

Planning and Development Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1342

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL AGENCIES.

Vote Date: 3/7/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/24/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Planning & Developing Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

It gives individuals, who are aggrieved by decisions made by specific boards, commissions, councils, committees, or other agencies, the right to appeal such decisions to the State Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. But the appeal must be filed within 30 days after the written decision is mailed. The purpose of this bill is to ensure access to justice by providing individuals with an opportunity to have their cases reviewed by a higher, potentially more neutral authority. It promotes accountability by creating a clear procedure for appealing decisions, ensuring that agencies or entities are held responsible for their actions.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Anonymous Anonymous](#), [Jerry Cincotta](#), [Debbie Esposito](#) and [Melanie Main](#): All expressed concern about a legislative practice where bills, often with only minor wording changes, are altered in their entirety on the floor of the House and Senate after the public hearing process has ended. They criticize this to bypass public scrutiny and avoid controversial discussions about important issues like housing, land use, and property rights. The practice, referred to as passing "dummy bills," is seen as opaque and undemocratic, as it allows significant changes to be made without proper review or consideration of potential unintended consequences. They urge for greater transparency and public involvement in the legislative process.

[Thomas C](#): He expresses concern about "placeholder" bills, which are scheduled for public hearings despite having no content. He believes this practice fuels public fear that the government no longer represents its citizens and suggests corruption among elected officials.

[Kirk Carr](#): " On their face, these bills appear to make technical and procedural adjustments to existing statutes. However, given past legislative precedent, I urge the Committee to exercise extreme vigilance because these bills are highly susceptible to last-minute hijacking through "dummy," "rat," "parasite," and "camouflage" amendments —a tactic that has been used in recent years to circumvent public scrutiny and legislative transparency. Each of these bills makes broad but seemingly minor technical adjustments to municipal governance, local government authority, civil service, and planning regulations. These topics provide the perfect framework for major, last-minute amendments that could: -Override local zoning and planning authority (as seen with prior legislative attempts like Fair Share). - Expand state control over municipal functions under the guise of administrative changes. - Impose new regulatory burdens on towns and cities that were never intended by the original bill sponsors." For bill 1342, "A simple deadline adjustment could be leveraged to expand state oversight over local decision-making, curbing municipal autonomy."

[David Fong](#): He chose to live in Greenwich for its schools and lifestyle, preferring a less congested environment. They believe further development would strain the town's infrastructure and resources and argue that decisions about the area should be made locally, not by officials in Hartford.

[John Hair](#): He argues that the public and legislators deserve to know the details of a bill from the start. They criticize "dummy" bills, which have vague titles and lack specific information, as a tactic used by some legislators to insert controversial language later, hoping it will avoid scrutiny.

[Anne Jerge](#): "Dummy bills that were raised bills that lack any substance or actual language of what will eventually be raised on the floor in front of the entire legislature and voted... Tell me what are our elected officials trying to hide? Why did you vote for this? These two dummy bills completely circumvented the proper committee process and a real public hearing. Democracy is dying in darkness; we are not stupid. YOU TOOK AN OATH TO SERVE ALL THE PEOPLE, THIS SERVES NO ONE BUT YOU. STOP!!!!!"

[Marcella Kurowski](#): She opposes because it's a placeholder bill and is an overreach of state government.

[Louise Pascal](#): "One-size-fits-all mandates do not work."

[Quentin Pearson](#): " I am confounded by the "Dummy" Bill process. How does one know what is being proposed as a law if there's nothing in it? Very sneaky! Legislative phenalgin in my book! Please restore our confidence in your legislative process by allowing full disclosure!"

[Dwight Rollins](#): " Stop hiding your legislative agenda behind dummy bills. These two bills should be rewritten for transparency."

[Maria Weingarten, Co-Founder, CT169Strong](#)

[Kim Yannon](#): " These are dummy bills and they represent an attempt to do an end run around the electorate. I oppose the use of this tactic."

The following individual has submitted written testimony that includes graphs and charts:

[Maria Weingarten, Co-Founder, CT169Strong](#)

GENERAL COMMENTS:

[Jim Heckman, General Council, CT Realtors](#): " The Association understands these may be used as vehicles relating to housing and development legislation this session. The four bills do not have detailed language, and we are therefore UNABLE TO TAKE A POSITION on the proposals at this time."

[Francis Pickering, Executive Director, WestCOG](#): He states that this bill should consider amending the following language to include Prohibiting compliance with unconstitutional federal orders, Strengthening protections against federal civil rights rollbacks, Extending the appeal period for cases involving federal directives and Strengthening whistleblower protections for public employees.

Reported by: Austin Adil

Date: 3/24/25