House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 406

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7074

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 UNIFORM STATE-WIDE POLICE PURSUIT POLICY.

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

Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 14-283a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(b) (1) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in conjunction with the Chief State's Attorney, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association and the Connecticut Coalition of Police and Correctional Officers, shall adopt, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, a uniform, state-wide policy for handling pursuits by police officers. Such policy shall specify: (A) **[**The conditions under which**]** That a police officer may engage in a pursuit **[**and discontinue a pursuit, (B)**]** when the police officer believes that an occupant of a moving motor vehicle committed a felony, as defined in section 53a-25, (B) the factors that may be considered in a police officer's decision to engage in a pursuit,

including, but not limited to, the protection of the public, the known or suspected offense, the apparent need for immediate apprehension, risks to police officers, motorists and the public and alternative measures to be employed by any such police officer in order to apprehend any occupant of the fleeing motor vehicle or to impede the movement of such motor vehicle, (C) the factors that may be considered in a police officer's decision to discontinue a pursuit, including, but not limited to, risks to the public and any pursuing police officer, the protection of the public, the known or suspected offense, the apparent need for immediate apprehension, vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions, such as speed, volume and safety, weather conditions and whether such occupant is identified and may be apprehended at a later time or whether such occupant is unknown, (D) the coordination and responsibility, including control over the pursuit, of supervisory personnel and the police officer engaged in such pursuit, **[**(D)**]** (E) in the case of a pursuit that may proceed and continue into another municipality, (i) the requirement to notify and the procedures to be used to notify the police department in such other municipality or, if there is no organized police department in such other municipality, the officers responsible for law enforcement in such other municipality, that there is a pursuit in progress, and (ii) the coordination and responsibility of supervisory personnel in each such municipality and the police officer engaged in such pursuit, **[**(E)**]** (F) the type and amount of training in pursuits, that each police officer shall undergo, which may include training in vehicle simulators, if vehicle simulator training is determined to be necessary, and **[**(F)**]** (G) that a police officer immediately notify supervisory personnel or the officer in charge after the police officer begins a pursuit. The chief of police or Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, as the case may be, shall inform each officer within such chief's or said commissioner's department and each officer responsible for law enforcement in a municipality in which there is no such department of the existence of the policy of pursuit to be employed by any such officer and shall take whatever measures that are necessary to assure that each such officer understands the pursuit policy established.

(2) Not later than January 1, **[**2021**]** 2027, and at least once during each five-year period thereafter, the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in conjunction with the Chief State's Attorney, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association and the Connecticut Coalition of Police and Correctional Officers, shall adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to update such policy adopted pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*from passage*	14-283a(b)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:
In Section 1(b)(1)(A), "a suspect" was changed to "an occupant of a moving motor vehicle" for consistency with other provisions of the general statutes; and in Section 1(b)(1)(C), "conditions, speeds" was changed to "conditions, such as speed" for clarity and "the suspect" was changed to "such occupant" for consistency with other provisions of the section and the general statutes.

PS *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

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: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to update the state-wide police pursuit policy, results in no fiscal impact to the state because the department has the expertise to update such policy.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis

HB 7074

AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIFORM STATE-WIDE POLICE PURSUIT POLICY.

SUMMARY

This bill modifies the statutory parameters for the uniform statewide police pursuit policy, including by requiring that the policy allow pursuits when an officer believes a moving vehicle's occupant committed a felony (i.e. an offense for which a person may be sentenced to a term of imprisonment that is more than one year).

Existing law requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) commissioner to adopt a uniform statewide police pursuit policy in conjunction with the chief state's attorney, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, and the Connecticut Coalition of Police and Correctional Officers. By regulation, this policy is the minimum standard for all police pursuits in Connecticut, and individual police units may adopt additional requirements as long as they do not conflict with the uniform policy (Conn. Agencies Regs., § 14-283a-1).

Under current law, the policy must specify the conditions under which a police officer may engage and discontinue a pursuit. The policy adopted in 2021, among other things, (1) permits engaging in a pursuit only if an officer has reasonable suspicion to believe that a vehicle occupant committed or is attempting a violent crime or there are exigent circumstances that warrant timely apprehension of the suspect and (2) specifically states that non-violent felonies and misdemeanors do not justify a pursuit without exigent circumstances.

This bill instead requires the uniform statewide police pursuit policy to specify (1) that a police officer may engage in a pursuit when the

officer believes a suspect committed a felony and (2) the factors a police officer may consider when deciding whether to engage or discontinue a pursuit.

Existing law requires the DESPP commissioner, in conjunction with the entities listed above, to adopt regulations once every five years to update the policy. The bill specifies that the policy must next be updated by January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Under the bill, the policy must specify the factors a police officer may consider when deciding to engage or discontinue pursuit. Factors that may be considered in both instances must include:

1. the protection of the public;
2. the known or suspected offense;
3. the apparent need for immediate apprehension; and
4. risks to police officers, motorists, and the public.

As under existing law, for engaging in pursuits, the factors must also include alternative measures for apprehending occupants in moving vehicles or to impede the vehicle's movement. For discontinuing them, the bill also includes the following factors an officer may consider: vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions, speeds, volume, and safety; weather conditions; and whether the suspect is unknown or identified and may be apprehended later.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

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