment. Repeat violators are guilty of a class A misdemeanor, which is punishable by a fine up to $2,000 and up to 364 days in prison.

§§ 12 & 14 — RESIDENTIAL ELEVATORS

The bill requires the next adopted version of the State Building Code to explicitly permit the installation of elevators large enough for two people, including one in a wheelchair, in residential buildings with (1) six or fewer floors and (2) less than 25 residential units. The bill also requires the next code revision to define "high tunnels" and "hoop homes" and classify them as temporary agricultural structures.

Specifically, the state building inspector and CSC, with the DAS commissioner's approval, must include these amendments in the next code update.

Inspections (§ 14)

The bill requires that all privately owned multifamily housing projects must have their elevators inspected at least once every 12 months by a DAS elevator inspector. Following each inspection, the inspector must submit a report to the state building inspector that describes the status of (1) each elevator on the premises and (2) any ongoing elevator repair, including how long any elevator is expected to remain inoperable.

A privately owned multifamily housing project is a real property that is at least 15 stories tall, contains age restricted dwelling units, and is subject to a mortgage ensured under the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. § 1701).

§ 13 — MODEL ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE

The bill requires the state building inspector and the CSC, by July 1, 2026, to create and share a model ordinance with stricter energy-efficiency requirements than the State Building Code. In developing the ordinance, the inspector and committee must consider input from the public and those with interest in the matter. Municipalities can adopt the ordinance, and if they do, it supersedes the energy efficiency requirements in the building code.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)