House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 523

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7186

House of Representatives, April 3, 2025

The Committee on Government Oversight reported through REP. DATHAN of the 142nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM CONCERNING THE USE OF BODY SCANNING MACHINES IN CERTAIN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND REQUIRING REPORTS CONCERNING STRIP AND CAVITY SEARCHES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

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

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than December 31, 2025, the Commissioner of Correction shall (1) purchase at least two body scanning machines, and install at least one at the York Correctional Institution and at least one at the John R. Manson Youth Institution, Cheshire, and (2) establish a pilot program and directives that prioritize using such machines to inspect persons who are incarcerated in said institutions in lieu of correctional personnel conducting strip searches or cavity searches when such searches are typically performed, according to the existing directives. As part of such pilot program, the commissioner shall train correctional personnel in the use of such machines and collect data concerning such use.

(b) Not later than February 15, 2027, the Commissioner of Correction shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary and government oversight. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) the total number of body scans performed by the body scanning machines during the 2026 calendar year based upon the reason for the scan, by month, (2) the number of strip or cavity searches conducted during the 2026 calendar year, by month, (3) the total number of such body scans that discovered contraband material, by month, (4) the types and material of contraband discovered during such period, differentiated by the type of search or scan performed, (5) the use of any additional screening subsequent to the implementation of the body scanning machines, including a strip search, placement on a dry cell watch, urinalysis or medical assessment to confirm contraband was not present, and (6) any recommendations for legislative changes based upon the results of such pilot program.

Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than February 15, 2026, the Commissioner of Correction shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary and government oversight. Such report shall include an evaluation of current directives and procedures for strip searches and cavity searches in correctional institutions in the state compared to other states in the northeastern region and federal policies, based on the type of institution, and highlight any differences in such directives and procedures.

Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) For the purposes described in subsection (b) of this section, the State Bond Commission shall have the power from time to time to authorize the issuance of bonds of the state in one or more series and in principal amounts not exceeding in the aggregate five hundred thousand dollars.

(b) The proceeds of the sale of such bonds, to the extent of the amount

stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the Department of Correction for the purpose of purchasing two body scanning machines, installing such machines and training corrections staff on their use in accordance with the provisions of section 1 of this act.

(c) All provisions of section 3-20 of the general statutes, or the exercise of any right or power granted thereby, that are not inconsistent with the provisions of this section are hereby adopted and shall apply to all bonds authorized by the State Bond Commission pursuant to this section. Temporary notes in anticipation of the money to be derived from the sale of any such bonds so authorized may be issued in accordance with section 3-20 of the general statutes and from time to time renewed. Such bonds shall mature at such time or times not exceeding twenty years from their respective dates as may be provided in or pursuant to the resolution or resolutions of the State Bond Commission authorizing such bonds. None of such bonds shall be authorized except upon a finding by the State Bond Commission that there has been filed with it a request for such authorization that is signed by or on behalf of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and states such terms and conditions as said commission, in its discretion, may require. Such bonds issued pursuant to this section shall be general obligations of the state and the full faith and credit of the state of Connecticut are pledged for the payment of the principal of and interest on such bonds as the same become due, and accordingly and as part of the contract of the state with the holders of such bonds, appropriation of all amounts necessary for punctual payment of such principal and interest is hereby made, and the State Treasurer shall pay such principal and interest as the same become due.

Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On or before January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Correction shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary and government oversight, concerning the conduct of strip and cavity searches in such facilities. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) The

number of strip searches and cavity searches of persons who are incarcerated that have occurred during the prior calendar year, disaggregated by correctional facility, (2) whether there have been any lawsuits filed concerning such strip searches or cavity searches during the year immediately preceding such report and, if so, the status or outcome of such lawsuits, and (3) a copy of the current policy concerning the conduct of such searches, including any training requirements for correctional officers concerning the conduct of such searches.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*from passage*	New section
Sec. 2	*from passage*	New section
Sec. 3	*July 1, 2025*	New section
Sec. 4	*from passage*	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:
In Section 1(a)(1) and (b)(5), "body scanner" was changed to "body scanning" for consistency, and in Section 4(1), "broken out" was changed to "disaggregated" for clarity.

GOS *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 $
Treasurer, Debt Serv.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Correction, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	None

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner to purchase at least two body scanning machines at certain correctional institutions, resulting in the following fiscal impacts.

The bill authorizes $500,000 in General Obligation bonds for costs related to the purchasing, installing, and training of body scanning machines. To the extent bonds are fully allocated when available, total debt repayment is anticipated to be approximately $715,000 over the 20-year duration of the bonds, with the earliest annual payment of up to $25,000 possible in FY 27.

There may be a one-time potential cost to DOC in FY 26 to the extent the department needs to modify its facilities prior to installation of the body scanners.

The bill also requires DOC to submit several reports related to the body scanning machines, which does not result in a fiscal impact because the department has the expertise and capacity to meet these requirements.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the terms of any bonds issued.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7186

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM CONCERNING THE USE OF BODY SCANNING MACHINES IN CERTAIN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND REQUIRING REPORTS CONCERNING STRIP AND CAVITY SEARCHES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

SUMMARY

This bill (1) requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner, by December 31, 2025, to buy at least two body scanner machines for use in a pilot program on inspecting inmates at certain correctional institutions and (2) authorizes up to $500,000 in state general obligation bonding to buy the machines, install them, and train staff on how to use them. The bonds are subject to standard statutory bond issuance procedures and repayment requirements.

The bill establishes an annual reporting requirement for the commissioner on strip and cavity searches of inmates in correctional facilities. The report must include (1) how many searches occurred in the prior year in each facility; (2) if there were any lawsuits filed about the searches in the year immediately before the report, with the status or outcome of each; and (3) a copy of the current policy for doing these searches, including any training requirements for correctional officers. The first report is due by January 1, 2026, to the Government Oversight and Judiciary committees.

Lastly, the bill requires the DOC commissioner to submit a report by February 15, 2026, to the Government Oversight and Judiciary committees that evaluates current directives and procedures for strip and cavity searches in the state's correctional institutions. The evaluation must compare the directives and procedures to those of other northeastern states and federal policies, based on institution type, and

highlight any differences.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the bonding provision is effective July 1, 2025.

BODY SCANNING MACHINE PILOT PROGRAM

The bill requires the DOC commissioner to buy at least two body scanner machines by the end of 2025 and install at least one each at the York Correctional Institution and the John R. Mason Youth Institution in Cheshire. He must also establish a pilot program on using the machines to inspect inmates.

For the pilot program, the bill requires the commissioner to create directives that prioritize using machine scans instead of correctional personnel doing strip or cavity searches when those searches are usually done under existing directives. The commissioner must train personnel on using the machines and collecting data on their use.

The bill requires the commissioner to submit a report on the use of the body scans by February 15, 2027, to the Government Oversight and Judiciary committees. The report must include the following information:

1. how many scans (a) the machines performed in 2026, by month and reason for the scan and (b) discovered contraband, by month;

2. how many strip or cavity searches occurred in 2026, by month;

3. contraband types and material found that year, by the type of search or scan used;

4. use of additional screening after implementing the body scanners, including strip search, placement on a dry cell watch, urinalysis, or medical assessment to confirm there was no contraband; and

5. any recommendations for legislative changes.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Oversight Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)