



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

**Raised Bill No. 5484**

LCO No. 2490



Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION

Introduced by:  
(TRA)

**AN ACT CONCERNING TREE AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT  
GUIDELINES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.**

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

1 Section 1. Section 13b-31h of the 2024 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective from passage*):

4 (a) The Department of Transportation shall develop, and thereafter  
5 revise as necessary, guidelines governing tree and vegetation  
6 management, removal and replacement along state highways for use by  
7 its employees and contractors when undertaking maintenance and  
8 construction projects. The goal of the guidelines shall be to ensure the  
9 impacts of maintenance and construction projects on the environment,  
10 landscape and noise pollution are balanced or outweighed by measures  
11 taken to avoid and minimize the impacts.

12 (b) Such guidelines shall include, but need not be limited to,  
13 provisions addressing (1) the safety of the traveling public; (2) general  
14 roadside vegetation management activities performed by the  
15 department, including, but not limited to, mowing, herbicide

16 application, grassing, replanting with native species whenever  
17 practicable, limb management, tree removal and debris removal; (3)  
18 beautification, enhancements and the effect on scenic roads designated  
19 pursuant to section 13b-31c; (4) visibility enhancement; and (5) the  
20 environmental impact of such work, including (A) preventing invasive  
21 tree, brush or plant species' growth and impact, (B) storm water run-off,  
22 (C) erosion, (D) replanting of vegetation species to expand and improve  
23 pollinator habitats, as described in section 22-90b, and (E) reduced  
24 mowing. Such guidelines shall apply to construction projects financed,  
25 in whole or in part, with federal funds to the extent such guidelines do  
26 not conflict with federal laws and regulations.

27 (c) Such guidelines shall not apply to the removal of any trees or  
28 vegetation necessary to maintain public safety or that is performed  
29 because of a weather-related civil preparedness emergency declared  
30 pursuant to section 28-9.

31 (d) [On or before January 1, 2024] Not later than thirty days after the  
32 effective date of this section, the Commissioner of Transportation shall  
33 submit such guidelines to the joint standing committees of the General  
34 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation and  
35 the environment, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a.  
36 [The] Not later than thirty days after the receipt of such guidelines, the  
37 committees shall hold a joint public hearing on such guidelines and the  
38 commissioner shall present such guidelines at the public hearing. The  
39 committees shall meet to approve or reject such guidelines and advise  
40 the commissioner of their approval or rejection of such guidelines. If the  
41 committees fail to approve or reject such guidelines within thirty days  
42 of such receipt, such guidelines shall be deemed approved. Such  
43 guidelines shall become effective when approved by an affirmative vote  
44 of the committees or deemed approved. If such guidelines are rejected,  
45 such guidelines shall be returned to the commissioner for revisions and  
46 resubmitted to the committees not later than thirty days after such  
47 rejection. Any such resubmitted guidelines shall be acted upon in the  
48 same manner as provided in this subsection for the initial submission of  
49 guidelines.

50 (e) The Department of Transportation shall not remove any trees or  
51 vegetation when undertaking maintenance and construction projects  
52 until such guidelines are approved or deemed approved in accordance  
53 with the provisions of this section, except the department may remove  
54 trees or vegetation necessary to maintain public safety or because of a  
55 weather-related civil preparedness emergency declared pursuant to  
56 section 28-9.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	13b-31h

**Statement of Purpose:**

To require the Department of Transportation to submit guidelines governing tree and vegetation management to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation and the environment for approval.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*