

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 14-181

HB5538

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
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veteran in the House that's being honored. Please proceed, Sir.

REP. HENNESSY (127th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Army Reserve Ambassador Colonel Ronald Weil, civilian A to the Chief of Army Reserve Lieutenant General Jeffrey Talley is here to accept the citation. Also in attendance is Captain Jamie Minor, S3 Operations Officers 395th combat sustained support battalion. I would ask that the -- that the House all rise and give them a welcome. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you. And thank you for your service to the State of Connecticut and to this country, Sir. Could return to the call of the Calendar. Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 386.

THE CLERK:

On page 30, House Calendar 386, favorable report of the joint standing committee on judiciary, substitute for House Bill 5538, AN ACT CONCERNING JUICE BARS.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter, Vice Chair of the
judiciary committee, Sir.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of the
joint committee's favorable report and adoption of the
bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

The motion before the Chamber is acceptance of
the joint committee's favorable report and passage of
the bill. Will you comment further, Sir.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will clarify the title
as I've even gotten emails on this subject. We are
not banning the sale of juice at bars which is what
sometimes people think we are doing here in the State
of Connecticut. A juice bar is an establishment that
-- I see some heckling over there, that serves alcohol
but also lets people under the age of 21 in at the
same time. This -- you might think of a night club
does things like this.

And it's a serious situation for particularly the
cities in the State. Hartford, New Haven have pushed
hard for this particular piece of legislation. We've

had some problems. We've had some major incidents. And there was a thorough review by police departments in both cities to think about how we could look at this statutory scheme and improve it.

There's long been a statute, 30-22c on the books which requires an establishment that is a juice bar to notify the police department of their town when they're going to have an event that will have the mingling of people who are underage and who are of age to drink. And they're supposed to hire an undercover police officer. The problem is a lot of these bars are not notifying the police departments and incidents occur.

So we figured how can we make this bill better. We do a couple things. The old statute talked about you could fax them the information about the event you wanted to have. No one really uses faxes anymore. This bill will require an email (inaudible) to do that. It also will allow more than one officer in certain instances. Think about it, you have a nightclub that may have 30 people, maybe one cop is suitable.

Some of these clubs fit thousands of people at times, certainly hundreds. Maybe there should be more

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than one officer. The point is that police officers are there to help protect and keep these events under control. So this bill also raised the fine for noncompliance.

What the Hartford Police Department said to me was they just take a chance. We won't notify anybody. If we get caught we pay a fine, maybe we get a suspension for a day or two of our liquor license but that's the risk we're going to take because we're going to make more money anyway. This new bill has serious fines, a sliding scale for each violation which no longer allows you to take the chance of not making that phone call.

Ultimately what I think this bill will do particularly in our cities is ensure more compliance with the statute which again has been the law for some time and also make sure that when we do have these events and some people don't know that we should have juice bars quite frankly, but to the extent that we do have these events they will be safer, they will have adequate protection and it will keep hopefully some of the fights and other incidents even murders that have happened from occurring in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you, Representative. Representative
Rebimbas of the 70th. Ma'am, you have the floor.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do rise
in support of the legislation that's before us. There
was certainly no opposition testimony that was
provided during the public hearing. It is also
supported as it's been eloquently stated by the cities
Hartford and New Haven who have experienced these
incidents but there's also support from CCM who
provided testimony in this regard as well. Just for
some further clarifications on the bill a few
questions to the Vice Chairman of the judiciary
committee, through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Yes. Representative Ritter, please prepare
yourself. Representative Rebimbas, please proceed,
Madam.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, Mr.
Speaker, just a clarification. These are premises
that already are permitted premises such as with a
café permit so this is not just completely

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establishing new rules or regulations it's just enhancing premises that already have these types of café permits that are regulated by the Department of Consumer Protection. Is that correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And through you, Mr. Speaker, nothing in this legislation prevents a facility from serving alcoholic beverages during these types of events that there are individuals under the age of 21 attending these events, they just need to be kept separate and apart and have an identifiable wristband at the time that they're being served -- served the alcoholic beverage. Is that correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is also correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to further clarify I know the Vice Chairman had indicated that now the correspondence notification could be to the police chief via email but it can also be via certified mail if the individual chooses that form of notification. Is that correct? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again just one last clarification. Under the bill that's before us as it's been already stated there are some offenses and some fines for the first, second and third and -- and so forth. And the fines that are stated are certainly not set in stone it has up to so for example the first

offense is up to a fine of \$2,500, the second offense up to \$5,000 so there is some leeway there for the person who is obviously charging and prosecuting this claim to potentially give some range of a fine amount depending on the circumstances. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. That's correct. And essentially it says not more than. And the goal with that language was and you know obviously the words were chose carefully, is there might be a situation where someone says geez I thought I emailed the right guy and I typed it in wrong or he or she retired and they no longer got it. So if you could prove good faith and there was a lack of compliance there is discretion involved and again to the extent we can let municipalities and police departments have discretion and govern themselves I think we've done a good job up here by doing that.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again I do support the legislation that's before us. I believe again it is certainly an issue that needed to be addressed. It's one that under this proposal seems to be an even handed one. It does not prevent again the service of alcohols at these facilities that have been taking place but it does provide a public safety furtherance of assurance that the individuals who are under the age of 21 will not be served alcohol and also that they're safety will be protected. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you, Representative. Representative Sawyer of the 55th, Ma'am you have the floor.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quick question through you to the gentleman who brought out the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Please proceed. Please proceed, Representative.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you. Thank you, Sir. Representative, in the case of these increased penalties and for the violations is the violation for not notifying the police department or is it in -- is it for violations

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of not separating the minors from those who are at the age of majority and drinking? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The -- the fines would relate to any violation of the sections in the bill. So that could include not notifying them. It could include not having wristbands worn as now required by statute. I would say that if there was underage drinking I think that would be covered under a different statute though as opposed to this. Through you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that's helpful.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

That is helpful because that was certainly the thought process that I had gone to when I saw the increased penalties that it would -- that would be inclusive of it so there is another section for that. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his answer. You know parents run very difficult course when they have their 16 and 17 year old who sometimes have an

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older sibling or a cousin or a relative or perhaps peers who are a little bit older and it is way cool to go out and go to the clubs. It is for some they begin to feel that it's a rite of passage. And for parents they want to have a sense of security.

They want to have an understanding that -- that their child is going to be in a fairly safe situation when it is listed classified as a juice bar. And so there is a -- a hope that with this particular increased penalties that the establishments will see just how serious we are as a legislature in looking at juvenile safety as well. So I thank the gentleman for bringing out the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you, Madam. Representative Srinivasan of the 31st, Sir, you have the floor.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do rise here this afternoon in strong support of this bill but just a few questions to the proponent of the bill. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter, please prepare yourself.
Representative Srinivasan, please proceed, Sir.

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REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it the current notification prior to passage of this bill is that 48 hours. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

And through you, Mr. Speaker, with this passage of this bill if it were to pass that notification time period will now change to 25 days is that -- am I understanding that correctly? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, not exactly. So the new requirement will be not less than five days and not more than 30. So one of the other concerns the police departments raised to us is under the old statute on January 2 I can send them a notice and say

here's our days we're going to have a juice bar open and that could count for the old year. And that could get lost in the shuffle. The police departments said to us make it so the notice comes not less than five and not more than 30 so that we can kind of keep a going tally of the events that are coming. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

And through you, Mr. Speaker, my final question. Is this notification is it necessary only when there's an event at that café or is it a routine thing because as I understand it you know in a café if the juice bar is there kids are going to go there you know not just when there's an event but just to hang out on a typical Friday night or a Saturday. Would that then also be included in this notification process? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. And again this is the old law not what the statute does. In any instance in

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which there is going to be the operation of a juice bar which will be defined as having people over the age of 21 and under the age of 21 at a premise in which alcohol is served you must provide notice pursuant to the statute. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

So through you, Mr. Speaker, just as a clarification. So is there is a juice bar that operates not necessarily because of an event but that's -- you know they feel that you know they can raise money and it's a profitable situation and they have the juice bar open Saturday nights, Friday nights on a routine basis with or without an event. And in that case as I understand it every -- for five days prior to that up to 30 the police will have to be notified that this juice bar is in operation. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Ritter.

REP. M. RITTER (1st):

That is correct. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the Vice Chair for his answers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you, Sir. Will you remark further on the bill before us? Will you remark further on the bill before us? If not, will staff and guests come to the well of the House. Will members please take your seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will members please return to the Chamber immediately.

(Deputy Speaker Orange in the Chair.)

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly cast. If so, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally please. And will the Clerk please announce the tally.

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THE CLERK:

House Bill 5538.

Total Number Voting 147

Necessary for Passage 74

Those voting Yea 147

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 3

DEPUTY SPEAKER BERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The bill passes. Are there any announcements or introductions?

Announcements or introductions? Representative Grogins.

REP. GROGINS (129th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Everyone I just wanted to remind everyone that Bridgeport's own Beardsley Zoo is having a reception in 20 minutes, a dessert and coffee reception upstairs on the third floor. And they're going to have lots of critters from the zoo so I'd really appreciate it if everybody can come by, stop by, have a dessert and pet one of our critters. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Representative Grogins. Any further introductions or announcements? Seeing none, we will

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Thank you. That was, are you referring to Calendar 468, House Bill 5450?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, I apologize.

SENATOR LOONEY:

That was recently voted, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

SENATOR LOONEY:

So Calendar Page 16, Calendar 474, House Bill 5337, move to place on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Also Calendar Page 16, two additional items, Calendar 469, House Bill 5538, move to place on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And also, Madam President, Calendar 473, House Bill 5328, move to place on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Moving to Calendar Page 17 where we have two items. The first, Calendar 496,

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Calendar 334, House Bill 5339.
Calendar 336, House Bill 5056.
On Page 7, Calendar 345, House Bill 5443.
On Page 9, Calendar 417, House Bill 5410.
On Page 10, Calendar 420, House Bill 5258.
Calendar 421, House Bill 5263.
Calendar 424, House Bill 5439.
On Page 11, Calendar 429, House Bill 5581.
On Page 12, Calendar 445, House Bill 5418.
Calendar 438, House Bill 5336.
On Page 13, Calendar 453, House Bill 5133.
Calendar 446, House Bill 5150.
Calendar 452, House Bill 5531.
On Page 14, Calendar 457, House Bill 5516.
Calendar 455, House Bill 5325.
Calendar 456, House Bill 5440.
Calendar 459, House Bill 5321.
Calendar 461, House Bill 5140.
On Page 15, Calendar 468, House Bill 5450.
Calendar 465, House Bill 5341.
On Page 16, Calendar 474, House Bill 5337.
Calendar 469, 5538.
Calendar 473, House Bill 5328.
On Page 17, Calendar 496, House Bill 5115.

SENATOR LOONEY:

If we might pause for just a moment to verify a couple of additional items.

Madam President, to verify an additional item, I believe it was placed on the Consent Calendar and Calendar Page 30, on Calendar Page 30, Calendar 592, Substitute for House Bill 5476.

THE CHAIR:

It is, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

It is on? Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, finally, Agenda Number 4, Madam President, Agenda Number 4 one additional item ask for suspension to place up on Agenda Number 4 and that is, ask for suspension to place on the Consent Calendar an item from Agenda Number 4.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President, and that item is Substitute House Bill Number 5566 from Senate Agenda Number 4.

Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, if we might call for a vote on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. Will you please call for a Roll Call Vote on the Consent Calendar. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

An immediate Roll Call has been ordered in the Senate.

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An immediate Roll Call on Consent Calendar Number 2 has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number 2.

Total number voting	36
Necessary for adoption	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Two additional items to take up before the, our final vote on the implementer. If we might stand for just, for just a moment.

The first item to mark Go is, Calendar, to remove from the Consent Calendar, Calendar Page 22, Calendar 536, House Bill 5546. If that item might be marked Go.

And one additional item, Madam President, and that was from Calendar, or rather from Agenda Number 4, ask for suspension to take it up for purposes of marking it Go, that is House Bill, Substitute for House Bill 5417. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

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those who cannot pay their bill typically have no assets that we could recoup through a lawsuit. Further, this lawsuit is unfair to those folks who needed our services to be put on a payment plan and then subsequently have fallen on hard times.

I have had clients who at the time they need to be bonded out had jobs and constantly had made consecutive payments for several months. Then they lost their jobs and are unable to make payments. The law requires my company to sue these clients despite the fact I knew that they were -- despite the fact I knew they were out of work and had no sources of income and no assets.

This section changes the installment contract from 15 months to 24 months to address some of the concerns that I have just noted. I'd like to add that this bill with the current laws favor the wealthy and has a definite negative impact on the middle and lower class.

If there's any questions -- I mean, everything else was touched by all the other agents, you know, about the task -- We're working on the task force. If you guys got any questions about the payments please feel free to ask. I just feel it's not there.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you very much. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you very much. Thanks for waiting.

At the next speaker is Rebecca Bombero. Is Rebecca here? There she is. After Rebecca Jason Thody and Bruce Biel.

Good afternoon.

HB 5538

REBECCA BOMBERO: Good afternoon Senator Doyle,

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March 24, 2014
12:00 P.M.

Representative Ritter, members of the committee. My name is Rebecca Bombero. I'm the Legislative Director for the City of New Haven. I'm here today to testify in strong support of HB 5538, an act concerning juice bars.

The legislation before you recognizes the additional risks associated with bars that host juice bar nights. It updates the noticing provisions allowing e-mail to replace faxes, requires earlier notice allowing time for departments to prepare and assure the proper available staffing. And it also updates the fine structure, recognizing that the previous fine structure was not enough of a deterrent to compel compliance.

New Haven knows firsthand the difficulties that juice bars and other promoted events create for our public safety personnel. They produce bigger, more rowdy and unruly crowds. We welcome this legislation, but would ask the committee to consider expanding the scope of the legislation to all promoted events. You know these events. They're the ones that you find promoted underneath your windshield wiper on those cards. Our police department spends a considerable amount of time trying to track these events on Facebook, through those cards and other things and they don't catch them all. These events create a significant number of problems and they're the same problems that juice bar legislation aims to address.

We thank you for your consideration and passage of the bill.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you very much.

Any questions from the committee?
Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER: Thank you, Senator. And I know it's late. So I'll just say it. I appreciate it. I know you guys have in New Haven some other issues that we're going to work on, maybe try to combine this vehicle. But I think the Lieutenant is going to be next -- but I think for the cities in particular, do these juice bars serve alcohol? I know they serve juice, which I've gotten a lot of random e-mails about that. We're not regulating the sale of juice. But it's a very important issue, so I appreciate you being here today and waiting this long and we'll work together on some language as well.

REBECCA BOMBERO: Yeah, juice bars is a good -- it's what they call all-ages night. So as you know, they produce a significant amount of problems.

REP. RITTER: Yeah. Thank you.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you.

Any further questions from the committee?
Seeing none, thank you very much.

The next speaker is Bruce Biel from the Hartford Police Department. He's here. And then we have Bruce Biel, Sandra Staub. Mr. Thody.

JASON THODY: Good afternoon, members of the committee. I'm here on behalf of Chief Jim Rovella from the Hartford Police Department. He apologizes for not being able to be here himself. And we are here to show our support for HB 5538, AN ACT CONCERNING JUICE BARS.

Our testimony is primarily about public safety. Our goal is to give the patrons that come into the city and the residents and the employees of

these establishments, providing them with the highest level of public safety. The mixture of our large diverse crowds combined with alcohol and maturity levels of 18 to 28 year olds have caused us some significant problems with the legislation as it sits.

Some of the key problems that we've seen are knowing about these events in advance, identifying the different age groups that are present, keeping these age groups separate, keeping the alcohol from those under age in an environment that is designed for liquor distribution and consumption, preventing the commingling of these two groups and getting both of these groups in and out of the establishments without conflict. One of the larger problems is doing all this with open communication and cooperation from those that run these establishments.

Our support in this legislation comes up after our two unfortunate homicides that occurred in the downtown area in 2013, both stemming from an establishment operating as a juice bar. Both of the altercations erupted inside the bar and spilled out into the street and the unfortunate incidents occurred outside. One of the biggest problems that we saw was communication between the bar staff and the police on the outside.

This, one of the changes in the proposed legislation allows for the chief to have police officers stationed inside the establishments during these juice bar -- while they're operating as a juice bar. That would allow officers on the outside to become aware of incidents that happen on the inside. The lack in communication was certainly a key issue in our particular instance.

Another issue is notification was not made for these events to the police department. As was stated just moments ago, the new legislation outlines a more defined process for notification and it also doesn't allow for a revolving notification where a juice bar will let us know ahead of time for their intent to operate it as a juice bar in an indefinite period of time.

Allowing for these multiple officers to be assigned is another big factor that we will analyze based on the size of the establishment, the number of floors, the numbers of entrances and exits, the bar staff on duty, the type of crowd and the history of the establishment. So the new legislation allows the chief of police to designate multiple officers. This also becomes an issue in some of our larger venues of officer safety. While the older proposed -- or the older statute, as it exists, provides an officer safety risk with only one officer assigned to these venues.

The wristbands will allow for easier identification of those that should not have alcohol and when they're in places they should not be. The added progressive penalties will increase adherence to the law and make these events safer for all invested.

We urge passage of this legislation and I can certainly answer any questions.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you very much.

Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER: I just want to thank you. I know you've been here a long, long time today and I know you have a lot of things you can be doing. So I do appreciate it. It is important. As I

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12:00 P.M.

told the ranking member in Hartford, we do it the hard way. We could have submitted testimony, but we wait here until people ask questions. I think it does matter to the committee that you are here. It shows how important it is in the City of Hartford and it's police department.

So thank you. Now it's my job. I'll work on it and we'll get it done, but I do appreciate you being here. Okay. Thank you.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you.

Any further questions from the committee?

Representative Fox.

REP. D.J. FOX: Thank you, and good evening. Just very quickly for my own purposes of understanding it. In terms of stationing police officers inside the facility, are there any other occurrences where that happens now?

JASON THODY: As far as where we station police officers inside?

REP. D.J. FOX: Correct. Yes, sir.

JASON THODY: We have local ordinances. 2917 is the local ordinance where if there's a pattern or practice of issues inside of an establishment, the chief can order the establishment to actually hire an officer at their own cost. The way our ordinance is currently written, he makes an assessment or his designee makes an assessment of the issues, the scope of the issues and he can actually apply more officers to that scenario.

This is a reactive ordinance. Something has to happen and actually more than one thing. There

has to be a pattern or practice. There has to be several issues before we can use this ordinance. When it comes to the juice bar, 18 and over, the way it's written is that just upon notification of this, of a bar operating as a juice bar the chief can then put a police officer at the door or inside.

REP. D.J. FOX: Thank you.

REP. G. FOX: Thank you very much.

Any further questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you. And get back to work, Officer.

The next speaker is Bruce Biel. Is Mr. Biel -- yes he is. And Sandra Staub and Giselle Jacobs. Mr. Biel.

BRUCE BIEL: How are you? Good evening. My name is Bruce Biel. I was a bail agent in Connecticut for 15 years. Now I represent Surety, which is the insurance company that represents many of the bail bondsmen in Connecticut. I am here in support on behalf of the insurance company on Bill Number 5588.

As a couple people have mentioned, Chief State's Attorneys Office, Kevin Kane, he is in support of this bill and he has submitted written testimony on behalf of this bill. So I urge everybody to take a look at that. There are a lot of good things in this bill, 5588, that will help our agents run a bailbond business as a business. It's a big concern, I know, over the years and I think this bill introduces a lot of very good things that will help our agents conduct business in Connecticut.

There's many things that people have brought up

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Toni N. Harp
Mayor

CITY OF NEW HAVEN
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Testimony Regarding

HB 5538 AN ACT CONCERNING JUICE BARS

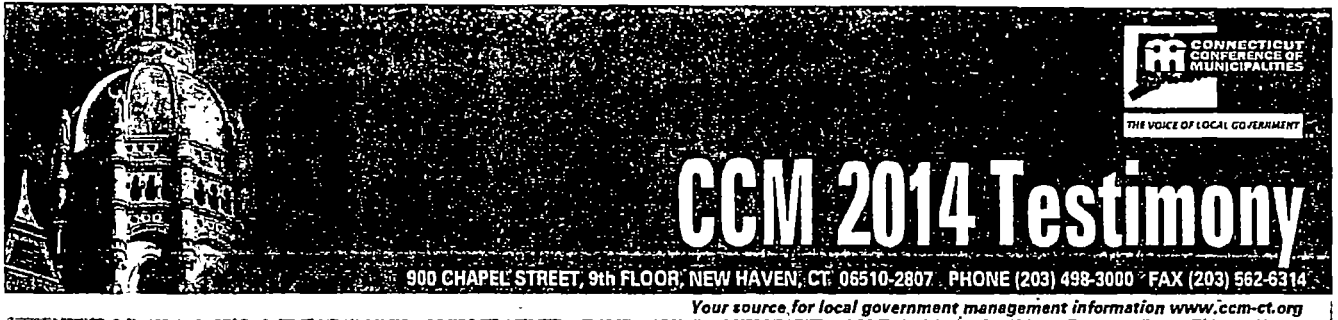
Submitted by
Rebecca Bombero, Legislative Director
March 24, 2014

Sen. Coleman, Rep. Fox, members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 5538 An Act Concerning Juice Bars.

This bill recognizes the additional risk associated with bars that host juice bars. It updates the noticing provision allowing email to replace faxes, and requires earlier notice allowing time for a department to prepare and ensure the proper staff are available. It also updates the fine structure recognizing that the previous fine structure was not enough of a deterrent to compel compliance.

In New Haven, we know first hand the difficulties that juice bars and other promoted events create for our public safety personnel. They produce bigger, more rowdy and unruly crowds. We welcome this legislation but would ask that the committee consider expanding the scope of the legislation to all promoted events. This would cover events that have special entertainment, specific themes – the events that you most often see on cards stuck below your car windshield wipers. These events cause some of the same problems, and it would benefit both patrons and public safety professionals if the scope of this bill was expanded.

We thank you for your consideration and urge passage of this bill.



JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

March 24, 2014

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5538, "An Act Concerning Juice Bars"

The bill would enhance the notice and enforcement provisions for select permittees operating juice bars or similar establishments. A "juice bar" is an area that serves nonalcoholic beverages to minors. In addition, juice bars are usually found within facilities that are otherwise permitted to serve alcohol.

CCM supports the proposal as it would provide clarity to the standards and permitting for these sometimes problematic establishments. In particular, HB 5538 would ensure proper notification of the operation of a juice bar to law enforcement, implement protocols regarding the operation of the facility to protect against minors being served alcohol, and enhance the penalty for any permittee that violates these provisions.

As a result of recent increases in violence within some of these establishments throughout the State, HB 5538 would be a reasonable means of enhancing the quality of life that our dedicated public safety officials strive to protect on a day-to-day basis. Law enforcement officials have cited that current practice does not properly account for adequate law enforcement notification of these facilities, and often establish little security or protocols to prevent minors from being served alcohol. These are matters of serious concern to our communities and impact local public safety.

For these reasons, CCM asks the Committee to favorably report HB 5538.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Senior Legislative Associate, at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or (203) 500-7556.