

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

HB 6791	PA 218	1999
SENATE:	3449, 3552-3553	3p.
HOUSE:	5545-5548	4p.
Public Safety:	354-357, 373, 383, 396-397 420-424	13p.
		Total - 20p.

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives Proceedings

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S-438

CONNECTICUT  
GEN. ASSEMBLY  
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS  
1999

VOL. 42

PART 10

3161-3510

kmg

11

003449

Senate

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

I would move Substitute for HB6790 to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

I move for suspension of the rules to take up all items on page 9, Calendars 597, 598, 599, 600, and 601.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

I move Calendar 597 Substitute for HB6786 to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

I move Calendar 598 Substitute for HB6791 to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

Calendar 599 should be passed temporarily.

Calendar 600 is to be PR.

601, Substitute for HB6787, I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

S-439

CONNECTICUT  
GEN. ASSEMBLY  
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS  
1999

VOL. 42

PART 11

3511-3808

kmg

114

Senate

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Calendar No. 588, HB6781.

Calendar page 8, Calendar No. 593, Substitute for  
HB6723.

Calendar No. 596, Substitute for HB6790.

Calendar page 9, Calendar No. 597, Substitute for  
HB6786.

Calendar No. 598, Substitute for HB6791.

Calendar No. 601, Substitute for HB6787.

Calendar page 10, Calendar No. 605, Substitute for  
HB6775.

Calendar page 11, Calendar No. 148, Substitute for  
SB1055.

Calendar No. 168, Substitute for SB982.

Calendar page 12, Calendar No. 309, Substitute for  
SB1232.

Calendar page 14, Calendar No. 464, Substitute for  
SB1142.

Calendar page 15, Calendar No. 94, Substitute for  
SB993.

Calendar page 16, Calendar No. 304, Substitute for  
SB630.

Calendar page 17, Calendar No. 594, SR50.

Calendar page 18, Calendar No. 595, SR51.

And, Calendar No. 607, SR52.

Mr. President, that completes the first Consent

kmg

115

Senate

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

On the Consent Calendar, the machine will be open.

The Clerk will announce a roll call.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the  
Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to  
the Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on  
the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return  
to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Machine will be closed. Clerk, will announce the  
tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar No. 1.

Total Number Voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is adopted. Mr. Clerk, would  
you proceed?

THE CLERK:

Returning to Calendar page 15, Disagreeing Actions.  
Calendar No. 278, File No. 369 and 794. Substitute for

H-813

CONNECTICUT  
GEN. ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS  
1999

VOL. 42

PART 15

5257-5623

gmh

House of Representatives

Monday, June 7, 1999

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the machine to make sure your vote is properly recorded.

The machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Clerk, please announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill Number 1166, as amended by Senate Amendment Schedule "A" in concurrence with the Senate

Total Number Voting	150
Necessary for Passage	76
Those voting Yea	103
Those voting Nay	47
Those absent and not Voting	1

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

The bill, as amended passes.

Clerk, please call Calendar 286.

CLERK:

On page 20, Calendar 286, Substitute for House Bill Number 6791, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES. Favorable Report of the Committee on Appropriations.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

Representative Ryan of the 139th.

gmh

House of Representatives

Monday, June 7, 1999

REP. RYAN: (139TH)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

REP. RYAN: (139TH)

Yes, Mr. Speaker. Much of the toxicology work that's currently being done by the Department of Public Health is related to criminal investigations and is similar to the analytical work that is done by the State Police Forensic Laboratory. That's why this transfer makes a lot of sense and is recommended to ensure the highest possible standards of practice, clear and consistent procedures for handling and storing evidence, and it will avoid the duplication of facilities and procedures.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO 9965.

Would you please ask the Clerk to call and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

Clerk, please call LCO 9965, designated House "A" and the Representative has asked leave to summarize.

CLERK:

gmh

House of Representatives

Monday, June 7, 1999

LCO 9965, House "A" offered by Representative  
Godfrey, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

Representative Ryan.

REP. RYAN: (139TH)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are basically a number of technical changes that basically take "he" and make it into "Commissioner" so that the bill is gender neutral.

I move acceptance. Adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

The question is on adoption. Will you remark further? Will you remark on House "A"? Will you remark on House "A"?

If not, we will try your minds.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

Those opposed. The ayes have it. House "A" is  
adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill, as amended?

Will you remark further on the bill, as amended?

If not, staff and guests to the Well of the House.

The machine will be opened.

gmh

231

House of Representatives

Monday, June 7, 1999

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted, please check the machine to make sure your vote is properly recorded.

The machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 6791, as amended by House Amendment Schedule "A"

Total Number Voting	150
Necessary for Passage	76
Those voting Yea	150
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	1

DEPUTY SPEAKER HYSLOP:

The bill, as amended passes.

Clerk, please call Calendar 262.

CLERK:

On page 19, Calendar 262, Substitute for House Bill Number 6790, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC  
SAFETY  
PART 2  
328-568**

**1999**

SUSAN McCALLEY: Okay.

REP. DARGAN: And then you gave a --

SUSAN McCALLEY: In short, we hope that the Public Safety Department can explain these concerns that we have and answer them and make sure that we are not amending the strictness of our handgun permit process here in Connecticut.

Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you.

Questions from committee members?

Thank you so much for your testimony.

Next speaker. Is it Jesse Tucker?

JESSE TUCKER: Good morning. My name is Jesse Tucker. I retired after 16 years of employment at the State Health Laboratory. The last 10 years were as Laboratory Director. The State Toxicology Laboratory under Dr. Abraham Stohlman as Chief Toxicologist was part of my responsibility, as were five other laboratories.

I'm here to testify in opposition to HB-6791, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES.

The State Toxicology Laboratory has provided high-quality services for almost 50 years to all duly constituted prosecuting, police and investigative agencies of the state. With the support of these agencies and local police departments, it has performed its duties in a professional manner appropriate to the confidential nature of the work.

Dr. Abraham Stohlman was the first Chief Toxicologist and remained so until his retirement in the late 1980's. Although Dr. Stohlman was widely known in the field, he was challenged on a number of occasions by those who felt that the State Police Laboratory was more suited to perform

toxicological testing.

At those times, he would produce a letter written in the early 1950's by the Commandant of the State Police who reaffirmed that the Health Department was the appropriate location for the toxicology laboratory and that it would be considered a conflict of interest if it were made the responsibility of the State Police.

The pressures attending the increased drug use, arrests and narcotics submissions starting in the 1960's resulted in a dire need for laboratory and storage space. The storage space problem was aggravated by the need to store and track evidence until the case had been adjudicated.

The problem was only partially solved by the availability of a large and nearby storage area and eventually by the funding for a position and vehicle to pick up and return evidence to the submitter. The space, position and vehicle are no longer available due to budget cuts.

The difficulties of tracking evidence under these conditions, rather than quality of analyses, are responsible for the complaints from some submitting agencies.

There is no indication that the agency in which the toxicology lab is located will have an effect on the budget. There does not seem to be a critical need to make a change at this time. At least eight other state health laboratories perform toxicological testing successfully. Other than an internal report on this laboratory done by a single individual, there has been nothing in 50 years of providing services that indicate that this change is necessary.

The report from the Thomas Commission was favorable to the State Health Laboratory. Requests from the Health Department in the past for the Program Review and Investigations Committee to conduct a review of this facility indicated that there was sufficient cause for review -- insufficient cause for review.

This information alone should justify the need for a more careful, a much more careful, look before making the change.

REP. DARGAN: Jesse, can you --

JESSE TUCKER: I request that this committee report unfavorably on HB-6791.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you.

Questions from committee members? Questions?

Thank you very much for your testimony.

Yes. Representative Kirkley-Bey.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY: Thank you.

You indicated -- excuse me, sir. My throat is a little bit sore. You indicated that through budget cuts that you lost some space, a vehicle or something like that to transport. This doesn't in any way provide lesser services through the toxicology whatever, laboratory?

JESSE TUCKER: What has happened is that other, less desirable means have been found in order to accommodate the problem. And it actually has exacerbated the problem.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY: So if it's not getting better, then why do you feel that the merger would be so detrimental? If it's not getting better, than why do you think it would be bad to merge the two?

JESSE TUCKER: It isn't a merger. It's a matter of transfer of responsibility and a matter of whether it's appropriate. It was implied in the explanation for why this had to be done that it was a matter of quality of services. It really involves the fact -- the problem that has to be addressed is are the laws of the State of Connecticut appropriate for the way that the evidence has to be handled and requiring storage for what is extremely long periods of time.

REP. KIRKLEY-BEY: Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Further questions?

Hearing none, thank you very much for your testimony.

Next speaker is -- I guess they're coming up together -- Mary Casey and Patrick Moynihan.

MARY CASEY: Good morning. I'm Mary Casey. I'm President of the Connecticut State Surety Association. This is my associate, Patrick Moynihan, who is a licensed bail bondsman, along with a licensed bail enforcement officer.

REP. DARGAN: An outstanding bond -- Senator Penn is here. So if you want to take him away now, you could take him.

MARY CASEY: After the testimony.

REP. DARGAN: Proceed.

MARY CASEY: We're here in support of proposed Bill No. 6824, AN ACT CONCERNING BAIL ENFORCEMENT AGENTS. The Association feels that a higher standard should be met by those individuals acting in the capacity of a bail enforcement agent. These individuals are empowered to apprehend fugitives from justice. Therefore, they should be absolved from all felonies and cited misdemeanors in Section 1.

With that in mind, we also suggest adding Section 53a-173, failure to appear in the second degree, a Class A misdemeanor, to this amendment.

Furthermore, the Association would like to suggest that the same amendment be attached to Section 38a-660 sub-section (h), which is the statute mandating licensing requirements for bail bond agents. By doing that, it will prohibit an individual who does not meet the requirements for a bail enforcement officer from simply applying for a bail bond license in order to legally apprehend fugitives.

compliance.

We just want to make sure we don't penalize any of the local departments who have already invested in electronic imaging equipment because we had to wait for DPS to play catch-up. If we can work through that, we have no objections. Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you.

Questions from committee members?

Thank you very much for your testimony.

CHIEF STRILLACCI: Thank you.

CHIEF SALVATORE: Thank you.

REP. DARGAN: Next speaker is Dr. Henry Lee.

DR. HENRY LEE: Senator Penn, Representative Dargan and committee members, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Department of Public Safety to support some of the bills listed on the agenda for the public hearing.

Also, we submit some written testimony which already --

SEN. PENN: I see you signed up for all the bills.

DR. HENRY LEE: Right. Signed up for all the bills.

Also with me this afternoon, we have some other personnel, other officers in charge of a certain area, which are much familiar with that area than me. So in case the committee have some additional questions, we are available to testify.

The bill we submitted, our Department basically can put into four groups. The first one, one group is related to Fire Marshal's office, SB-111 concerning firework display.

SB 111

The spirit of this law is to allow a local Fire Marshal the ability to determine if a proposed fireworks size are appropriate. Instead of revoke

confusing for people that are traveling through our state. As long as they not attempting to establish residence --

SEN. PENN: Right. Okay.

LIEUTENANT KIEHM: If they are going to establish residence, then they have to comply with Connecticut law.

SEN. PENN: Okay. Thank you, sir.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT KIEHM: Thank you, Senator.

DR. HENRY LEE: The next is SB-1170 concerning fingerprint of arrested person. Basically, that fingerprint bill, the spirit of that -- because so many different models of AFIS system now. Future, this AFIS system direct electronic transfer. If we don't have some kind of a standard to compatible can create more problem. And that's why we have this bill, try to set fingerprint image acceptability for the state.

The next bill is HB-6823 concerning auto theft. We change the motor vehicle crime to the criminal statute. Also, including any chop shop, unlicensed garage, junkyard, alter the title, alter the Vehicle Identification Numbers, and also including equipment and agriculture tractor into the motor vehicle statute.

The next bill regards to 67 -- HB-6791 concerning a merge of toxicology lab of the Health Department and Forensic Lab in Department of Public Safety. The spirit of that bill is to consolidating all the forensic services to one location, create a forensic center, one-stop services. So officers only can -- only have to come to one location in the future.

In addition, we can reduce in cost and reduce man hours, try to meet the national accreditation standard for the forensic services.

GENERAL DAVID GAY: That's near a first, Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN: Yes, it is. Well, a lot of the windbags have left. So you're lucky.

The next -- thank you for coming and testifying.

GENERAL DAVID GAY: Thank you very much.

REP. DARGAN: The next speaker is Elise Kremer.

ELISE KREMER: Good afternoon, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Elise Kremer. I'm the Bureau Chief of Administration in the Department of Public Health. And I'm here to speak in strong support of HB-6791, AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES.

Over the course of the past several months, the Departments of Public Health and Public Safety have collaborated very closely on a proposal that would allow us to consolidate all of the forensic science functions that are currently conducted by the two agencies.

This proposal would entail the transfer of the forensic science laboratory functions of the Toxicology Criminology Laboratory in the Department of Public Health to the Department of Public Safety, together with the necessary funding and resources to support those functions.

The leadership of both agencies believe that this proposed consolidation is consistent with the Governor's initiative to improve services and enhance governmental efficiency and would enable both agencies to better focus their resources in accordance with their respective statutory missions.

This bill would provide us the necessary statutory authority to proceed with the transfer and consolidation.

We have submitted, together with our written testimony, some technical comments on the bill. There are a couple of language changes that we are requesting in order to smoothly affect that transition. I'd be happy to detail those today, if you wish, or you may wish to simply review that written testimony.

REP. DARGAN: Yes. I think any changes that you'd like to see, we would like to see that. And maybe --

ELISE KREMER: Yes. We have submitted those in writing.

REP. DARGAN: Oh. Okay. That would be very, very helpful.

Do you have any further comments? No?

ELISE KREMER: No. Just any -- if there are any questions regarding the consolidation, I'd be happy to address them.

REP. DARGAN: Any questions? Since another one of the Governor's proposal to implement the budget, any other questions from members? No.

Thank you very much for your testimony.

ELISE KREMER: Thank you very much.

A VOICE: Are there any legislators (inaudible - not using microphone) who would like to testify?

REP. DARGAN: Mr. Hammersy, you'd like to testify from the Governor's Office? No. Okay.

Well, that concludes the public hearing today of the legislators, agency heads and municipal officials.

Thank you so much.

(Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned.)

**Testimony**  
**Office of Policy and Management**  
**For the Public Safety Committee of the General Assembly**  
**Tuesday, February 23, 1999**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 6791 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER  
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC  
SERVICES**

This testimony is being submitted to request favorable consideration of House Bill No. 6791, *An Act Concerning the Transfer of the Department of Health Toxicology Lab to the Department of Public Safety Division of Scientific Services*. The bill implements the Governor's Budget Recommendation that many toxicology functions related to criminal investigations be transferred from Public Health to Public Safety. The Governor's Recommended Budget adds 38 positions and \$2,301,246 in FY 2000 and \$2,358,883 in FY 2001 related to the operation of the toxicology lab to the Department of Public Safety. This is a reallocation, with a commensurate reduction in the Department of Public Health budget.

Much of the toxicology work that is done by the Department of Public Health is related to criminal investigations and similar to the analytical work done at the State Police Forensic laboratory. This transfer was recommended to insure the highest standards of practice, clear consistent procedures for handling and storing evidence, and to avoid duplication of facilities and equipment.

The agencies have been working for a number of months to assure the smooth transfer of these functions. It is anticipated that the transfer of these functions will result in more efficient handling of evidence in criminal cases.

We ask your support of this legislation.



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**  
**February 23, 1999**

*Elise Gaulin-Kremer, Chief, Bureau of Administrative and Support Services 509-7218*

**House Bill 6791 - An Act Concerning the Transfer of the Department of Health Toxicology Lab to the Department of Public Safety Division of Scientific Services**

The Department of Public Health strongly supports House Bill 6791.

The Departments of Public Health and Public Safety have collaborated on a proposal to consolidate all forensic science functions currently conducted by the two agencies. This proposal would entail the transfer of the forensic science functions of the Toxicology/Criminology Services of the Public Health Laboratory to the Department of Public Safety, together with the necessary funding and resources to support these functions. The leadership of the Departments of Public Health and Public Safety believe that this proposed consolidation is consistent with the Governor's initiative to improve services and enhance governmental efficiency, and would enable the two agencies to better focus their resources in accordance with their respective statutory missions. Bill 6791 would provide the necessary statutory authority to proceed with this transfer and consolidation.

The Department of Public Health would request several technical changes in Bill 6791, as drafted. First, Section 6(a) provides for the Commissioner of Public Health or his designee to be a member of the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations. Since expertise in this area will be transferred to Public Safety with the Toxicology Laboratory, it would no longer be suitable for the Department of Public Health to hold membership on this body.

Second, since the Governor's budget is predicated upon the transfer of the Toxicology Laboratory and the associated resources on July 1, 1999, we would request that those portions of Bill 6791 which pertain to this transfer become effective upon July 1, 1999.

Thirdly, we believe that Section 19a-28 of the Connecticut General Statutes, which mandates that the Department of Public Health operate a toxicology laboratory, should be repealed, as all functions governed by this section will be transferred to the Department of Public Safety.

Finally, we believe that language should be included in the bill to designate the Department of Public Safety as the successor agency for regulations currently under the purview of the Department of Public Health which deal with the measurement of alcohol in blood, breath or urine (Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Section 14-227a-1 et seq.).

We urge the Committee to report favorably on this legislation. Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.



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STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

FACT SHEET  
1999 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 6791 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL:

The bill implements the transfer in the Governor's Recommended Budget of 38 positions and \$2,301,246 in FY 2000 and \$2,358,883 in FY 2001 related to the operation of the toxicology lab in the Department of Public Health to the Department of Public Safety.

REASON FOR PROPOSAL:

Much of the toxicology work that is done by the Department of Public Health is related to criminal investigations and similar to the analytical work done at the State Police Forensic laboratory. This transfer was recommended to insure the highest standards of practice, clear consistent procedures for handling and storing evidence, and to avoid duplication of facilities and equipment.

SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:

It is anticipated that the transfer of these functions will result in more efficient handling of evidence in criminal cases

To: Chairpersons and Committee Members  
Public Safety Committee

From: Jesse Tucker

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB 6791

My name is Jesse Tucker. In 1992, I retired after 16 years of employment at the State Health Laboratory. The last ten years were as the laboratory director. The State Toxicology Laboratory under Dr. Abraham Stohlman, as chief toxicologist, was part of my responsibility as were five other laboratories. I am here to testify in opposition to **HB 6791, An Act Concerning the Transfer of the Department of Health Toxicology Lab to the Department of Public Safety Division of Scientific Services.**

The State Toxicology Laboratory has provided high quality services for almost 50 years to all duly constituted prosecuting, police and investigative agencies of the State. With the support of these agencies and local police departments, it has performed its duties in a professional manner appropriate to the confidential nature of the work. Dr. Abraham Stohlman was the first Chief Toxicologist and remained so until his retirement in the late 1980's. Although Dr. Stohlman was widely known in the field, he was challenged on a number of occasions by those who felt that the State Police Laboratory was more suited to perform toxicological testing. At those times he would produce a letter written in the early 1950's by the commandant of the State Police who reaffirmed that the Health Department was the appropriate location for the toxicology lab and that it would be considered a conflict of interest if it were made the responsibility of the State Police.

The pressures attending the increased drug use, arrests, and narcotics submissions starting in the 1960's resulted in a dire need for laboratory and storage space. The storage space problem was aggravated by the need to store and track evidence until the case had been adjudicated. This problem was only partially solved by the availability of a large and nearby storage area and eventually by the funding for a position and vehicle to pick up and return evidence to the submitter. The space, position and vehicle are no longer available due to budget cuts. The difficulties of tracking evidence under these conditions rather than quality of analyses are responsible for the complaints from some submitting agencies.

There is no indication that the agency in which the Toxicology lab is located will have an effect on the budget. There does not seem to be a critical need to make a change at this time. At least 8 other State health laboratories perform toxicology testing successfully. Other than an internal report on this laboratory done by a single individual, there has been nothing in 50 years of providing services that indicate that this change is necessary. The report from the Thomas Commission was favorable to the State Health Laboratory. Requests from the Health Department in the past for the Program Review and Investigations Committee to conduct a review of this facility, indicated that there was insufficient cause for a review. This information alone should justify the need for a much more careful look before making the change. I request that this Committee report unfavorably on HB 6791.

For further information contact Jesse Tucker at 875-7995 or 37 Tallwood Drive, Vernon, CT 06066

State of Connecticut



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Dr. Henry C. Lee  
Commissioner

Senator Alvin W. Penn  
Representative Stephen Dargan  
Co-Chairpersons  
Public Safety Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

February 22, 1999

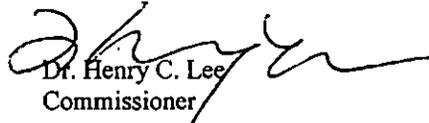
**RE: PROPOSED BILL H.B. # 6791- ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TOXICOLOGY LAB TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF SCIENTIFIC SERVICES**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPORTS THIS PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

The citizens of Connecticut would be best served by consolidating the Department of Public Health Toxicology functions within the Department of Public Safety, Forensic Lab as Proposed in the Governor's budget. The transferred functions consist of three phases, sexual assault evidence, blood alcohol testing and Intoxilyzer functions, and analysis of controlled substances. Upon transfer of these functions a statewide one-stop Forensic Service Center will be established. Any type of evidence requiring forensic testing will be sent to and analyzed at one centrally located laboratory in Meriden.

There are numerous advantages to this single, all encompassing laboratory structure. First, consolidation will reduce costs associated with the support services needed to maintain two separate facilities. Second, there will be savings recognized by all of the laboratory users, state, local and federal law enforcement and judicial agencies, by reducing the man hours necessary to deliver and receive evidence from multiple locations. Third, current conditions at the Toxicology Laboratory do not meet the minimum national accreditation requirements. Transfer of the Toxicology Laboratory to Meriden will require additional laboratory space, which can be renovated or constructed in a manner that will meet accreditation requirements. Fourth, accreditation and current technology advances require both the Forensic Lab and Toxicology Lab to invest in high tech evidence tracking and computerized data base systems. With consolidation of these laboratories in one location the expensive but essential systems can be shared, thus significantly reducing costs.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Henry C. Lee  
Commissioner

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Middletown, CT 06457-9294  
An Equal Opportunity Employer