

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

<u>HB 7043</u>	PA 820	<u>1969</u>
<u>House</u> : P. 4085-4089		5
<u>State Development</u> : P. 60, 145-150		7
Senate - 3207-3208		2



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CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS
1969

VOL. 13

PART 9

4023-4395

Tuesday, May 27, 1969

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THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1198. Sub. for H.B. No. 7043. An Act concerning The Licensing of Youth Camps.

REP. ADAM - 2nd D.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the committees favorable report and adoption of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

REP. ADAM - 2nd D.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment. I would like to turn it over to Mr. Straffolino for the amendment.

THE CLERK:

I have a ring from New York University. Did anyone lose it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is on adoption of the amendment. Will you remark? The amendment is quite lengthy, is there someone who is prepared to outline the amendment as opposed to the reading of it?

REP. STRAFFOLINO - 143rd D.

Yes, Mr. Speaker. The amendment gives the Health Commissioner the power to name an Advisory Council, composed of people who are interested in and know what "camps" are all about. It also makes non-profit corporation, only pay twenty-five dollars, for each permit, and also that the members appointed to this Commission, shall be paid Twenty-five Dollars for each day of any meeting held by them.

REP. ADAM - 2nd D.

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Mr. Speaker, this amendment is something that I think will dem enhance the bill. The purpose of the bill, is not to hamper or to hurt, any of the camping associations. Particularly, the non-profit organizations. By lowering the fee, for the non-profit organizations, it makes it more palatable to them and it gives them more money and id deosn't take any/money away from the scholarship fund. I think its a good amendment and it ought to pass.

REP. KENNELLY - 1st D.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment. The amendment addresses itself to certain problems created by the file copy of the bill, its a good amendment and I think it should pass.

REP. TUDAN - 42nd D.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good amendment and should pass.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those in favor of the amendment indicate by saying aye. Those opposed? The amendment is adopted, in view of the agreement between the leaders on both sides, its ruled technical and you may proceed with the bill as amended.

REP. STROFFOLINO - 143rd D.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is long over due. Its ~~pass its~~ ^{passage} becoming more urgent each year. Unfortunately, what is involved in this bill, is the health and safety of our own children. Under present conditions, tragedy may strike anyone, rich or poor. Summer camps are required in almost all states, only to comply

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with the sanitary code. No laws for personnel. In every case dem
the death or injury to a boy or girl could have been prevented
had the camp owners or directors trained their counselors properly,
used proper equipment and hired mature leaders. There are a num-
ber of organizations, which have set up standards for their mem-
ber camps, however the majority of the camps have no affiliation
and are only as safe as the individual owners cares to make his
camp. This bill will not regiment the camp. This bill will merely
set minimum safety standards, so that the parents will know when
a camp is approved. In this way the bill will be safe. This is
a good bill and I urge its passage.

REP. TUDAN - 42nd D.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for the licensing and set-
ting up of standards and requirements for the operators of profit
and non-profit youth camps throughout the state. This is a sen-
sible approach, which will help to insure the safety and welfare
being of the state's youths who attend these summer camps. At
the same time, this legislation, will protect the legitimate owner-
s, and operators of youth camps and the unfair competition of mar-
ginal operators, which operate under unsafe conditions. This bill
will empower the Department of Health, to set standards for camps
including staffing, sanitation and supervision of hazardous activ-
ities and the proper keeping of records. This type of legislation
is long over due in the state of Connecticut. We conducted rather
an extensive Public Hearing on this matter, and I am almost sure
to the man and the lady on the committee that we completely agreed

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on this.

REP. COLLINS - 165th D.

Mr. Speaker, Just a brief question to the Chairman of the Committee, on this as a point of clarification, does this, sir, include the YMCA and the Boy Scout Camps?

REP. TUDAN - 42nd D.

Mr. Speaker. Yes.

REP. REYNODLS - 54th D.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that has been concerning me for some time. It has bothered me, because I am extremely interested in the FH, the Boy Scouts and the YMCA camp. After talking with, Mr. Tudan, and Mr. Adam and the other members about this, with this Amendment, I believe my objections have been well take care of, and I will support the bill as amended. Thank you.

REP. ADAM - 2nd D.

Mr. Speaker, we've been in contact with the Camping Associations of Connecticut, and also the YMCA Camps' of Connecticut and they feel that this has been long over due. They are glad to have something like this and they urge its adoption.

REP. ORCUTT - 100th D.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join in this bi-partisan forte of this very important bill, and I'd like to congratulate, Rep. Stroffolino, Rep. Adams, and Rep. Tudan, for the good work that they did on this bill. This is going to provide new productions to the young people in our state and I hope that the bill passes unanimously.

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MR. SPEAKER:

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Will you remark further on the bill as amended? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye. Those opposed? The bill is passed.

MR. CLERK:

Introduction of bill. With Emergency Certification.

H.B. No. 8699. An Act concerning the Sale Of the Military Department Garage in Southington to the Town of Southington. For Reference to Military and Veterans' Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER:

So ordered.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1201. H.B. No. 8270. An Act concerning the Rooster River Flood Control Project.

REP. GIANNINI - 134th D.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

REP. GIANNINI - 134th D.

Mr. Speaker, this provides that the water resources Commission shall include, the portion of Lincon Boulevard in the Rooster River Flood Control Project. The flooding conditions in this particular area have existed for over twenty-five years, to my knowledge, causing much damage to property and possessions, as well as loss of time from work, to the homeowners and residents

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STANDING
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Jotham Reynolds, Representative 54th Assembly District, appearing in favor of H.B. 7462, which I find has not yet been printed. Co-sponsor of this bill was Senator Dupont from the 29th District. Now this bill in essence asks for some capital funds for the improvement of Mashamoquet Brook State Park, off of Route 44, in the town of Pomfret. This is a request from the Department of Natural Resources Park and Forest Commission, and I believe that funds were made available, but the bill itself asks specifically for an appropriation. Now, this park is very much in need of capital improvements. The water supply doesn't take care of the bathers. It has a tremendous gathering of picnickers and people enjoying park facilities during the holidays and weekends, and they're asking the funds for capital improvements. We request, I would like it very much if both Senator Dupont and myself could appear for this bill, after it has been printed, because it's quite necessary that the public read the requirements. This is Phase One only, asked for in a project of three phases over a sum of years. I'd appreciate it if you give this considerable consideration and come out in favorable report. Thank you very much.

Representative Mettler: Representative....

Representative Stroffolino 143rd. District: I wanted to speak on Bill 7043. It's establishment concerns the safety standards of the summer camps, operated for boys and girls under twenty-one years of age. Gentlemen, the Youth Camps Safety Act is long overdue. It's passage becomes more urgent each year. Unfortunately, what is involved in the Youth Camp Safety Act is the health and safety of our children. No function of government is more important than the protection of our children. Under present conditions, tragedy will strike anyone, whether rich or poor, whether knowledgeable or ignorant, and regardless of where the victim is from or where he is attending camp. Summer camps, which care for six million youngsters per year, are required in almost all states only to comply with the sanitary code, the same is required by restaurants. No laws cover personnel. Personnel cannot consist of anyone and because the industry pays little they are scraping the bottom of the barrel for help. I am convinced you have no better way of determining a camp than any citizen, there is no way. Now, Gentlemen, this is a new act for the State of Connecticut, at present we do not have any. And this will take care of licensing, personnel and regulations set forth by the Department of Agriculture. I think it's a very important bill and I urge you to pass it.

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a resident.

Representative Tudan: Can't even play on the weekend.

Mr. Jarms: At a weekend we still maintain a non-resident....

Representative Tudan: If you can recall Mr. Jarms there was a Senator the Committee felt that it should give you some money then because we couldn't help but felt it was a recreational facility being used by the Metropolitan area and I feel that I know you have a problem there the people..... But coming to us for funds

Mr. Bill Morisander: And what I would like to ask is the privilege of appearing before the Committee in executive hearing on this Bill 197? I didn't appear and speak my piece earlier today because you were so pressed for time and I'd like at least maybe ten minutes to run through it.

Representative Tudan: 7039, 7043?

H.B. No. 7043 (Rep. Stroffolino) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHING CERTAIN SAFETY STANDARDS FOR SUMMER CAMPS OPERATED FOR BOYS AND GIRLS UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE.

Mr. Mitchell Kurman: However, it's rather pathetic that we're considering rock piles off the Norwalk coast which ... in spite of my contemptuous manner of saying it, I sincerely feel the importance of the entire ecology and the entire set up that's there. However, those things went on for years and nobody paid attention to them until somebody wants to put a nuclear plant up there. However, what I have in mind is this. It's a youth camp safety bill. Now this is something, I wonder if you gentlemen know it, and if you don't I wouldn't be surprised because very few people do. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, to safeguard our own children. When you or I or anyone else want to send them off to a camp. Now you people may have children, you may have neices, nephews, grandchildren, I don't know. You people are legislators I'm not, but give it some thought. Now do you have any better way of determining a nature of a camp than I've got? I think if you'll look into it and I wish you people would, there's nothing. Literally anybody, and I mean that in the strongest sense, literally anybody, at all can open up a camp in the State of Conn. Whether they're qualified or whether they're not qualified. They can employ anyone they wish. The personnel, they get a with the title of counselor, sounds good. I've got records, incidentally you may wonder

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my purpose in being here. I've been active for quite a while , my son was killed at a camp and it's not at all distinctive At any rate if it was distinctive that I lost my own child well I'd just be a nut to keep on in this manner. However, because the rawness of the situation in which my own boy lost his life , I put in a tremendous amount of time following up on camp tragedies that I had brought to my attention. I have records from California where an institutional camp rented a flatbed truck for the day, and they could do it here in Conn. I want to emphasize that, they rented a flatbed truck for the day, loaded 62 children and 8 counselors on a flatbed truck let it go down a high speed limits expressway. It did not jack-knife it summersaulted. Four children and one counselor were killed instantly, at least fifteen were very seriously injured, I flew out and got the entire report. This is an interesting twist. I've been after Governor Reagen consistently trying to get the report on that. That report is not available to the public. You have to be a lawyer directly connected with the case to get that report. How can you, forget me, how can you determine the nature of a camp to which you want to send a child? They print brochures? That's true ,they use the same brochure year in and year out. The brochure is meaningless, it isn't worth the paper it's printed on. Senator Ribicoff incidentally had got a Youth Camp Safety Bill in right now. This is the third session of the U.S. Congress that it's been put in. The first session they ran out of time, the second session, in spite of the backing of about ten excellent Senators, the Committee chairman simply would not let it out of the hearing, Senator Hill of Alabama. Now it is in and it has an extremely good backing again. I'm hopeful that something will be done to finally clear this thing up. I think that there is a pretty fair chance of it although I do know and if you wish I'll state the names. I've got no secrets, of Congressional opposition to it, from people who own camps. It's a question, do they represent their constituents or do they represent their pocketbooks. Now, going down the list briefly, anyone could own a camp, anyone could manage a camp, they can employ anyone they want to. A counselor can be anything. I've got a record of a sex-fiend who ran away with a kid at the end of the summer. There was an alarm out for them. When they finally caught up with him they, the camp tried covering it up and said that well the boy had the parents permission to go. If so why the alarm, why the police action? There's no minimum age for a Director of a camp. I have a record of an 18 year old counselor being in charge of a 180 children at a camp. He could

swim. He said "thank goodness I was a sincere kid" he said that he could swim but wouldn't know what to do if one of those kids started to go under or if something happened. These are fellows that just didn't want to pay any money and that's it. Then, regarding training, for an aquatic staff there isn't anything in Conn. and incidentally, when I say Conn. I don't mean to hurt your feelings, I don't mean to pick on the State of Conn. you're not alone in it. About the only state that has any legislation worth anything is Michigan right now. About the Director, it could be anyone, the supervision of activities, there's nothing, nothing whatsoever. I have records of kids shot on rifle ranges, I have the actual records. As far as restricting hazardous acts there's nothing, as far as the camp sites, there's nothing. A fellow could pick up a cheap piece of swampland, put something up on stilts, give it some sort of fancy name, if he wants to. It's perfectly possible there's nothing to stop him. All right, going on, living quarters there's nothing, the sleeping accommodations, there's nothing. Responsibility of the director, there's nothing. Connecticut is rated fair on a four rating. One to four is the worst you can get, Conn. rated 3, in other words pretty far down. Regarding personnel records, They could have the same fellow year after year regardless of the tragedies that have happened the year before. Regarding a doctor, one the premises or a doctor handy, there's nothing. All that they have to do for practical purposes is comply with the sanitary code. Now I'm not blaming anybody in government life today, this has been going on for years. It's simply a situation where, for some reason I can't understand it and I don't pretend on this I really can't understand it, in my own business, I happen to be a wholesale furniture salesman today at one time I used to be a biologist with the Conservation Dept. of New York, in my own business, because in the old days they would stuff literally anything and I mean anything into a mattress or sofa or a pillow. Today there are bedding tabs for anything that has a filler. Originally there was an outcry from our industry about it. Today no one complains about it, the legitimate business man does not have to compete against a sharp-shooter who's putting anything in there just to..... Our industry has gotten a new respect, it's gotten a new image before the public and in fact our own industry has benefited by it. I sincerely feel that sooner or later this legislation is going to come and the sooner it comes the better and the better for the camp industry itself. There's no reason why the legitimate camp operator, and there are a great many of them, should be hurt each time something of this nature pops up, and it pops up constantly. Now what I want is this, licesensing of all camps organized or private, I don't care who they are, I want them licesensed if they are

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taking a certain number of children, set an arbitrary amount, say six children. I'm not talking about someone going out camping by himself or a family, I'm talking when you entrust your child to somebody you think you're paying a fee for. You're entitled to at least minimum protection there. I want licesensing for the camps and their personnel. I want their personnel to fill out a standard form and the reason I say that is this, they should list their qualifications, if they are a swimming coueslor, are they Red Cross qualified? If so fine, I want to know that. I don't want someone picking up some cheap help to run the waterfront. I also want a clause put in there about good moral character, and I'm not too far off when I say it, unfortunately these children's camos attract an awful lot of, let's say, people who are mixed up sexually. They like to be around little children. It's a pathetic thing but I've got records from New York State, I've got records from down in New Jersey. I want reports of all accidents immediately to the State Police. Now the reason for that, and I feel very strongly on this, I cannot emphasize how strongly I feel about it, my own boy was killed following a previous accident in Canada but the whole thing was hushed up and they led the boys into Maine. We were notified, I don't want to go into the entire thing, it's just that a white-wash was made of the entire thing as though a boy simply fell out of his canoe, that's about the size of it. We went up there, we found out that the river they were on was completely off limits and All right, full accident reports possibly to the State Police. I trust their judgement to accidents in Canada..... one boy dead and they still permitted the same to go on up a trail in New Hampshire that was closed off and I've got the record of that. They keep talking of the preservation of a public image of a camp. What is more important, the preservation of a public image or the welfare of children entrusted to them? I want those reports made immediately of all accidents to cause the bringing in of a doctor. All diseases reported, all deaths reported and a record kept of these things. I don't expect the camps to print that it would be against any businessman's judgement..... But if anybody is sincerely interested in sending their child to a camp, pay two or three dollars to the State Police or to the Dept. of Health that should be available to them. I'm thinking in terms of the accident that happened in California that I can't I don't want self accrediting, it doesn't work, this self-policing. I've seen insignias, shields put on American Camping Assoc., Assoc. of Private Camps and every time, I didn't try doing it, I had people I know try tracking it down. No one ever gets replies. I think our children are worth that. I also want a truthful brochure. Long ago we had a truth in

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lending bill, whether you were for it or against it okay, it just involves money. If you pick my pocket I still can make up the money somehow. Try to make up a child who's been crippled for life, a child who's been blinded for life, I've got that in Connecticut. I want a truthful brochure that will describe the camp. I don't want the same thing used year in and year out. I want also a detailed insurance report stating the exact coverage. I can go on with this thing, I realize it's late you people deserve overtime for the time you put in on this thing. And as far as the State of Conn. is concerned I think that we are on the verge of a breakthrough. There is a good chance for this bill to pass. Let Connecticut be one of the states in a position to take advantage Right now the camps are scraping the bottom of the barrell. the camps within the State of Conn.less value to them, and I mean this sincerely, everyone who sends a child to a camp This is one of the ways to pound upon the safety features of the camp and it would be to the advantage of the State of Conn. to

Representative Tudan: Are you suggesting that we wait and see what they do in Congress?

Mr. Kurman: I have no faith in what I have seen in Congress.

Representative Tudan: If you'd care to go through the trouble of drafting up what you would regard... and incorporathg these regulations

Mr. Kurman: I just wanted to say that here's a letter from the American Red Cross and they state that they're in favor of it. Here's a letter from the Attorney General of New York State , regarding personnel there is no State supervision of personnel privately orother camps. There are no special requirements for camps in other words anybody can get in on them. Here's an editorial that was in a Danbury paper, here's an editorial which was in a Waterbury paper. There've been over two hundred editorials on this, you people have probably seen them, the New York Times, the Hartford Courant, the New Haven Register.....This is one of the things I want to bring out and I don't intend to knock this camp because it could be anybody's camp, Assoc. of Private Camp Owners, Assoc. of and all that sort of thing. Here is a kid water skiing with no belt on. now he was the only man that ever came out with an editorial against us. I recently received a communication with a parent who lost a child, while we feel sorry about it we wonder why this parent didn't care enough to check out this camp. I didn't know anything about it

Representative Tudan: Direct that to the Committee on State Development. Are you willing to do that. Get someone to type this thing up for you, these are proposed

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regulations that you would like to see the Dept. of Agriculture incorporate in the Bill. 7053?

Mr. Quickmire: The Conn. Audobon Council is in favor of 7053, Senator Gunther's bill. We haven't got a copy yet. We're taking Senator Gunther's word for this. He said he's introducing this along with Rep. Kennedy. And also the next bill 7118, we're in favor of this.

H.B. No. 7118 (Rep. Caplan) AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A CONNECTICUT SYSTEM OF NATURAL AREA PRESERVES.

Mr. Hibbard: I don't want to take any of your time, I have a statement that outlines in detail the changes in this natural area proposal and are significant and will take care of anysections of the legislation regarding this subject and I'd hope you'd call on me or anyone else during executive session to comment on this business. This is the third time and hopefully we've taken care of all the problems. I appreciate your endurance and everything else.

Representative Tudan. Well now we have 7332, 7333, 7461, 7462, 7466. Just for the record I'd like to state that the Conference of Mayors issued a statement ...

Complete Statement of Rep. Carlson 72nd District: I support bill 798.

Complete Statement of Senator Lucy Hammer 12th District: I strongly support this bill 798.

Complete Statement of Rep. Sarasin 95th District: I am opposed to any bills which would limit long term camping.

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THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1264, File No. 1295. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations on House Bill No. 8316. An Act concerning the Appointment of Mediators for the Board of Mediation and Arbitration.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, I move for the acceptance of the Committees favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, the purpose of this bill is to assign two mediators to municipal collective bargaining. The present statute is now indefinite as to the number of mediators which shall comprise the board. The bill sets a definite figure of five mediators and funds have been provided for this bill in the recommended budget of the Labor Department. I recommend its passage.

THE CHAIR:

Any further remarks. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The bill is adopted.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1266, File No. 1290. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations on Substitute House Bill No. 7043. An Act concerning the Licensing of Youth Camps.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of the Joint Committees

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favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, the bill provides that the State Department of Health prescribe regulations for the operation of resident and non-resident youth camps. The department will inspect for compliance of such regulations and issue licenses.

The funds for these activities are in the Governor's proposed budget. I urge the adoption of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Are there further remarks on the passage of this bill. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The aye's have it and the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1267, File No. 1292. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations on House Bill No. 7313. An Act concerning Resident State Policemen for the Towns Without a Police Force.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of the Committees favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, the purpose of this bill is to authorize the