

**PA10-110**

**SB414**

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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Number 514.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Will the Clerk please -- question before the Chamber is suspension of the rules to bring up 514 Calendar.

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 514.

THE CLERK:

On page 29, Calendar 514, substitute for Senate Bill Number 414, AN ACT MAKING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES, favorable report of the Committee on Appropriations.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Guerrero, of the 29th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill, in concurrence with the Senate.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Question is -- before the Chamber is acceptance and passing, in concurrence with the Senate.

Please proceed.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk in possession of one amendment. And may the Clerk please call LCO

Number 5010, designated Senate "A," and I may be allowed to summarize?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 5010, previously designated Senate "A."

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 5010, Senate "A," offered by Senator DeFronzo.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Guerrero seeks leave of the chamber to summarize.

Seeing no objection, please proceed, sir.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Basically, this is a strike-all amendment and the amendment becomes the bill.

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Mr. Speaker, this is basically the Department of Motor Vehicle Omnibus Bill here which -- and I'll just highlight some of the captions inside this bill. It has a number of administrative efficiencies, including a greater reliance on electronic transmissions and less paperwork.

And, also, Mr. Speaker, it increases the authority of the commissioner to sanction company officials found in violation of certain laws in other states.

And, also, it eliminates the requirement of registration stickers.

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you.

The question before the House is adoption of Senate "A."

Representative Scribner, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SCRIBNER (107th):

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of the strike-all amendment that the Chairman of the Transportation Committee has called on Senate Bill 414. This is a fairly extensive bill that does make a lot of technical changes, that

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we worked with the commissioner's office to improve a variety of services to the public that we serve, and many of the bills that were brought forward, initiatives by members of the General Assembly to the Transportation Committee throughout the session which have held public hearings and been broadly supported by members of the committee.

I'd like to urge the members of the House to support the amendment that is before us which becomes the bill and certainly thank Chairman Guerrera for his leadership on pulling this all together. It truly was a collaborative effort of all of those of us that serve on the Transportation Committee along with the Department of Motor Vehicles and the commissioner's office, itself.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Scribner.

Further on Senate "A?"

If not, I'll try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Opposed?

The ayes have it. Senate "A" is adopted.

Further on the bill as amended? Further on the bill as amended?

Representative Guerrero.

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It was just one, final comment. I want to thank my Ranking Member, Representative Scribner, as always, who is always willing to work together with me, and also my Vice-Chair Steve Mikutel, who was very influential in helping getting this prepared.

And one other thing, Mr. Speaker, and that is the Department of Motor Vehicles, and this is Ernie Bertothy and Sharon Geanuracos, who extremely worked very hard to draft these technical revisions, and so forth. And I applaud them for all their help.

So, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you, Representative Guerrero.

Further on the bill as amended?

If not, staff and guests please retire to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

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THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll  
call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting by  
a roll call. Members to the chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted?

Please check the board and make sure your vote is  
properly cast.

if all members voted, the machine will be locked.

Will the Clerk please take a tally.

Representative Leone, for what purpose do you  
rise, sir?

REP. LEONE (148th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to cast my vote in the affirmative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Representative Leone, in the affirmative.

Further? Further?

Will the Clerk please announce a tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill Number 414 as amended by Senate "A,"  
in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number Voting 146

Necessary for Passage 74

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Those voting Yea	146
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	5

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

This bill passing, in concurrence with the  
Senate.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 505.  
Representative Olson.

REP. OLSON (46th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise for -- to move for a  
suspension of the rules for immediate consideration of  
House Calendar Number 505.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Suspension of the rules for a transmittal.  
Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 505.

THE CLERK:

On page 27, Calendar 505, Senate Bill Number 283,  
AN ACT CONCERNING AUDITS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL  
SERVICES, favorable report of the Committee on  
Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

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Those absent and not voting 3

THE CHAIR:

The bill as amended passes.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 30, Calendar Number 195, matter marked third order of the day, Calendar Number 265, Substitute of for Senate Bill 414, AN ACT MAKING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES, favorable report by Committees on Transportation, Finance Revenue and Bonding, Judiciary and Appropriations.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

THE CHAIR:

Acting on acceptance and approval, sir, would you like to remark further?

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, the Clerk is in possession of an Amendment LCO 5010. I ask that that amendment be called and I be permitted to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO 5010, which will be designated Senate Amendment, Schedule A, is offered by Senator DeFronzo of the 6th district.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President I move adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Motion on the floor for summarization and adoption. Seeing no objection, please proceed, sir.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, this is a strike all amendment and the amendment becomes the bill. This amendment includes a number of administrative and technical changes to DMV statues and also several substantive changes which I'll try to enumerate for the -- for

the body.

First, there are a number of administrative efficiencies, including greater reliance on electronic technology which should result in less paperwork for the department and for its customers. There's an elimination of restrictions on driver retraining programs so that more small driving schools could participate in that program. There's an elimination of the requirement for a registration sticker which will result in approximately \$800,000 savings to the taxpayers of the State of Connecticut. There are new penalties for medical personnel who provide false information on certification forms for drivers with disabilities. There are more stringent background checks --

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo, one second. Can you please keep the tone, volume down? I'm trying to hear Senator DeFronzo. If you have to speak, please take it outside. Thank you.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

There are more stringent background checks for owners and operators of driving schools. There's a

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grant of increased authority to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to sanction company officials found in violation of certain laws in other states.

The -- the bill gives the commissioner the authority to contract with automobile clubs to issue identity cards and certain registration materials. The bill corrects a problem expressed by a number of municipalities involving accessed information on the part of their assessors and tax collectors.

And if I can flip the page here I can get you a couple more -- the -- the bill establishes an ignition interlock device fee and fund and this is hopefully to lay the foundation for an expanded ignition interlock device program in the future.

The bill increases the photo ID requirement for license renewal now from six to 12 years. It establishes a streamline method for the processing and reviewing of fingerprints required by prospective bus drivers. And, finally, Mr. President, this bill establishes stronger and more rigid fines for school bus companies that fail to comply with agency inspection standards or orders. That's the amendment, Mr. President, and I would ask the body to approve it.

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Good afternoon, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon, ma'am.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Mr. President, I rise to support, of course, the DMV bill that has many, many sections in it that comprise a lot of the issues that, not only the department brought before us, but also many other bills that were brought -- brought before us as well. However, although we have gone through an extensive number of sections, there is one section of note that talks about implementing statutory language to the real ID requirements into statute that will not result in a fiscal impact to DMV.

More clearly stated a federal grant to assist states to comply with real ID requirements will fund the background checks for about 250 DMV employees. The current law requires that DMV subject new employees to state and national criminal history record checks and this bill requires DMV to run

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formal background checks on all employees who will make or produce drivers license or identity cards or who will have the ability to affect the identity information that appears on them.

Although that is important language to include and was requested, however, it does appear that one area has been eliminated from this bill that was being requested of all the states to include and that section would have conformed statutory language to the real ID requirements into statutes that would have, in fact, required the DMV Commissioner, before issuing a drivers license or identity card to anyone who is not a US Citizen or national, to verify the individual has been lawfully admitted for permanent or temporary US residency. As such, an applicant for a license or identity card would have to submit valid documentary evidence that he or she is an alien lawfully admitted for permanent or temporary residency in the United States.

Another requirement that was being asked of the State of Connecticut from the federal government was too that this -- had -- individual also has conditional permanent resident status or has an approved application for asylum in the US or has

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entered the US in refugee status. Additionally, has a valid, unexpired, non-immigrant visa or non-immigrant visa status for entry into the United States or has a pending application for asylum in the US or has a pending or approved application for temporary protective status in the US or has approved deferral status or has pending application for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for a permanent residence in the US or conditional permanent resident status in the US.

Part of this requirement was for the purpose that the commissioner would have to issue a limited term license or identity card if an applicant provided evidence of his or her status in any of the categories that we just mentioned previously, four through eight, or otherwise indicates that his or her presence in the US is limited by federal law or too that the commissioner determines that the applicant has met all other statutory requirements.

This license or card would be valid only during the applicant's authorized stay in the US or for one year if there was no definite end to the authorized period of stay. The reasons for that -- for this

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requirement and why the federal government was asking states to make sure that they complied with this of course, has to do with certainly safety and other precautions. Much of this type of legislation was introduced after September 11th and a lot of concerns about terrorist activities.

We only have to look just to this recent weekend when some serious actions were taken and were yet to be determined whether the individuals involved in this were or were not American citizens, whether they did or did not have valid status and -- and licenses. My question would be, to our good chairman, why was this language deleted from our current DMV bill, when in fact the language was passed unanimously out of Transportation and Judiciary and only recently did we see that we do not have this language in here to verify the process or provide transparency in the process.

Could I please ask through you, Mr. President, to our good chairman, why the change of heart at this stage of the legislative process? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

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SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President. Through you to  
Senator Boucher.

Clearly this is -- has been and continues to be  
one of the more contentious issues in compliance  
with real ID. If this bill passes today, we will be  
fully compliant in 17 out of the 18 criteria that  
are -- that are required. You mentioned the  
background checks being the most recent item of  
compliance. The -- the item of the limited --  
limited licenses is one that continues to be  
problematic for -- not only for Connecticut, but for  
a number of states.

And, you are correct, we had this in the  
original bill; we -- we put it out for public  
hearing to see what we'd get on it; we, in truth,  
did not get much comment on it; moved through the  
committee process, did not get much feedback on it,  
but in the last week or two we've begun to get quite  
a bit of negative reaction to inclusion in the bill  
and the -- the truth of the matter is that we have  
until May of next year, May 11th of next year, to  
come into compliance with this -- 25 other states  
have either passed statutory bans on compliance with

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real ID or have passed joint resolutions in opposition to compliance with real ID.

So, there is a very considerable argument, compelling argument I think, that can be made that this is likely to change. When you have 26 or 27 states out there statutorily opposing implementation, you have congress still debating the pass ID which is the Obama administration's response to real ID, and a lot of things happening around the country recently which is triggering I think, a broader debate on -- on immigration. So, in our -- in our judgment, and I'll say my judgment as chair of the committee and Representative Guerrero, we decided it would be wiser to wait on this -- on this issue until next spring; we'll have a better sense of what the congress is doing; we'll have a better feel for what the other states are doing in terms of whether they're going to take legal action to block this implementation or whether implementation will be resolved.

I would -- as you know, we had a conversation on this, through you, Mr. President, I would much prefer to have this all resolved today, but I think these issues are still not resolved on a national

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level and I think to commit Connecticut at this point would be a little bit premature. Through you, Mr. President. ...

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank the good chairman for his answers --

THE CHAIR:

I want to remind everybody about use of cell phones in the chambers.

Thank you. Sorry Senator Boucher. Please proceed.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you very much, Mr. President and I certainly thank the good Senator for his answers and explaining some of the reasons that -- that this was deleted from this general bill. I am concerned that given the public hearings that we had on this bill and multiple opportunities for the public to express their opposition or their favor of the bill, that we received substantially less comment than of any controversy than in previous years and this may have been a very good time to include this so that we

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could proceed and be in compliance.

Through you, Mr. President, I am going to take the good chairman at his word that in fact we do still have an opportunity for compliance that we would not be in jeopardy in losing any substantial funds if we wait until next May. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFRONZO.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Mr. President, if -- if in fact the deadline of May, I think its May 11, 2011, stands, we will have to be -- and these provisions are not changed, we will definitely have to be in compliance by then or fined or take legal action to maintain a position in opposition to compliance. But, if everything stays the same, the status quo were in place and the -- and the current extension was -- was required to be in place and be adhered to, we will -- I am not aware of losing any funding at this point.

If we go beyond that time, we may be in jeopardy in a number of ways. There are sanctions that the federal government may apply which I don't think any of us would like to experience. Through

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you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Yes, Mr. President, thank you. Certainly a question just was raised in that answer in that there was some reference to the fact that some states have engaged in legal action against the government. Would that be one of the options for Connecticut and in doing so, would there be a cost involved in -- in proceeding on that front? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

If the legislature or the Governor decided to take legal action, I'm sure there would be some -- some costs. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Yes, Mr. President, through you.

Do we have a sense of the amount of federal

funding that is at stake here or that's on the line should we fail to comply in a timely manner and the rules are -- of the game are not changed at the federal level? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Actually, that's one of the central issues in the opposition from a number of states is that there is no clear indication of how much federal funding we will be getting under this -- under this federal act. And so many states have -- have reacted as our municipalities react to unfunded mandates in that -- that many states are viewing this as an unfunded mandate. And if you were to look at the -- the testimony from -- from Commissioner Ward in our -- in our committee, well there's no fiscal note attached to this.

He could not be very precise on what it would cost to implement this in future years either. At one point he, I don't have the actual testimony in front of me today but I was looking at it the other day, he said that he would expect it would cost at

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least -- he would have to hire at least 20 additional staff people to comply with this provision going forward and -- and the provisions will come into affect shortly where new -- new applicants for licenses will have to -- have to produce their original birth certificate which are - - which is a, you know, a pretty significant change from where we are today.

So, there are federal funds that have been pledged for this. We don't know how much would be coming to Connecticut and in fact, to summarize again, one of the -- one of the very contentious issues between the states and the federal government is exactly that one -- will this be paid for in it's entirety by the federal government. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank the chairman for his patience in this line of questions, but I think it would be very helpful to the public if maybe we could further explain so that they understand currently when

someone comes forward to get a drivers license, to what extent are they asked to prove residency or citizenship to date without this inclusion of this language? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

There is a -- there is a legal term, I'm not familiar with it, I'm not a lawyer, but even -- even today an individual going for a license has to prove that they are here -- or may be asked to prove that they are here legitimately. And, if they are not, there -- the -- again, a license is not a right, it's a privilege and if that individual is not here or demonstrated to be here legally, I believe the commissioner does have now the authority to not issue a -- not issue a license. Obviously in those cases where somebody is here under a visa or temporary stay, they need to produce that -- that documentation -- they can be giving a license to the -- and those may vary from a short stay to a -- to a lengthy stay. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I think one of the areas of discussion that we had extensively in our committee was the fact that currently we have a problem and a disconnect between the length of term of a -- of a valid drivers license and the actual legal period of time that a -- that a non-resident is allowed to stay in the country. Often times that license can extend way beyond the maybe two year application without this new language. Through you, Mr. President, how do we resolve this issue?

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

Without that language in the bill, there would be no change in the short run. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher:

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

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I certainly thank the chairman for his answers. I think we do have some areas of concern that really need to be fixed with or without complying with this language, certainly the last point being very important that, in fact, if someone is here on a two year visa and they have a valid drivers license that can extend four to six years, we do have an opportunity here for some problems to occur.

And, I think that given the state of affairs in this country right now with concerns about the fact that most people come here legally but there are occasions when that is not the case and other occasions when maybe some activities can be perpetrated that could be of danger and cause concern, that were -- were probably the rationale for -- for this requirement to begin with. So I would hope that we do not delay very long.

If in the future we do not fix this problem, it would have been a much better bill if that had been included and we could comply and not have to worry about any penalties going forward whether it's financial or legal into the next session. And, even if we were to convene in January, we would have to work quickly on this bill to comply before the end

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of that particular long session. But I again, thank the good chairman for his answers and I would be supporting the underlying bill. It is, however, not complete as far as I am concerned, this session. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir -- ma'am.

Senator Kissel on -- on the amendment, Senate Amendment A, which is the bill.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I followed what Senator DeFronzo had indicated and this amendment becomes the bill, but I sort of -- my notes go to the underlying bill was, so just to clarify what actually carried forward from the underlying bill into this new amendment. One of the things that was in the underlying bill was requiring the commissioner to conduct state and federal criminal history records checks of DMV employees who make or produce drivers licenses. And, my first question, through you, Mr. President, is does the amendment still have that as part of the bill?

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

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SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

It does.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel:

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And my understanding is the underlying bill had required rather than allowed certain health professionals to report to DMV, health conditions that may impair an individual's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle and I'm just wondering if that's still part of this amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

The -- the language there has been -- has reverted back to permissive language but what has been added is an -- an indemnification for those professionals so that they might be more secure in providing accurate and correct information on the health status of those individuals. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And does the amendment, which becomes the bill, still make it a crime for certain health professionals to falsely certify in writing that a driver requires a handicap placard? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

Yes, it does.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And though you, Mr. President, does the amendment, which becomes the bill, still prohibit municipal assessors from disclosing information they receive from the Department of Motor Vehicles that the Department is not required to disclose?

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

Now that's an interesting question. The -- the -- through you, Mr. President, that language is still there but it does correct the problem that the assessor's were having -- having -- getting access to that information so that the assessor's will in fact be able to get the date of birth information they were -- they were trying to get access to in order to resolve their -- their issues, although the language doesn't quite suggest that, but it's a -- it's a bit of a trick -- tricky wording issue.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And, so, through you, Mr. President, the legislative intent is to allow these assessors throughout Connecticut to have access to this information? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

The -- the legislative intent is to allow assessors and tax collectors to have -- to have access to that date of birth information. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And, through you, Mr. President, does the amendment, which becomes the law, still allow rather than require the commissioner to issue registration stickers?

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

It does.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. It's -- I recall that one of the things that I believe was stated that rather than renewing one's license every six years that we're now going to allow renewals every 12 years.

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Did I hear that correctly? Through you, Mr.  
President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

Let me -- let me explain. The -- the license renewal is still every six years. The requirement for a photo ID will be shifted to once every other renewal so that you will still be required to come in every six years for a renewal -- actually you'll be able to do it by mail now, or hopefully in the -- not -- distance future, maybe by over the -- over the web, but you'll only be required to come in for a photo now every other registration -- or -- or license renewal. So long as some provisions on that that, that the department is compliance with -- so long as there's a digital photo on record, we can move to a 12 year -- 12 year cycle for photos.

Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. So a question, through

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you, Mr. President. So recently in the fall I renewed my license and I did it at a AAA outlet in Enfield; they were wonderful, it was fast, courteous. Is it my understanding that when you have your photograph taken at one of those facilities that that photograph is retained such that in six years when I have to renew my license again, that that photograph should be available and I wouldn't have to have it taken again? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

That's correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. And, through you, Mr. President, is there a cost savings associated with skipping every other license renewal period of time or why are we -- why are we doing that? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Through you, Mr. President.

There is a minimal fiscal advantage to doing it this way. Obviously, if we can decrease traffic into our -- our offices and, you know, process people a little more quickly, that's a good thing and it probably will result in, not so much in a -- I would say the -- the notion here is you'll -- you'll achieve a greater level of efficiency, not so much cost savings. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Mr. President. And, I'm sure that my friend and colleague from New Britain wasn't making a pun when he said he wanted to decrease traffic through the Department of Motor Vehicle offices. Those -- those answer all my questions, thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further?

Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Mr. President.

I have a couple of questions, through you to the Chairman of the Transportation Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator DeFronzo, I supported this bill as it passed through Transportation and Judiciary and my neighbor, Senator Boucher, expressed some concerns of changes to the bill in the strike all. I know that you've worked very hard on this to -- to bring legislation to us that will be productive and -- and sail through an approval, but there -- there is a section that I'm very concerned about that is now missing. And I wondered if I could get some clarification from you on your assessment of the controversy around non-resident aliens and their drivers' licenses. So my point would be the suggestion of the real ID act is to have a coterminous license as it relates to an individual's immigration status here in the United States and I'm

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-- I'm just trying to get a sense of what is the objection to what I think many people would think is fairly common sense that someone should not have a valid drivers license if they don't have valid immigration status. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

And, Senator, I think you and I agree on that. I do think it's a common sense goal that we should be striving after. The opposition to it though comes from many quarters. It comes from progressive groups that -- that feel there is no -- not adequate due process in the system so that if someone shows up at a motor vehicle office and we're asking a clerk to essentially make a decision as to whether that individual is in good status or whether they have legal papers pending, people feel that that's not an adequate safe guard on that end.

On the other end we have considerable opposition voice from libertarian type folks who believe that the entire bill is too intrusive and -- and requires too much information, personal

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information, to be -- to be provided to government. So the opposition comes over quite an -- quite an array. And, you know, I had the opportunity when I -- when I was reviewing this the other day to look at some of the comments that have been made in debate in other states and the array of states, as I indicated earlier, 25 states have taken position in opposition to the implementation of real ID and they range from Alaska to Pennsylvania to Louisiana to Utah, all across the board, you know, all political spectrums and the -- and the comments that are made in the legislative debate range across that whole political spectrum, from libertarian concerns to due process concerns into more progressive concerns.

So it's -- I don't think it's any one issue. For me, I would -- I would say it's this. That I do think there are some -- some process issues that need to be addressed here in Connecticut. It has always concerned me a little bit that we'll be asking a busy DMV service representative to be making this kind of an initial decision. And then there -- we have not seen in any of the legislation, either in this amendment or in the prior legislation, a clear process by which disputes can

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be resolved. And I think that is something we need to -- need to have.

And, then thirdly, the -- the issue of the amount of federal funding to support this measure is still not at all clear. So, those are -- those are both a snapshot of what's happening -- happening nationally on this and what my personal concerns are here in Connecticut. Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Mr. President.

And thank you, Senator, for your answer.

Actually you went far beyond what -- what my initial question was and I appreciate your -- your viewpoint on the real ID as a general topic. I think more specifically, though, we're probably in agreement on a number of the concerns on the broader topic of real ID, but more specifically, the topic of coterminous driver license. That topic, in and of itself, I'm not sure that there is -- is objection in the libertarian world.

Certainly the -- those who are concerned about state's rights I think are not in objection to that.

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My -- my concern frankly, is that this is the last step in the process for us to comply and there seems to be a large population of my constituents that express a concern, quite frankly, that an undocumented person is -- is legally driving a car in the State of Connecticut. It seems -- it just seems totally counterproductive and -- and not appropriate for state government to -- to allow that to occur.

And, so if all we need to do is take this last step of coterminous driver's licenses that seems to be the most appropriate step to take. I understand your concerns; I'm very disappointed that -- that this didn't make it to the final bill and I'm hopeful that we can continue to have this discussion as I think that this is important to the residents of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Mr. President, may -- may I respond?

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Thank you. Senator, I -- I appreciate those

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comments. I -- I pledge to you and Senator Boucher right now that I'd be more than happy to convene a little working group over the next couple of months because I do think this is an issue that the legislature is going to have confront when we come back in January.

And I'd be more than happy to put a small working group together with the two of you, maybe some of our friends from the different political ends of the -- of the world and maybe we can sit down and hammer something out. My -- my particular concern is the -- is the due process procedure. That if somebody is arbitrarily denied an extension of a license there needs to be some process to resolve that and that's my basic concern and I'd be more than happy to work with both of you and others in trying to resolve that. And I appreciate your concern. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on Senate A? Will you remark further on Senate A?

If not, I will try your minds.

All those in favor, please signify by saying

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Aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed Nays? The Ayes have it.

Senate Amendment A is adopted.

Will you remark further on Senate Bill 414 as amended by Senate A?

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President I rise to support this particular bill as it's drafted and also call attention to some of the very positive things that are in this bill that is good for the public to know, particularly when it comes to the safety of our students with regards to the licensing of driver's schools and driver instructions where we have required it in this bill, the DMV Commissioner to conduct state and national criminal background checks and check the state child abuse and negligent registry for applicants seeking or renewing a license to conduct a driving school.

I think that's a very important area in here

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that may not have been something that we had caught early on and also to apprise the public of the fact that we have a section in here on ignition interlocks that has the bill conform the law to current practice by requiring rather than allowing, installation of interlock device for such second offenses for offenders 21 and over and it poses a mandatory one year suspension installation of interlock for the two following years.

It also applies penalties to all drivers older than 21 convicted of a second DUI violation in ten years rather than only those convicted based solely on alcohol use. So, there are some provisions in here that are important for the public to know as well as some safeguards for those that are offenders of 21 or -- or under, it imposes a suspension of three years or until the offender is 21, whichever is longer and bars operation of a motor vehicle without an interlock device for the two years following the completion of the suspension.

So I do believe that there are a number of factors in here that address directly the safety of our public and particularly our young people. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Boucher.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further on Senate Bill 414?

Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DeFRONZO:

Mr. President, if there is no other comment, I would ask that this matter be placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Motion on the floor to place this item on Consent. Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President for several more items to -- to mark. The next ready go item is calendar page 33, Calendar 237, Senate Bill 300. And after that, Mr. President, we have calendar page 35, Calendar 316, Senate Bill 278.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2010**

**VOL. 53  
PART 10  
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THE CLERK:

Roll call -- roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all senators please return to the chamber? Roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all senators please return to the chamber? And pay particular close attention to the call of those items placed on the Consent Calendar.

Starting with Senate Agenda Number 3, Substitute for Senate Bill 456; calendar page 2, Calendar 143, Substitute for Senate Bill 393; calendar page 12, Calendar 462, Substitute for Senate Bill 5404; calendar page 13, Calendar 475, House Bill 5402; calendar page 14, Calendar 479, Substitute for House Bill 5028; Calendar 480, Substitute for House Bill 5372; calendar page 23, Calendar Number 541, House Bill 5241; calendar page 25, Calendar 35, Senate Bill 12; calendar page 27, Calendar 106, Substitute for Senate Bill 318; Calendar 122, Substitute for Senate Bill 319; calendar page 29, Calendar 169, Substitute for Senate Bill 108; Calendar 170, Substitute for Senate Bill 109; calendar page 30, Calendar 195, Substitute for Senate Bill 414; calendar page 31, Calendar 206, Substitute for Senate Bill 382;

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calendar page 32, Calendar 218, Substitute for Senate Bill 302; Calendar 223, Substitute for Senate Bill 380; Calendar 230, Senate Bill 283; calendar page 33, Calendar 235, Substitute for Senate Bill 216; calendar page 34, Calendar 258, Substitute for Senate Bill 274; calendar page 35, Calendar 316, Substitute for Senate Bill 278; calendar page 36, Calendar 318, Substitute for Senate Bill 418 and calendar page 40, Calendar 546, Senate Resolution Number 17.

Mr. President, I believe that completes the items placed on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is open on the Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is voting by roll call on the Consent Calendar. Will all senators please return to the chamber? The Senate is voting by roll on the Consent Calendar. Will all senators please return to the chamber?

THE CHAIR:

Senators please check the board to make certain that your vote is properly recorded. If all Senators have voted and all Senators votes are properly recorded, the machine will be locked

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and the Clerk may take a tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on passage of Consent Calendar

Number 1.

Total Number Voting	35
Those Voting Yea	35
Those Voting Nay	0
Those Absent, Not Voting	1

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar 1 is adopted.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would yield the floor to any members for announcements or points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there announcements or points of personal privilege? Are there announcements or points of personal privilege?

Seeing none, Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**TRANSPORTATION  
PART 2  
253 – 519**

**2010**

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csd/par TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE 12:00 P.M.

CHAIRMEN: Senator DeFronzo  
Representative Guerrera

VICE CHAIRMEN: Senator Duff  
Representative Kehoe  
Representative Mikutel

MEMBERS PRESENT:  
SENATORS: Boucher, Colapietro, Frantz,  
LeBeau, McDonald, McLachlan

REPRESENTATIVES: Boukus, Camillo, Caruso, Drew,  
Fawcett, Fontana, Fox, Giegler,  
Hoydick, Hwang, Janowski,  
Jutila, Lawlor, Leone, Mazurek,  
McCluskey, Mioli, Morin,  
Nicastro, Perone, Reeves,  
Sawyer, Sayers, Scribner, Serra

REP. GUERRERA: Good afternoon. We'd like to start our public hearing here, so I ask everyone be seated. And if we can shut the door right there, please. Thank you. All right. Let's start off with the officials here. And let's see who we have first on our list. Oh, Representative Larry Cafero, is he here? As prompt as always. How are you Larry?

REP. CAFERO: I'm doing well, Mr. Chairman. Ranking member, Scribner; ranking member, Senator Boucher; members of the committee, thank you so much for this opportunity to speak to you. I'm here this morning to speak in favor, generally, of Senate Bill 414, the bill that has been put forth by the Department of Motor Vehicle. And, frankly, if I may focus on two sections of that bill.

You know, as all of us are struggling with the incredible deficits and the problems that come with that and trying to get our budget under control, we sometimes think that any savings

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comes at the expense of service to our constituents and service to the public. And I think sections 24 and 26 contradict that conventional wisdom.

In section 24 of Senate Bill 414, of course, it allows the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles -- a person I know, personally. He's a fine fine man -- it allows the commissioner to allow automobile clubs to conduct registration renewals and renewals of identity cards. As you all know, you folks in your wisdom have allowed over the years, automobile clubs to renew licenses, and it's my understanding that about a third of the licenses are currently renewed at these automobile clubs. To shift these other responsibilities, would presume that many people would avail themselves of their car registration and their ID cards being taken care of at these automobile clubs, which might very well free up resources in other areas, or achieve savings.

And, secondly, section 26, as you know, does away with the registration stickers that we all put on your windshields. It is our understanding, through the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, that if that requirement were eliminated, it would save 820,000 -- almost \$821,000 per year. That's just in materials and postage, et cetera. And there is a significant savings that I think we all would agree would not affect service or the lives of our constituents, in any shape or form.

There's other ideas both in this bill and outside this bill that I think, again, are along a similar line, wherein we could achieve savings, make things run more efficiently, give as good, if not better service, to our public

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and also help solve our budget crisis. So I encourage you -- and I know you have a lot of things to debate and discuss -- and I encourage you to look carefully at this bill.

And I would ask this, that as we know, sometimes in these multisection bills, there are certain things that are controversial and there are certain things that everybody's in agreement on. If this committee finds itself in that position, I may respectfully suggest that we take those things that are no-brainers, as they say, and we pass them as quickly as possible, because, I think, if we did that with everything, we would find that we agree on more things than we disagree with, and most importantly, get a lot done and a lot accomplished.

So with that, I thank you for the time, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. And I'll be glad to answer any questions, although I do not purport to be an expert, other than the fact that I know when I did put on that registration sticker, it is very difficult to put on and very difficult to take off. So I would welcome the chance not to have to do those things.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative Cafero. Just real quick, Representative, you talked briefly about in regards, in bills sometimes, there's some good parts an, obviously, some bad parts and try to move them along as fast as we can. And I think, Representative that this committee, we do a pretty good job of that in regards to, you know, always being on a bipartisan effort to make sure that whatever happens, we do what's best for our constituents and the members of our committee and the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives and everyone in the state of

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Connecticut. So I couldn't agree with you more when you made those comments. And I applaud you for all the work that you do, too, Representative, in regards to your caucus and your constituents.

Larry, you did mention, though, real quick, in regards to removing that sticker, how much money we can save. So was there an alternative, if we don't use that sticker? Do you know? Or --

REP. CAFERO: Well, the notes that I have on the committee -

REP. GUERRERA: I can ask DMV, too. If you don't have the answer, that's fine.

REP. CAFERO: No, it says that, obviously, the section 26 makes the issuance of registration stickers permissive rather than mandatory. The registration information, as you folks know far better than I, is available and updated regularly on the COLLECT, the Connecticut Online Law Enforcement Communications Teleprocessing. Some won't argue it's more reliable for the police to verify information through that mechanism than the redundant windshield stickers. And that it is our information, based on the subcommittee on transportation and the Appropriations Committee that eliminating the stickers would yield a \$820,700 in savings just on postage and supplies alone. It provides motorists with a better unobstructed view of the road and eliminates the messy and cumbersome of putting on and taking off of the sticker. That's the information that I have on it, Mr. Chairman.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative Cafero and I couldn't agree with you more. Eight hundred and twenty thousand, it may not seem like a lot

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of money in the big picture, but it is a lot of money. And if we have to start attacking everything little bits at a time to get to that big pot, so that way we can try to do what we can for our constituents. So thank you --

REP. CAFERO: Thank you.

REP. GUERRERA: -- for your comments here. And just one other comment before I hand it over to Representative Scribner, did you happen to notice we passed a snow and ice bill today?

REP. CAFERO: You know, I did, Mr. Chairman. And members of the committee, I thank you very much. I think I've submitted that to you. I think the first time I did I had hair, a full head of it. I appreciate, I know people have some questions that are very legitimate and they're hopefully be answered down the road, but I can't thank the committee enough for allowing that piece of legislation to move forward.

And may I also say, Mr. Chairman, in regard to your comments that you're very right, and you're being modest that the Transportation Committee, as certainly under the leadership of both Republicans and Democrats, who lead this committee of late, has been known to work in a very bipartisan way and reduce any rancor and get the people's business done. And you should all be applauded for that. There are times that people legitimately disagree with various things and sometimes that holds up things that everyone agrees upon. That's not a good thing. And I'm a firm proponent of let's break things up into little pieces. Those things we agree on, let's launch them out. And the other ones would be continued to debate. And I think you folks have made the hallmark of your committee.

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And leadership of this committee has been just that. And I applaud you for that.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you for those nice words, Representative. Representative Scribner.

REP. SCRIBNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Cafero,

REP. CAFERO: Good morning, Representative Scribner.

REP. SCRIBNER: Thank you for taking the time to be here and advocate on behalf of Senate Bill 414. As you have aptly pointed out -- and I would also take the opportunity to thank the department and, specifically, Commissioner Ward in administration, for really identifying common sense approaches, where we really can save the taxpayers significant dollars. And I hope, just like you alluded to, the way that we work well together in this committee, which set the tone and example of how government operates well when we work together and respect each other; that this also serves as an example to other state agencies, where there really are opportunities and ways that we can save dollars as we face these most difficult economic times. And I think that's a message that can't be said enough or strongly enough. And you being here today really does help advocate for that. So I appreciate it and thank you.

REP. CAFERO: Thank you very much.

REP. GUERRERA: Any other comments? Thank you for your testimony, Representative.

REP. CAFERO: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, I appreciate it.

REP. GUERRERA: Senator Kane, followed by Commissioner Ward.

very interested in the airplanes in the state of Connecticut, both privately owned, as well as owned by municipalities, so I would like to ask, if you have an opportunity, if you would set up some kind of a meeting. I'd be very happy to go down to Oxford and see what's happening there.

SENATOR KANE: That's wonderful. I would love that.

REP. BOUKUS: I'd ask you to set that up, and we'll see if we can mutually agree on that. I don't want a ride. That's fine. I just want to go down and see how it id operated.

SENATOR KANE: I would love to have you.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you. Any other comments?  
Seeing none --

SENATOR KANE: Thank you very much.

REP. GUERRERA: -- thank you, Senator. Good luck.  
Next, Commissioner Ward.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Sorry about that. I SB409  
assume the welcome and happy to be here is on the record. Even if the mike wasn't pushed, I won't repeat that all.

REP. GUERRERA: And it's always such a pleasure for you to be here. I like that.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: And, indeed, it is a pleasure to be here. The Senate Bill 414, there are several sections I'd like to make mention of within it that kind of fall into a category of public safety, efficiency and cost savings and security. I'll mention first the security issue.

Sections 12 and 28 are necessary to make Connecticut compliant with REAL ID. Those sections, section 12 provides that a driver's license list -- issued to a noncitizen will be in effect for the period of time that the noncitizen is legally present in the country. If they were here on a two-year Visa, their driver's license would be two years. If they're here on a one-year student Visa, their license will be issued for one year. If it was a longer period of time, it would be issued for that longer period of time.

Connecticut is otherwise fully in compliance and checks the right documents, to be sure that a noncitizen is legally present in Connecticut. But if they're here for two years, we give them a six-year license. This statute change is necessary to link the length of stay to the period in the license. If it's an indefinite length of stay, then it would be a one-year license, which could be renewed, as long as they remain legally present.

If we don't pass this, we will not be in compliance with REAL ID, which means beginning -- as the law is presently written, as best as anyone can guess that's where it's going to stay -- in May of 2011, the Connecticut driver's license, as a noncompliant license, will not be able to be used as an identity document for access to most federal properties, including Bradley Airport, which means if you want to travel, even on a domestic flight, showing the Connecticut license will only be the first step in your security clearance. You will need enhanced security clearance to get on. That is much more than going through now, the metal detector and perhaps the X-ray of your bag and that kind of thing. If, in fact -- and I think it's over two-thirds -- closer to 75 percent of those that travel through Bradley

Airport use the Connecticut license as their identity document. That will create huge backlogs at the airport because most of the people going through will have intensive security to be able to board an aircraft.

We think it also makes sense, from the point of view of security, in general, that you give a license to citizens when they meet the standards. You give a license to our visitors to our country when they meet the standards, but only for the period of time that they're appropriately here. We actually think it will be easier -- there are times now a license may be denied to a noncitizen because of some ambiguity. We may be able to resolve it in their favor, knowing that it's limited to a certain period of time. The details are spelled out in the bill.

The second part of this section, section 28, the Federal REAL ID Act requires that for all employees, who are in any regard involved in the issuance of the license, of the changing of the driving history of the license, any of the identifying information needs to have gone through a background check. Most of our state employees have. For all new employees that includes a fingerprint base background check. But for some, current employees have never had the fingerprint base background check. If they're going to work in these units, to comply with REAL ID, they will need to meet that.

Getting that background check does not disqualify them; it's only disqualified if it meets certain federal standards. We've previously supplied to the Chairmen, the ranking members, a list of all those. We can provide them electronically to other members if they want. They are fairly significant. Minor things that occurred in your record in the past

is not going to mean somebody loses their job. It's only something that's -- some are quite -- you virtually never find -- it was: sedition, treason, things of that sort, murder, involved in identity theft. They were crimes of that sort. It doesn't mean you had a speeding ticket, or a drunk driving at some time in your life, and you can never work in a licensing unit at the DMV. And, again, it's spelled out in federal regulation and we'll provide that.

It also doesn't mean that we discharge an employee. It means we just can't work them in that area. But we need to be able to do the background check for everybody, or we're not in compliance. If we're not in compliance, we can't issue a REAL ID compliant license.

The second piece -- and I'll take questions on these and any other bills. I'm just going to go through these couple sections. Sections 23 and 25 are what I would call cost savings and efficiencies.

Section 23 does two things. It allows us to issue every other driver's license without a personal appearance. Right now, when you come in every six years, we take your picture. This would allow us to take your picture every other visit, or every 12 years. That means you could online renew every other renewal and not have to come in. Under REAL ID that's permissible. The first time through, people will not be able to use the online, because they have to bring in their new identity. They will have to bring in identity documents to establish who they are, in the first renewal under REAL ID, but then they would not have to go back through that process of six years later; it would wait until 12 years later. So I think it adds efficiency. Regardless of what happens with REAL ID, we think it's a good idea. We're not

ready to proceed with that yet, but if we get the authority, we can develop that system. And we don't think it will be particularly difficult to develop that system, with the other IT projects going on.

Section 25 eliminates -- it makes discretionary -- but it would be our intent to eliminate the registration sticker that you're all familiar with that goes on your car. I traded in a car within the last several days, so I got mine in the mail yesterday, as I went home. So I actually have a prop for the hearing. So now what I need to do within the next couple of days to be in compliance with the laws, is to scrape the temporary one off the windshield and put this in. What I'm showing you is this got mailed to me at home. The State spent 35.7 cents on the postage, plus whatever the -- and it's fairly automated -- but whatever the handling was and the printing of this sticker, for a car that was already registered online that only had a plate transferred from one car to another on a trade-in. Think of how many thousands of times -- tens of thousands of times that happens every given year.

The sticker used to be on the back plate. That had more benefit to law enforcement, by being on the back plate because you would see the back plate as you were patrolling and if it was out of compliance, that gave you cause to make a stop. It's now on the front windshield, much more difficult to observe. I think of much less benefit to law enforcement.

The change makes sense because of the crime that occurred, particularly in urban areas, with people's plates being stolen. If we can eliminate the sticker and the mail process that goes with it -- we've provided the

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Transportation Subcommittee on -- I'm sorry -- the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation with an estimate of \$800,000 in savings in a full year, because we can send the notice to renewal; can include your registration document that will not be activated, until such time as the proper fees have been paid.

At any time today, law enforcement can check any plate, whenever they want in our system, through NCIC and know if that plate is validly registered or not. It doesn't need the sticker to tell you that. And they have legal authority to verify any plate at any time they wish; if it's publicly displayed, you can look up that plate and it's online and it tells you whether it's properly registered or not.

I believe read stickers are a bit anachronistic.. It's how we've always done things. I ask you to think creatively about the cost savings. I don't think it interferes in any way. In fact, the newest move in law enforcement is to use license plate readers, so they can read and check to see if the registration is valid, or if it's a stolen vehicle, anything in NCIC, thousands in a matter of minutes. They can patrol a parking lot and read all those plates. Not a lot of departments are doing it now. We're running a pilot program with several communities at this time. And they've found success in that. I believe over the next several years you'll see that proliferate throughout the state of Connecticut.

They're going to that technology regardless of whether we're doing this. I just show that as an example of why it is not as necessary -- I think it's not at all necessary. It's not as necessary as it once was. Imagine doing your

online renewal and being able to push the button as if you bought a sports ticket and printout your own ticket. You'd be able to printout your own bar coded registration certificate from that. You may not even have to do that, because we may be able to include that right with a reminder. We mail a reminder out to everybody when it's time to renew. They can have a document there that they can keep in their glove compartment. It won't be valid and put in the computer system, until the fee is paid. But it's still the piece of paper that you get asked for. You'll have that. That eliminates one mailing. And it eliminates all the work that goes around tracking these stickers.

The other piece of sections 23 and 25 is to ask for permission to increase -- it is a very successful partnership with AAA, with the motor clubs across the state. There are 15 motor clubs that do one-third of the driver's license renewals today. We're asking to allow them to do nondriver IDs, in addition. They've requested that. We're requesting that. Nondriver IDs come, more often than not, from folks that are either -- that are disabled, because they don't qualify for a driver's license, but need that same identity document that everyone else needs, since they have a driver's license. I think they ought to be able to renew, in just as many locations for a nondriver ID, as for a driver's license.

We've also asked that they be authorized to do registration renewals. We try to get those all done through the mail or online, But about 16 percent of the people still come into the office to do the registration renewals. We're trying to enforce a little more strictly, the requirement that you're only supposed to come in if there's a hardship reason. One of the

reasons they come in is they're late, and they want the sticker right there and then that day. Some of that reason will go away if they don't need the sticker, they can just drop it off. It will be processed within a day. And the computer system will reflect that they've paid. But if they want to come for some reason, like to show they paid their taxes; we would like them to have the opportunity to use the 15 AAA offices.

Many have suggested that DMV find ways to outreach into the private sector to do more things. We're setting before proposals, such as using other retail establishments. We're saying give us a change, by law, give us the authority to use the partner that we already have that does a superb job on drivers' license renewals. We had a successful meeting. They're interested in it. I'll let them speak for themselves. There are representatives from AAA here. But we think it's a good way to provide service at little, virtually no cost, to the State of Connecticut, but enhance service. So we're talking about cost savings and enhanced service.

Finally, there are two sections that I think talk about public safety, section 2 and section 13.

Section 2 would require that for anyone to get a motorcycle license, they have to complete a motorcycle safety course. I know that Representative Larson is here with a mom who lost a child, as a 19-year-old that didn't have a safety course and, tragically, was involved in a motorcycle accident.

There's not been a lot of attention in Connecticut on this issue. Across the nation, there's a new move from the National Highway

Traffic Safety Administration to look at motorcycle safety. And it's my belief that requiring a safety course is a good first step in that requirement. So that's the issue. The current law allows you to take a safety course and not, therefore, have to take a Connecticut test. We think that makes sense, but it hasn't been an incentive for enough people to take those courses. There could be some resource issues. The DOT provides that. I think it's through the -- through one of the community colleges, but, also, the current law allows manufacturers of motorcycles, as long as they follow an approved curriculum, to do that. At least one of them, I believe it's Harley, does now. I believe others will meet the demand.

So those are the issues that I wanted to specifically emphasis on Bill 414. Again, I'd take other questions.

And I do want to mention Senate Bill 409, which the committee raised on a pilot program, on better enforcement of handicapped placards. That came out of a report that this committee requested that Senator -- I know, in particular, Senator DeFronzo, has a particular strong interest in. We submitted that report authored by one of the very good staff members of the agency, Nikia Grant, who happens to be here today, so she can hear the other comments on it, because I think she realizes if you pass the bill, I'm going to stick her with the mission of trying to make it work, as well. If she doesn't, she now realizes that. But we think it's a creative way, at relatively modest cost. And the agency's not asking for funds to try to make this work, to use volunteers to find out where there are violators, but share that with law enforcement in a process, so that final tickets are actually issued by law

enforcement because we don't -- I was always reluctant to authorize a non-law enforcement person to actually take a formal enforcement action, but this combines both, and we think may be a creative approach. And so we do support that bill and ask the committee to proceed.

At that I'll stop talking. I know there are lots of people that testify and lots of bills. And answer your questions, if I may.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Commissioner Ward. And I applaud you for the recent testimony that you gave us in regards to the placards. I mean your agency did a very good job in regards to that. I do have a few questions.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Sure.

REP. GUERRERA: And just bear with me here. Let's SB414 talk about the REAL ID Act, first of all. What other states have done it so far. And what other states are contesting it? Do we know that?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I don't know the exact numbers, but I would say in round numbers there are about four or five states that are actually implementing it today, as opposed to indicating that they are compliant. There are a number of states that are indicated they are fully compliant or near fully compliance with the intent to comply. And I would say that's a majority of the states. There are a strong minority of states that have, so far, been indicating they don't intend to comply. But, of course, no one really knows what states are going to do until it gets down to the deadline.

I think a majority of the jurisdictions are making most of the steps that are necessary to

comply. There's been little opposition to the limited-term license. Many states have adopted that already, although I don't have a count. Where people are balking, is as the extra cost of processing, when somebody who's had a license for many years has to then come in and bring in their birth certificate, as if they were an initial license holder; that they have to be -- basically, we have to reprove that everybody's entitled to a license on their first renewal, starting in May of 11 and then a six-year period after that. That's where the balking has been, not so much on the security requirements, but on the extra time of reprocessing and, therefore, the cost of reprocessing. Most jurisdictions, not all, but most have adopted legal presence requirements and limited term license.

REP. GUERRERA: Bob, how much is this going to cost us?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: We have asked in -- well, to go to the -- I think there's modest cost that we would absorb, to go to the limited term license. All that it would mean is some people that get a six-year license will get, say, a two-year license or a four-year license. So have to come -- if they're still here, they'll have to come back sooner. And we assume that we would absorb that workload.

The next stage of REAL ID, after May of 2011, when people have to bring in a birth certificate, or other proof of identifying documents, in the budget options that the Governor presented was for 20 full-time additional personnel, which would be spread through the various branches and so it's whatever the cost of those 20 personnel are. We have already built the system. It's going to have to be slightly expanded.

We've already built the systems to electronically -- to scan, electronically, store the documents. So that's already in our license system. We may have to add some more equipment. We've met with AAA. We -- our intent and their intent would be to keep them doing renewals. And we know we need to supply them with some additional equipment. It's not -- because I don't think that's a significant cost.

REP. GUERRERA: But do we have a dollar figure on this?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I don't have a dollar figure on the additional equipment. They have the software already that's needed. It's the scanning equipment, which by itself -- because we purchased all the software licenses -- the scanning equipment, I'm guessing is --

REP. GUERRERA: But is it --

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: -- in the several hundred dollars, times 15.

REP. GUERRERA: Right. So is it safe to say that this is going to cost us multimillions of dollars to implement this? Because I thought I heard a number, a few years back, that was, like, multimillions.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: It would -- earlier estimates, I believe, were overstated. It made some assumptions that in the REAL ID Act, we were also obligated to verify the birth certificate with the home state, assuming there was an electronic system to do that. No electronic system exists, so I'm not including that in our cost estimates, at this time, because I don't believe we'll ever really have

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to implement that, because the systems -- REAL ID regulations say you don't have to do that until there is such a system. And there is no such system. So I'm not assuming those costs anymore. I think the principle cost that we've not already incurred are labor costs. Again, the initial assumption is that 20 is. Can I guarantee that's going to be enough without degrading customer service? I cannot. But that's the estimate that's being used at the moment. I think that's a conservator estimate.

REP. GUERRERA: I'm sorry. What was it? How much?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Twenty personnel.

REP. GUERRERA: No. No. Did you give a dollar amount?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I didn't give a dollar figure. I guess if I said 20 full-time people at an average of 50,000 per person, plus fringe benefits and call that \$75,000 per person that'd be a million-and-a-half on PS. If that doubled, that'd be 3 million, if I'm doing quick math in my head, which I shouldn't do.

REP. GUERRERA: For some reason, 24 million.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: There was a much larger estimate in the past. It's not my belief that the number is that high today, with what looks like we'll really have to do. I'm also making an assumption that there's the provision pending in Congress, where we will not be charged for certain checks that have to be done against the Federal Immigration, with ICE, would not be a fee charged to doing that if I make that assumption -- and that's not in there -- if we do have to pay that fee, then that would increase the cost.

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REP. GUERRERA: Okay, Bob. I mean just, you know, I know that we're going to have more dialogs on this and so forth, because I know this -- that was a huge number a few years back, in regards when we looked at this, in regards to how we're going to end up paying for all this.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: And most of that number was in larger estimates of labor cost and also a belief that the electronic recording and storing of records. But since we've already implemented that, built it into our drivers' license, paid the bill to the system already, which, frankly, that made sense anyway. We were photocopying documents and storing them at Iron Mountain. My goal, as commissioner, to get rid of everything that's a piece of paper that I can get rid of as a piece of paper. I'm far from being there yet, but step at a time we're trying to move in that direction. This is one we did move.

REP. GUERRERA: Okay. Bob, also, you heard comments from my minority leader, Representative Cafero, in regards to the registration stickers. Are you okay with his comments in regards to the money we'd be saving? Is that accurate?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Yes. In fact, we have said to Representative Foster, who chaired the probe Subcommittee on Transportation that the -  
- there was a one million dollar figure of a reduction in our OE expense in the budget adjustment that came from the Governor, we said with that and one other thing that was discussed with the committee; this would be a way we could achieve that; that requested savings, about 800,000 of that requested -- not requested savings, proposed savings.

REP. GUERRERA: Just a couple more comments and I'll hand it over to Senator DeFronzo, the placards,

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REP. GUERRERA: I understand, Bob.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: You see, the concept was volunteers track down the information that shows a potential offender. Law enforcement has somebody reviews it and elects to issue an infraction, or other appropriate summons.

REP. GUERRERA: And then, do you know any other states that are doing this right now, Bob, by chance?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: As a statewide initiative, no, but the report did show a municipality in Long Island and that's what it was patterned off. I don't recall the specifics of that.

REP. GUERRERA: That's fine. That's fine. I have other questions, Bob, but I'm going to give it -- I'm sure Senator DeFronzo, maybe Representative Scribner would want to ask you.

SB414

But just one other issue that's, obviously, you know, near and dear to my heart right now, and that's the issues with buses. As you know, I'm, you know, trying to craft some type of legislation with seatbelts. But I know in the Hartford Courant the other day, they talked about the violations of certain bus companies and so forth. Can you just brief us, what is your agency doing about this? And is there a plan and, you know, that you have that will be coming to us?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: A couple of things, first to explain what we do do. The statute currently mandates that the Department of Motor Vehicles inspect every school bus annually. They have to completed by September 1, essentially the start of school. So we work on those year round. We have a nine person unit

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that inspects every school bus, roughly 8 to 9,000 in each year, will vary little, but it's usually 8,500-9,000 year. In addition, maybe another 4 plus thousand STVs, the simplest way of saying vans that are outfitted like school buses, but they're small.

We do all of those inspections. We find in some cases that when we do those inspections, everything's been very well maintained. And a very small percentage of the buses get cited for being a violation that would take them out-of-service. In some cases, we find a very high number, as the Courant reported, some 50 to 60 percent out-of-service.

We also go back and do a limited amount of spot checking and rechecking. The system is based on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program. That's a program where you inspect. If there's a violation that's out-of-service, the responsibility is for the carrier to make the repairs, and to certify that they're repaired back to the department, before they can go back on the road.

And so that's how the program has always been built. And that's how it's staffed. That's what the resources are there for. If we see repeated, within those resources, but I will say 'they're not huge resources. If you've got nine men and women doing 9,000 inspections on school buses, plus a couple more thousand -- the STVs aren't all done by that nine unit, some of them, maybe half or more are done there and half are brought into what are called, lanes, but I don't want to confuse the subject -- there's not lots of time to go back and recheck.

There are two things that I think could be helpful if they were placed in statute. One is, we have it is regulation already that each carrier is required to check their own bus fleet, at least every bus, at least quarterly, and maintain records of their own inspection of their own vehicle. The penalty, however, is an infraction. So you can write an infraction ticket, but that's about all. Infraction tickets then can be appealed. They go to court. And they go through the whole court system. We would recommend that you add a civil penalty to that statute, which is 14-275c, I believe. If you add a civil penalty, and I would suggest a large one, maybe up to \$2,500, but a civil penalty if you didn't do it and keep your records for your quarterly inspections, the department can then bring that through our own hearing process. We can cite them with a civil violation and bring it through our own hearing process.

The second is -- and this, we don't have evidence that this is regular -- the second is if somebody makes a false statement. If they certify to us they fixed the bus, but they didn't, again, that is a misdemeanor and goes through the whole court process. We're not saying to get rid of the misdemeanor. Leave the misdemeanor, but also add the potential for a civil penalty of a significant amount, because sometimes, rather than going to court, fines or a misdemeanor, a significant fine against the carrier may get their attention and make it less likely that that would occur.

And, again, we would suggest in addition to the criminal, once it becomes criminal we can issue that summons -- and they're not very commonly done -- and then the case is out of our hands. If we can also issue a civil penalty, then that stays within DMV's ability to assess the

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penalty. It's also important to keep in mind that school bus carriers, unlike, for example automobile dealers, are not licensed by the Department of Motor Vehicles. In other words, they're not a regulated business in that strict sense. There's not a license they have that we can take away.

Buses are registered. Buses have to meet very strict requirements. That's all in the law. And we can enforce that. Drivers have to meet very strict standards. They have to have a license and an endorsement, and there's a lot of background check and checked regularly, ongoing checks of their driving history and the like. But carriers themselves -- and I'm not suggesting we create that new system, but I just want you to understand the difference -- there isn't, like, a master license for the -- and I'm not trying to name a company -- I'll say the XYZ Company, because I don't think there is one -- for the XYZ Bus Company, they don't have a license from DMV to be the XYZ School Bus Company. Unlike a car dealer, the XYZ car dealer has to be licensed. So at some point, you have leverage that says, at some point, we can take away your right to do business. We can put a bus out-of-service, or a whole bunch, or all of the buses out-of-service, but I'm not actually the company. And that's true across commercial trucking. I'm not suggesting we change it. I just want you to understand the framework.

So I guess if you want significantly more inspections that's a resource issue. I've looked at the figures. I don't think I can tell you that I can get more inspections out of the crew that I have. I think they're dedicated to the process, work very hard at it.

The other step we're taking -- and we probably should have done it before -- we posted yesterday on the Internet, anybody -- any company that has 20 or more school buses, we're posting annually what the result was of your annual inspection of out-of-service violations. We put that up yesterday. And we're going to put it up annually. If there's a way to put it up as it goes along, we'll look at doing that, because we think school boards might be interested. They're the ones that enter into contracts with school bus companies, not the Department of Motor Vehicles. And I'm not trying to give school boards more work to do, but if they have more information, that's a conversation they can have. They can have performance standards in their contract.

A comment was made by one of the company's owners who had a 1 percent out-of-service rate. He said if somebody's at 60 percent, they're really not; they're waiting for DMV to tell them what's wrong, as opposed to doing their own inspection first and then fixing what DMV tells them. And I think he's probably hit the nail on the head.

REP. GUERRERA: I appreciate it, Bob. Again, I think this is something that we're going to have to look into in depth, in the next coming weeks, I'm sure. Now we can try to really address some of the flaws in the system.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: We would be happy to meet with you and work with you on that. As I say, the two things that came to mind is adding a civil penalty. I'm not assuming they'll be lots of them, but it is something that we could manage within available resources. And I think if somebody either makes a false statement or doesn't have proof that they've done their own inspections, if they know that there's a

\$1,000, or whatever fine coming that gives them a financial incentive to make sure they should ask. And, again, I'm saying that most companies aren't doing it. But it would allow us to focus on that.

REP. GUERRERA: All right. Thank you for your comments, Bob. I'll turn it over to Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you, Commissioner. Excuse me, while we're on this point, let me just ask you to submit language to the committee, particularly on those two points, considering the fines. And I thought I'd pursue that just a little further.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Sure.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: You indicated that there is no licensing provision for bus companies, as identities.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Right.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: And the nature of the industry is very decentralized, in terms of contracting with school systems to provide bus transportation, but in the case where -- now, your agency does the inspections?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: That's right.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: And you have limited enforcement authority, I'm going to say a bus-by-bus basis, but in cases where we have a company that has continually performed poorly and demonstrated poor results in terms of bus safety and compliance and even in attempts to mislead inspectors, why would it -- well, I mean I don't want to put this in an adversarial way -- but, would you think the Commissioner ought to

have authority to suspend or to bar a company with a chronically bad record for a period of time, from doing business with boards of education in the state of Connecticut?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I certainly think that's worthy of discussion. I haven't thought through the full implications. The one issue, when it's bus by bus, I understand how it works once the other -- I guess we'd have to define what we mean to be chronic and define what hearing rights they do have. And also figure out when we take the action and be sure that; for example, if it turned out it was a fairly large company that had 15 school districts and I let them bring the kids to school in the morning and then I shut them down in the afternoon. How do the kids get home? And I'm not trying to be facetious, but when I say there are issues that need to be worked on, I'm interested in trying to find a way that gets companies to do what they need to do, which is to get in compliance and have safe equipment. But I want to make sure we do it in a way that's focused in those areas.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: I understand what you're saying. Obviously, it'd have to be a process -- and some type of due process and a hearing process, as well. But, you know we're -- members of this committee are struggling with this issue of seatbelts on buses, which is an enormously expensive proposition. Arguable whether there'd be measurable safety benefits from that. And here's a case where we have documented widespread safety abuses and we don't have the authority to stop people from operating those buses on a -- other than on a case-by-case basis. So I mean -- you know, I look at this and I say where are we putting our resources for the maximum benefit? Here's an area, you know, bus safety might, can be

impacted in a measurable way. And maybe we need to look at this and give you more authority to take buses off the road, if they've been chronically unsafe.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I mean, again, I can take buses off the road. And on limited circumstances for certain types of things, maybe even take an entire fleet off. But I'm -- the focus, I guess has to -- I think what we need to do is to be able to focus on where -- specifically on where the problems are and how to get carriers back into it.

Going out more often probably would let us focus -- you know, when we see a pattern to do that and that probably is human resources. Unlike many other things, where we keep looking for technological ways to look at stuff, fortunately, or unfortunately, physically inspecting a bus is a labor-intensive job. And it takes a human being to look. This isn't plugging into an OBD and saying whatever the diagnostic says. It's pulling wheels and looking at brakes and walking through. And that becomes labor intensive.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. I hope you --

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: We're happy to sit down with you.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: -- submit the information to us.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I will do it.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: If after this hearing, you have thoughts about the additional authority, I'd like to have that discussion with you.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: And I would be happy to involve the chief of that unit and some of the

people that are out in the field doing the work. If you wanted to talk that way, rather than me doing it all.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Okay. On Senate Bill 406, is the -- concerning motor vehicle operation retraining program?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Yes.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Actually, that's not -- that's not the bill I wanted. Okay. Let me just skip over then to 409, Senate Bill 209, the pilot program on the placards. You said that Nikia Grant is here today?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Yeah, I believe she was.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Can you point her out, because I just want to thank her for her report. If -- where is she? I thought I'd acknowledge your good report and thank you for doing it. It was -- as I said to the Commissioner on three previous occasions -- one of the better agency reports I've read in the last several years. It's very comprehensive. And I appreciate that. Is she the one who's going to be implementing the project?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I think she may have just learned now.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Okay. Just for clarification, when the study was done, police chiefs were surveyed. And police chiefs were not unanimous in supporting this. Some departments have a bias against using volunteers and others are willing to go down this path. And I just wanted to put that on the record. This is a voluntary program. If a department or a community is adverse to using a volunteer for

mainframes. There's not enough room to manage a system with seven digits on the license plate.

The IT product I described before this committee, there will be. We do want to go to seven digits, as soon as we have the technological ability to do that. We also think we can generate revenue, because that opens up seven digit vanity plates. And so there are lots of names and numbers and things people would like to use that are used up; but if they can use another digit, they can do that. So we welcome the bill. It may not necessarily be the perfect language. We're happy to do it. Where it came from, I don't know either. But -- Bob Ward would fit, although I'm not going to put my name on, Representative.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: And then, I just wanted to go back on the agency bill. You have a couple of things here, which, you know, they seem to make sense, but they also have impact on employees. I mean the additional background check under REAL ID, is sometimes a sensitive issue with employees. And the expansion of work to be done by the AAAs has been a contentious issue in the past. It's always been -- have you had any discussion with any of your bargain units concerning either of those, to this point?

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COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I have not. And I don't believe anybody in the agency was. And I would also say I suspect under the state labor laws, I'm probably not even permitted to it. It probably has to go through the Office of Labor Relations. It is my sense -- well, I could be wrong -- it's my sense that certainly, as to nondriver IDs, the employees that work at the front counter of our agency will probably be just as happy that folks that want to renew a

nondriver ID have the same option in a AAA as others.

On the registration side, I can tell you that with the turnovers that occurs in the agency and the work load that's there now, this is not something where I'm going to say there's a reduction in personnel. It will just be a reduction in wait times for customers.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. I'm just interested because, obviously, if it is a matter that's going to be brought to our attention, at some point. And I was just wondering if you had that discussion, or not.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: And on the background checks, we're not looking for authority that says there's an automatic termination, if something showed up for somebody who's an employee. They have their bargaining rights. We're not trying to change any of that, or take any of that away. It's our sense that unless something extremely serious showed; that they had completed lied about that had been missed; and that lying on their application is a separate issue, but the mere showing of something that was legal to have when we hired you, would just mean you couldn't work in that unit. It doesn't mean that we'd be getting rid of an employee.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: And there is another issue, I'm not going to take time today to discuss, but I do want to raise it with you. It has to do -- we had a discussion about it once before -- having to do with the ability of marshals to process their work under new interpretations of the statute. And, again, I don't want to discuss that today, but they're -- I know you're making some steps to address that but, apparently, there are some unresolved issues

that we need to talk about. So later we can do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. GUERRERA: Representative Mikutel.

REP. MIKUTEL: I'd like to bring you back to Bill 409. And I applaud you for trying to strengthen the enforcement of these handicapped laws. And I know there's a lot of abuse in the system. But in selecting the residents to participate in this program, I think that it should be done in consultation with the chief elected officials of that town. I don't think my first selectman would like to have people who he does not think highly of, messing around in his town. So I would ask you to consider that change. That the police, in consultation with a chief-elected official, invites these civilian volunteers to participate in the program.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: I think it would need to be a consultative process, to be successful in any event. I guess I don't want to necessarily -- I'm not sure I want to pick a town, if the chief-elected official and the police chief are not getting along. It's probably not the best place to do it in the first place, since it's a pilot program. So as long as I'm not wading into one of those disputes, I don't have a -- it ought to be a consultative process in the community. For it to be successful, it has to be a community effort. So I don't have a problem suggesting consultation with others to make it work.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative Mikutel. Representative Leone followed by Senator Boucher.

REP. LEONE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And good afternoon, Commissioner. And I have one

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question. I actually got a few questions, but one, I walked in late. And I just want a little clarification. You were mentioned -- that's okay, over here -- you were mentioning when I walked in, and I apologize, something about extending the time frames for the issuance of licensing from six years to 12 years. I just wanted to get a clarification of what that meant.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Sure. What I -- the license will remain a six-year license, but every other renewal, you could, with this authority, not have to make a personal appearance. So if you had a valid license, when you went to renew; for example, you could go online, pay your renewal fee. We would use the picture we already have on file. You would certify online that the address and stuff is all the same. We would then mail you the license to your address. So you wouldn't have to make a personal appearance in our office or AAA. And a number of states do do that. And so we're asking -- right now, our statute says you have to appear in person every six years. We're saying if you appeared in person every 12 years, to update your photo, we would consider the renewal that way.

I have indicated that REAL ID had some -- allows that. It wouldn't kick in immediately. We'd probably be six years from now before we did that, because the next renewal after May of 2011, you have to bring in certain documents that you can't do online. But after that, you'd be able to spread it out for an online renewal.

REP. LEONE: And I guess I can understand the concept behind it, and why there's some benefits to it. And I guess from a personal perspective, it's great that I wouldn't have to

come into the office. But from -- just from the standpoint of being able to ID people in a coherent way, especially if you're pulled over by an officer, or anything of that nature, I could see a huge change in 12 years from a person's picture, from 12 years ago to then. I mean there can be lot of change in a person in that time. And I would fear that that could cause some confusion down the road. Has that been given any consideration?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: We have thought about it. I do think that the -- that in terms of just generally looking at somebody, a lot of appearance change can occur in 12 years. For our facial recognition technology -- the electronic look to see if the person is who they say they are -- the belief is that with the digital cameras we're now using that the changes that would occur in 12 years would not interfere with our facial recognition technology.

I think, eventually, for police to have a good photo, part of our project down the road, is to let the police look on the data terminal on the full photo. Trying to look at that driver's license photo and the person in front of you on a dark night, with a flashlight, is not a real good image anyway. I'm not trying to understate having the photo. But -- so I think there's some -- clearly more changes that will occur in 12 years than 6 years. I can't deny that. It does not appear to be a widespread problem in the states that have been using online renewal, as an every other renewal, in the past. But our reason was to be customer friendly and since it would meet the REAL ID and REAL ID was going to add other inconveniences; we were looking at, perhaps, having a convenience.

REP. LEONE: And I can understand that. , But even with the REAL ID, the whole idea of REAL ID was to sort of tighten security because the card is used for so many instances, as an ID, as a valid ID, whether it's when presenting bills, access to one facility or another, not necessarily where you're in front of a police officer, but just in everyday use. And to have a 12-year-old photo when we're putting all these additional requirements to tighten security from a REAL ID perspective -- of which many I'm not a fan of -- just seems to be counter intuitive to that overall goal. So -- but I thank you for your explanation. I'm not sure if I quite agree with that part, but I thank you for that.

But I do have some other questions, if you will. Section 1 of Senate Bill 414, eliminates drivers' license fees and registration fees. And it lists quite a few. My questions are: We're in a pretty financial serious doldrums these days. And, you know, we're looking everywhere for additional costs. Why is it we're giving up all these registration fees? And the questions are: How many cars does that cover? And what is the cost of that?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Well, the only change in the law here was the bracketed language of operator's license fee. And that's really technical. There is no municipal operator's license. So that was technical cleanup of the statute to say, well, we shouldn't say we're waiving the fee for something that doesn't ever exist and hasn't existed. So it was really technical.

The other fees; for example, a municipality not paying a registration fee has long been the law in Connecticut. We weren't proposing any change in that. All we did is bracket out the,

or operator's license fee. The other exemptions -- and I believe these are mostly where it is a fire department or a municipality or an ambulance owned by a hospital or nonprofit -- those were all public policy reasons of prior legislatures. So if we change that, you'd be charging a municipality for their registrations. We just weren't weighing in on that issue. We just found, technically, it made a reference to no fee for an operator license fee for a motor vehicle, but that isn't the way it works. And all drivers have licenses and pay a fee. So we haven't been doing anything like this, so it was technical.

REP. LEONE: Thank you. And then one final question, in terms of the issuance of the registration stickers, and I guess you're proposing that we eliminate having them. Is that correct?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: That's correct.

REP. LEONE: And the benefits are because we can -- I guess we can check enforcement through the COLLECT system?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: That's correct. The -- and I had said NCIC before, but that's part of what is COLLECT. That's the actual term of the police.

REP. LEONE: I guess, what's the problem with having a sticker on the vehicle, especially for people that need to sometimes visually identify that it's registered? Not everyone's always going to have access to some kind of electronic input to verify if it is valid or not.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: The ones that usually verify registration are law enforcement. Nobody else really has access to the

information. I can put this sticker on my car today before I got home. It will look like it's good to whatever year the year it says on it. My privilege to register a car could be revoked three weeks from now. You would have no way of knowing it. And the law enforcement officer wouldn't know. They always, when they make the stop, go back and check the terminal. I mean I've asked police about it. Do they rely on the sticker to make the final decision? They do not. They always check the terminal to see if it's valid or not valid.

The reason we're suggesting is cost savings and efficiency in transaction. A pile of several years worth, sorted by month, of these stickers, has to be at every examiner's desk. And has to be accounted for every day. Because you may change a windshield, you need to get a sticker that coincides with the one you had, because of staggered registration renewals.

There's a couple year -- there's \$260,000 spent a year just to print them. And another, we believe, approaching \$600,000 of extra mail that's done related to mailing stickers. And I think the safety interest is small, given that the information now exists, and police have such ready access to that. Years ago, they didn't have the ready access. It was -- first of all, our system was out-of-date, so the computer system wasn't up-to-date. Secondly, you know, most departments didn't have ready access to that information at all times. But the world of policing has changed.

REP. LEONE: And would you be issuing notifications to people when there's upcoming renewal?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Right, the current statute requires us to notify people of -- that their renewal is expiring. And it would be our

-- obviously, it's the law. But regardless of that, it would be our intent to continue to do that. We're required both for drivers' license renewals by statute and for reg. Renewals, to remind people.

Massachusetts changed that. They were required. They stopped doing it. They found an initial drop-off of people renewing on time. I don't know what the history sense of that is. But that's -- the reason to do it is to be sure, because people won't remember.

REP. LEONE: Right. Because I utilize the sticker from the simple standpoint, I see it everyday. And I know that in March of 2010, it's due. So I have time to, you know, prepare for it. It's very easy to overlook those things, given the, you know, the pace of life these days. So I just want to make sure that you will be sending out notifications if this goes forward.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: We will continue to send the notification. And, as you recall, we used to have a sticker on the admissions test date compliance. On-time compliance with admission, is greater with us having eliminated the sticker and linking it to your registration. So when your registration renewal comes out, if you haven't done your admissions, it's included in your notice. You can't complete your registration, until your admissions is done, has resulted in a higher rate of compliance than the stickers on the windshield.

REP. LEONE: Okay. And one final question, Mr. Chairman, on the seven-digit license plate number, you mentioned that the reason why we can't do it now is because of space within, I guess, the computer system itself. So does that -- I infer that we're going to be updating the technological capabilities of DMV, and if

so, what is the cost to do that? And if -- I would hope that that's not the only reason why we're upgrading the system.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Oh, no, not at all. We've undertaken a \$26 million IT project to bring us into the 21st century. We're creating a customer-centric relational database system. Not a -- what we now have is a nineteen seventies mainframe system, that creates a lot of challenges to pull out the information that everybody would like to be able to manage the agency effectively. And it has other limitations, as you're seeing here. Lots of things you would like to see and change are just very -- requires individual programming and a lot of programs. It's part of its capacity because of all the class codes we have, to try to reprogram seven plate things into it; it's a massive undertaking. With the upgraded system, it would be a relatively simple matter. But it's not just there, it's across -- it's throughout the agency for all of our transactions.

REP. LEONE: And for \$26 million that's a huge number that we have to come up with to allow you to invest that.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: It's been -- just so you know, it's been an ongoing project. And it's fully bonded. The money has already been appropriated to the agency. The contract's approved, signed and up and running. So we're not asking for additional funds. It's been the initiative of the Governor, approved bipartisanly by the legislature. It is in implementation, so we're not asking for any additional funds.

REP. LEONE: And what is the time line? When do you expect it to be completed?

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: There's a -- essentially, a three-year roll out and I would be happy -- we can send you -- we have a PowerPoint demonstration on it that I would be happy to electronically forward to you.

REP. LEONE: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Representative. Any other questions? Thank you, Commissioner, for your testimony.

COMMISSIONER ROBERT WARD: Thank you all and for all your time. And, again, it's a pleasure to be here.

REP. GUERRERA: Okay. We now have to begin alternating speakers with members of the public. So the next speaker will be Joe Miano, followed by Commissioner Marie. And we are adhering to the three-minute time rule. So if you hear the buzzer go off, please summarize your comments, so we can move forward. Good morning.

JOE MIANO: Good afternoon, Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Joe Miano. I am the president of the towing and recovery professionals of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on Raised Bill 5459, AN ACT CONCERNING THE WRECKERS.

Section 1(a) of this bill requires that all too trucks have wrecker plates. Currently, only companies who tow for compensation need wrecker plates. Reality is that there are a number of gypsy towers, who put commercial plates on their trucks, operate out of their garages, backyards and tow for compensation. They do not carry the proper insurance. They do not pay the full property taxes. And they

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in something you go at it with your heart and sole, you always have. You've become very passionate in your speaking. Like Representative Scribner said -- you know, the three minute rule and stuff like that but having known you for the years I have, you wouldn't be here unless you truly believed in what you were doing. And you're not on a soap box is what I'm trying to say, you truly are here speaking how you feel from the heart and I respect that. I just wanted to say that.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative. Any other comments?

Thank you, Ken, for you comments.

KEN CROWLEY: Thank you.

REP. GUERRERA: Good luck.

Representative Tim Larson. Good afternoon Representative, if you just want to give us the name of -- also.

REP. LARSON: Thank you very much, Representative. I'm joined by a dear friend of mine, Stephanie Pelletier and we'll certainly share my three minutes. We really truly appreciate an opportunity to sit here in support of Raised Bill 414, MAKING A REVISION TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

Specifically to Section 2, pertaining to the motorcycle endorsement requirements.

I also want to thank Commissioner Ward; he was kind enough to give us a couple of hours of his time. Stephanie and I went over to the Motor

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Vehicle Department and did some pretty extensive research on this particular item.

In May of 2008, Stephanie lost her son Nick in a motorcycle accident at the age of 19. Nick was operating a motorcycle without having had the benefit of motorcycle training. After losing Nick, Stephanie began to do some incredible research on the state's requirements on obtaining a motorcycle license.

Both Stephanie and I were surprised to find out that Connecticut requires only 16 and 17 year olds to complete motorcycle training courses as a requirement for their motorcycle endorsement. This is particularly startling since current statistics from the Connecticut Department of Transportation in 2008 there were a total of 61 motorcycle fatalities, motorcycle drivers under the age of 18 accounted for only two of those deaths. In 2007 there were 41 deaths with only one death of a rider under the age of 18. One can only assume that our 16 and 17-year-old drivers did in fact benefit from that mandatory course. There's a number of different studies out there that indicate motorcycle rider error as opposed to -- in correlation to those without training.

What I'd like to do now is just turn the microphone over to Stephanie and let her read into the record. And tell you a little bit about her personal story. And I would urge you to report favorably on this bill to the committee.

Thank you.

STEPHANIE PELLETIER: Good afternoon, my name is Stephanie Pelletier and I reside in East Hartford, Connecticut and I would like to thank the Committee for giving me the opportunity to

speak in support of the motorcycle training bill number 414.

On May 30, 2008 around 7:30 am my doorbell rang several times, a sound that makes me cringe to this day. At my door were two East Hartford police officers and a social worker. They came to tell me my 19-year-old son; Nick Cohen was killed while riding on his motorcycle. It is a parent's worst nightmare to lose a child and then turn around and have to tell my nine-year-old twins that their brother was never going to go -- be coming home.

Nick was a handsome kid. He was very personable, happy and a caring person. He was a role model in East Hartford High School. The sadness and grief my family and I felt after his death was overwhelming and was shared by the whole community.

Often times we hear of tragic accidents happening on weekend nights when the kids are out partying and fooling around. Motorcycle accidents can happen anytime, even on an ordinary early morning like May 30th. The night before Nick's accident he went to his grandmother's house to help her with a project and have dinner and he was home early. The following morning was a beautiful sunny day. Nick was heading to his friend's house so that he could ride to work together. A few miles from where he was going was where his life was ended. Nick collided with a minivan and he was instantly killed. Nick was wearing his helmet and what should have been a beautiful ride to work turned out to be a heartbreaking one.

Nick had a passion for motorcycles. Nick got his bike a little less than a year before his accident. As you can imagine letting Nick get

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his motorcycle at such a young age was a very difficult decision for me.

Through this difficult time I immediately knew I had to do something to help protect another parent from going through what I have. After Nick's death I spent time learning about Connecticut motorcycle laws. I wanted to see if there was anything I could learn from this tragic experience to be able to pass it on to others. I was amazed to find out how easy it was for someone to get a motorcycle permit, renew the permit without any formal training. I often wonder if Nick was required to go through this formal training would he be here today. I ask myself that question every day, which led me to start talking to the State Representative Tim Larson.

Currently the State of Connecticut has a motorcycle-training course known as the Connecticut Rider Education Program. However this program is only mandated for 16 and 17 year olds. What this means is anybody over the age of 17 can obtain a motorcycle permit with any -- without any formal training. I ask you please to consider this amendment before you, which would mandate that every driver seeking a motorcycle license be required to complete the Connecticut Rider Education Program.

I now hold Nick close to my heart by wearing locks of his hair in a locket on a chain and a yellow bracelet, which says, Nick, always loved, forever remembered. My hopes are that by mandating the motorcycle training for everyone we can save someone else's son or daughter and save a parent from the pain I feel everyday.

Thank you.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Stephanie, for coming here today and giving us that story and my condolence to the loss of your son. And obviously this is a very important issue to yourself and to -- I know to Representative Larson who's been fighting for this over the last two years. And I truly feel that this is something I think we'll see happen. But before I comment any more I think that Senator LeBeau would like to make a few comments. He's also your Senator.

So, Senator LeBeau.

SENATOR LEBEAU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Stephanie for being here and Representative Larson for bringing this in front of our committee.

I remember the day your son died, my kids were on our porch and swimming and partying and -- and then we heard about -- we heard about Nick and everybody just was totally shook up. And you kid Nick was everything you said he was, a great personality, a bright kid, a leader in the school, tremendously well respected and well loved. Everybody in the community loved him and I remember the outpouring of grief that the entire town had when he died. And I really really respect what you're doing right now, Stephanie. I think you're doing a great job in bringing this forward and trying to get something good to come out of something horrible. And you have to be commended for that. I -- I'm so pleased to hear that the Chairman -- the Chairman's comments.

I -- I used to drive -- I used to have a motorcycle and I almost got killed on mine. And I was astounded -- literally astounded at how easy it was to get the license and to -- basically had a friend show me how to do it.

And there was not much more to it than that. We need to tighten this up. The statistics that you presented and Representative Larson presented are very cogent; they show that there is a need here that needs to be addressed. If we can save some lives here by an ounce of prevention we're certainly going to do it.

And again I thank you for being here bringing this -- and as the Chairman said, our deepest condolences again.

Thank you.

STEPHANIE PELLETIER: Thank you.

REP. GUERRERA: Senator DeFronzo.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you for coming today. It's always amazing to me how people -- and we've had them as you might imagine the Transportation Committee -- others before you can take a tragedy like this and a loss and turn it in to such a positive thing for the people of the State of Connecticut. So I just want to join in extending condolences and recognizing your efforts here.

The -- the bill -- I did want to ask you a question or two about the proposal and -- you know, maybe you can rely on Tim there if you need to. And -- and Representative I want to thank you for your leadership on this as well.

The language in the bill before us would -- it looks like it addresses most of the questions I have but I just want to go through. This would be prospective in affect so anyone who's out there now with a license would not be required to go back into training. Is that your understanding and intent?

REP. LARSON: That's our understanding, absolutely.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Okay. All right. And it also makes provisions for individuals and others coming into Connecticut from other states who have taken the type of training course in Connecticut, will be extended the courtesy of recognition for licensing purposes. So there would not be a requirement on them to take the course here in Connecticut.

REP. LARSON: I certainly would support that, absolutely.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Yeah, well it's -- it's part of the existing statute actually, so it's --

REP. LARSON: Right.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: -- okay. And the -- I -- I do have a couple of questions on how we would implement this through our -- you know, driving schools or -- the commission made some reference to manufacturers providing training courses. I would like to see -- you know, if there's any proprietary companies out there that do this training and might amend the law to -- to provide for training in that respect as well. It was unclear from what the Commissioner said earlier about that but I just want you to know I intend to work with Representative Guerrero and Senator LeBeau and you and try and get this thing passed this year.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

Any other comments? Representative Scribner.

REP. SCRIBNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, I too want to thank you for doing something constructive and positive in the aftermath of a very painful loss. And I think that that is something that will become a tribute to your son. And I know that there's a lot of sentiment to support this measure going through because it's a sensible, responsible approach having learned from a very tragic experience.

One of the things that Senator DeFronzo alluded to had to do with proprietary involvement and I think I understood him to mean that there could be training offered outside of the state agency, meaning the Department of Motor Vehicles. It's my understanding that there are outlets -- using the example of Harley Davidson who do in fact offer such training. Do you have any familiarity or experience or knowledge about that at all that you could share?

REP. LARSON: I don't have familiarity of -- the Commissioner was extremely generous with his time and we didn't really delve too deeply on how the program could be administered. We understood that there was several avenues that could be pursued in order to implement this change administratively. We talked about potential revenue -- either generating or at least off-setting this type of requirement as well. The state currently has a program and there are other private entities that would offer and in fact, I'm aware of several credits for insurance reductions or -- or premium considerations by virtue of having taken this safety training.

REP SCRIBNER: Well thank you for that and I think that that is consistent with what we've tried to implement in the past in a variety of different scenarios so this would in some way be following that format. And I think what

that does is to assist in implementation so that all of a sudden we don't create something by starting from scratch. I think there are things that are already in place that could help satisfy the demand that might be there, which is actually a stronger statement in support of implementing the measure without having to create additional resources.

REP. LARSON: Absolutely.

REP. SCRIBNER: Again I thank you both for being here and appreciate your time.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative Scribner for those comments.

Representative Sawyer followed by Representative -- Senator Frantz, I apologize.

REP. SAWYER: Thank you for coming and telling your story which is so heart wrenching. I went through motorcycle school with my own daughter so I'm very aware of its cost and its limitations. And I'm going to say its limitations because there's a beginners course but there's also an advanced course. And I think it's the advanced course too that had a strength to it that we should be thinking about as well. Over the years we've chipped away at it certainly with getting the federal funds because it's not funded by the state. It is only funded by the federal government. We've chipped away at it by increasing the cost -- it used to be a very low cost and it's now increased to the point that I'm a little concerned that people aren't going to take it because of the cost -- or haven't taken it, I should say, because of the cost.

Also we have taken away the right of 16 year-olds, 17 year-olds, 18 year-olds to -- I'm sorry, 16 and 17 year-olds to get their driver -- motorcycle license singly. We mandate that they have to have a motor vehicle license first before they get their motorcycle license.

So as we look at this, one of the things that the DMV had tried to do at one point where they thought there was going to be some federal money was to create an indoor training area. And the reason for that is currently the program is taught by volunteers. The money of course goes for the equipment because you can go take this motorcycle course without owning a machine. Obviously you shouldn't drive your motorcycle there if you don't know how to drive your motorcycle there to take a training course on it. So it makes a whole lot of sense to have the m

otorcycles there ahead of time. Having said that, the indoor training was because we have a very short window of time in which we have a good riding season. And if we had a winter riding course indoor area where people could be trained as soon as that warm weather and the spring fever hits, the people who have gotten their machines over the winter would be able to hit the roads and be able to ride with a degree of safety. What I also know is in the past; in doing the research is that most driver fatality happens when people have only had their license for less than three months. They have not trained and I would thoroughly -- thoroughly support this particular piece. If we can figure out the funding mechanism, which has always, been the stumbling block. But I think we should also look at an extended way to do the training and have that training have somewhere that the training is also indoors as

we well as outdoors. These volunteers that have been teaching this course obviously want to go out and ride their -- when they only have their weekends to ride as well, most of them work full time and they donate their time.

So again, thank you very much for bringing this forward and my sincere sympathies.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative Sawyer.

Senator Frantz.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Stephanie I would also like to thank you. I know it's a very difficult thing to come up here. It takes a lot of courage to relive it and it's not the easiest thing to come up and sit in a hearing room thinking about this practically half of day if not longer and Representative Larson thank you for taking the initiative on this,

I was -- frankly shocked when I learned this morning that we did not require driver education for those on two wheels. It's the first time I was made aware of this and perhaps my naiveté was a result of having a driving school in our town, I believe it's Tom's Driving School, they were the first ones in the country, if not possibly the world to have a dual control motorcycle -- a set of them that they actually use to train people and they've been using it for -- I'm going to guess, 20 years or more. So I assumed that that training requirement was in place. Many of us on this committee are familiar with riding on two wheels and we know that it's about the most risky way to travel but it's also one of the most fun ways to travel and it's all part of the American experience. We know that. But to address those risks proper training as is the

case in any risky behavior is of paramount importance.

And we know that on two wheels you have to pay attention to everything from road conditions -- is there sand on the road after -- you know, a snowy spring, is there oil on the road, did it just rain, what are the blind spots of the truck or the car in front of me? Are they going to be able to see me? How do you deal with that? The dynamics of power to weight ration of these two wheeled vehicles is in many cases off the charts. You can get into real trouble that way.

So at the very minimum there has to be some very stringent training for the younger people or anybody who is new to the activity of driving on two wheels. And you're addressing it in this Legislation and I can't imagine it dying here. I hope that it is -- it hails to a successful passage very quickly and goes into law in a very affective way.

So, thank you both very much. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Senator. Any other comments? Seeing none, thank you for coming out to us.

Herman Schuler.

HERMAN SCHULER: I'm Herman Schuler; I'm the Economic Development Director for the Town of Oxford.

I'd like to thank Representative Guerrero, Representatives Scribner, DeFronzo and the members of the committee for allowing me to speak in favor of the Raised Bill 412, which is

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Representative Mioli, do you have a question or comment?

REP. MIOLI: Just a comment, thank you. And thank you for coming here. I remember those days about three years ago. I'm from Bridgeport, you know that? And I hope this will be your last trip here. Not that we don't want to see you but I really hope (inaudible)

Thank you.

ABBY SEIGAL: Thank you.

REP. MIOLI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. Thank you very much for your testimony. I appreciate it.

All right. Mike -- Connecticut Tax Collector's Association. I can't read the last name.

MIKE DESROCHES: I'm Mike DesRoches, I'm a tax collector, I work in the town of Rocky Hill, I'm Vice President of the Connecticut Tax Collector's Association. I say that with pride because when we do our job well we indirectly help the economy. We keep teachers, police officers employed; we minimize layoffs, furloughs and things of that nature.

I'm here on behalf of the Tax Collector's Association with respect to Raised Bill 414, specifically Section 24, to applaud the crafters of that section on the changes. To give a little background and maybe enlighten you with some of the nuances and ramifications of what's in there and what might not be in there that could be.

Go back 20 years, a gentleman named Mr. Goldberg from Greenwich I believe, was unable to reregister his motor vehicle because of a case of mistaken identity over a date of birth mix up. Mr. Goldberg became the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicle's under Senator Weicker. And for the past 20 some odd years through the assessors, the tax collectors have been able to get the dates of birth of the motor vehicle owners.

That is invaluable to us in our efforts to do our job which is to collect tax from delinquent tax payors when they - during the two year registration period, go up for renewal. They come in, they say, how much do I owe you and we look to match up their name to their vehicles and what they owe, through marriages, divorces etcetera sir names change, middle initials drop on, drop off, one letter misspelling in a last name can change the way we look at things and often times we find them back in another two years saying that they are delinquent and they're upset with the process because we didn't catch it two years prior.

And with the statutory interest rate of 18 percent it's not a pleasant conversation to have. So we -- we strive to collect the tax that is owed from the right person and when it's due. We don't want to get it six months later, one year, two years later, and these taxes stay on the town's books for 15 years. So if somebody were to leave and come back we've got to charge them this interest.

The date of birth was removed with our latest motor vehicle supplemental bills because of the concerns over identity theft. We wish to return the date of birth to the information that we get from the Motor Vehicle Department so that we can do our jobs affectively,

efficiently and as a matter of good customer service.

That is essentially it so I -- I ask you to look very carefully at the wording in Section 24, the changes that protect that information from being disclosed by the assessors. We wish to be included and named in their too and this will help the DMV's concerns so that the collectors are also named as not disclosing the information that we get from the DMV. And that perhaps in the list of information that the assessors get from the Department of Motor Vehicles, name, address, vin, the date of birth also specifically be included.

With that, I thank you very much for your time, Chairman Guerrera, Chairman DeFronzo and ladies and gentlemen of the committee.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you for your testimony and, you know, we appreciate the -- earlier in the year the Association coming in and explaining this issue to us. I'm glad it's incorporated in the bill.

I just wanted to clarify -- and Sally maybe you could take note of this, okay for -- for changes. You suggesting on line 813 that the tax collectors be specifically included in that language?

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. And that -- you mentioned a few other items in addition to the date of birth, can you make sure we have that language for the -- for our legal staff so that we can --

MIKE DESROCHES: Certainly, up in lines 797, 798.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Okay.

MIKE DESROCHES: We'll most certainly provide you with the language.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Yeah if you can do that it will be helpful.

Thank you very much for your testimony. Any other questions?

Representative Guerrero.

REP. GUERRERA: Welcome Mike. Thanks for waiting so patiently.

Just for the committee's own indulgence here can you just tell me how much money towns could end up losing because -- if we don't do this?

MIKE DESROCHES: That is a difficult -- that's a difficult thing to say and it's going to vary. In 169 municipalities -- taxing districts the cities will suffer more than the smaller towns. Because of the ethnicities involved and the difficulty in identifying one party from another and some of the transient nature of dwellings within the city I think you're going to see more of an impact then you would with the smaller towns. The entire point here is that we minimize the restrictions on our ability to go out and follow statute and collect tax, so that we're doing our best to keep mill rates down and preserve jobs.

REP. GUERRERA: But it's -- I'm -- is it safe to say, by adding this information you probably have a higher collection ratio?

MIKE DESROCHES: Absolutely.

REP. GUERRERA: Okay.

MIKE DESROCHES: Absolutely.

REP. GUERRERA: And I know that Senator DeFronzo wanted to ask a question in regards to make sure that I do pay my taxes on time. You are the tax collector -- other members didn't know that so --

MIKE DESROCHES: I believe so.

REP. GUERRERA: Any other comments?

Senator Boucher followed by a good friend down there, Representative Giegler.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony. Do you currently have access to the voter roles that do have birth days and date of birth information currently right there in your own town hall?

MIKE DESROCHES: We can gain access, yes. And further, we also have access to -- under a fee arrangement to the motor vehicle records through the Internet. But it's a less efficient, less effective way of trying to ascertain the data you're looking for. For example, if we had a new tax payor in town and we sent a bill, we don't know -- we don't know that person's date of birth; we lost it as a point of reference without the date of birth. If we don't know their date of birth, we don't know their social security number. If it was a -- a person who lived in town over the last few years and we now have to go look up their date of birth, we could look at an old record that has previously been provided by the DMV and put two and two together.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you for your answer. I -- I still have -- I must tell you, some concerns

about privacy issues. And -- you know, some of the most reputable organizations even in the state, the Department of Revenue Services has misplaced or lost critical personal identity information for hundreds of our residents as well. So you can see why this would give some pause for concern.

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for coming before us today.

Now you're wanting to add tax collectors now on the assessors list, do they have date of births already included or were they taken off their records as well?

MIKE DESROCHES: They -- the assessors used to, the information fees goes from the Department of Motor Vehicles to the assessors and then from the assessors to the tax collectors so essentially what was removed was the information being provided to the assessors. The new language in the Raised Bill essentially protects the assessors from having to provide that information to outside third parties. It's a limited use. Since the tax collectors will be receiving the information from the assessors we think it makes sense to include the Collectors in the group of people that has limited uses of that information. So the answer is, they used to get it and at this point they do not have the date of birth.

REP. GIEGLER: Because within city hall or town hall there's a lot of different departments, so how often are your records FOI or do people request

tax information other than the person that it pertains to?

MIKE DESROCHES: My records have -- in my three years as Collector in Rocky Hill they have never been FOI, with respect to the Motor Vehicle rules.

REP. GIEGLER: And isn't it true that the Registrar of Voters offices maintain dates of birth and so if someone went in there and wanted to get a list of an active voting list that those birth certificates -- birth dates would be included on the list that's handed out?

MIKE DESROCHES: I -- I don't know the answer to that question. I apologize.

REP. GIEGLER: Okay. Well thank you very much for your answers.

MIKE DESROCHES: They do maintain the dates of birth. Whether or not they can be obtained by an outside party under FOI I don't know the answer.

REP. GIEGLER: But they do have that information within their own office as well.

MIKE DESROCHES: Oh, yes.

REP. GIEGLER: But for you, you need it because you need to collect tax revenue and we know that in cities like Danbury where we have so many with the same last names, different initials, different first names, it becomes very difficult for --

MIKE DESROCHES: We -- we need to --

REP. GIEGLER: -- a source of identification.

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes, when we need to collect the tax we need to get returned mail out to the proper party. There are maybe 19,000 motor vehicle tax bills we can get 1,000 returned in Rocky Hill and through using Skip Tracing software and other means of technology we can locate the new residents of the person that has the tax but without the date of birth we're not sure we've got the right party. So this would also enable us to avoid inadvertently mailing a tax bill to somebody who does not own the property.

REP. GIEGLER: All right. Well thank you so much for your answer.

MIKE DESROCHES: Thank you.

REP. GUERRERA: Thank you, Representative.

Representative Scribner followed by  
Representative Mioli.

REP. SCRIBNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon.

Just for a couple of points of clarification, it's my understanding that as you have suggested, the information in regard to the date of birth was previously provided along with other information from the Department of Motor Vehicles to the tax assessor within a municipality who would then have the ability to share that with the tax collector.

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes.

REP. SCRIBNER: It's my understanding that the Department of Motor Vehicle made the decision not to include the date of birth in the information that they continue to share with you. Is that accurate so far?

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes.

REP. SCRIBNER: Okay. So what it's done is put you in a position where you no longer have that as another identifying source of information for accuracy to the exact individual that you're trying to identify.

MIKE DESROCHES: Correct.

REP. SCRIBNER: There was some suggestion that you would have access to a voter registration list that would provide the date of birth. I guess the obvious -- at least to me, would be that there may be many people that have registered motor vehicles that are also not registered to vote. And so that is not really a through replacement for the information.

MIKE DESROCHES: That's very true. And in fact somebody could be in town -- new in town for quite a while if they register at all, they may register shortly before an election.

REP. SCRIBNER: Okay. And then there -- of course always cases where there's a lag time and -- you know, they may continue to have their car registered or purchase a new car but they've stilled registered to vote in a different state or a different municipality and -- so their records are not necessarily concurrent or accurate.

MIKE DESROCHES: That's absolutely correct.

REP. SCRIBNER: Now I've had some discussion on this with the administration of the Department of Motor Vehicles and I know that some of this has to do with issues in regard to the Freedom of Information Commission and what their requirements state. I do know that there's an

ability for that information would it be reinstated by the Department to be suppressed. So that only you as the recipient of the information would have access to it and yet would not be required to include it if somebody issued a freedom of information request to the public record, which they would be entitled to receive absent the date of birth. Is that an accurate assessment?

MIKE DESROCHES: Yes -- yes.

REP. SCRIBNER: Now, one other point. I guess a concern that has been brought forward is that despite the fact that you're acknowledging pretty much on a volunteer basis that the staff for instance may have access to that information within the tax assessors and or the tax collectors office would not share that information with anyone else. Can you offer us a little bit of enlightenment and perhaps reassurance that that would be absolutely the case? So that information couldn't be otherwise shared outside of the confine and uses of those two offices?

MIKE DESROCHES: I cannot speak for offices outside my own. You would like to think that you can speak for the employees under your direction unequivocally; human nature is what it is. However what I can say is that there is a strong push for tax collectors who are bonded to become certified. I'm a certified municipal Connecticut collector. And for my staff to go through the certification process, which engrains ethical considerations, knowledge of the industry, internal controls, audit risk, it's a different breed of persons that should be working in a tax collector's office. So -- where as there can be no guarantees there are intrinsically safeguards and other considerations of internal controls already in

place. And so that if somebody came to the counter and said, gee give me a list of your motor vehicle roles, those types of requests are going to get filtered back up to me for me to produce those. They're not just going to get run off the printer and handed over.

REP. SCRIBNER: It's not my interest to suggest or accuse anybody of sharing what would otherwise be confidential information. I think what I'm trying to do is to establish some sense of reassurance that there may be opportunity for there to be some kind of safeguard or measure in place. Whether it be a signed code of conduct or something along those lines so that we have a stronger sense of assurance that any individual that would continue to have access to that information would be in large degree prevented from sharing it.

MIKE DESROCHES: I could concur with the code of conduct; I could also envision that there would be necessary software changes that would suppress date of birth being printed on any reporting. You know, changes like that make a lot of sense.

REP. SCRIBNER: It just seems to me that that would help strengthen the argument to make the revision that is being looked for so that there is that higher level of piece of mind that this information would be more secure. And that might make the difference in how successful the proposal is.

MIKE DESROCHES: Certainly. Thank you.

REP. SCRIBNER: Thank you.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Representative Mioli, do you have a question?

REP. MIOLI: Yes, and a comment. The comment is the register of voters -- first thing they must be American citizens so if they are not American citizens they cannot register to vote. And besides many Americans do not register to vote so that list is useless. On the other hand, why we just don't get away from the car taxes -- property taxes on the cars? Connecticut is the only state around here who does this. I was shocked when I moved from New York that Connecticut has a tax. We could survive (inaudible.)

(Inaudible.) Even if you are a renter you pay those real estate taxes really; in a different way. If you don't own property you won't be paying tax, you do pay the tax because a landlord -- when he rents something -- you know, he factors in all his expenses. Maybe we should look into this -- you know (inaudible.)

Okay. That's all.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Now you got a whole other thing going on.

REP. MIOLI: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. Senator Boucher, hopefully we could move along here, we got a lot of speakers left.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Couldn't help but remark. And I have to just very briefly pick up on Representative Mioli's wonderful observation. And you -- I -- I invite you to sign on to the multiple of bills that proposed over the last few years to eliminate the very uncompetitive car property tax as you have observed is rarely employed any place else. It's just one of the many cumulative taxes that make us one of the more tax burden states.

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Thank you, Representative Mioli.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: All right. I think you ought to be in the Finance Committee for this discussion.

All right. I think we're done. Thank you very much for your testimony.

MIKE DESROCHES: Thank you.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you.

All right. We have several speakers here from the Connecticut Horse Council. And I'd like to give you all an opportunity to speak but I was wondering if you might be able to call you up all together. You're all speaking on the same bill, if you're still here.

Amy Stegall, Meg Sautter, Diane Ciano, Jody Dardis. And you can each take a couple of minutes to speak. I just want to get you all up at the same time so if there are questions we can maybe save a few minutes in the - in the discourse.

You can -- you can use some of those chairs -- yeah, just -- right on that side and that side, yup. If you want to -- when you speak just push the little red button and you're on now, so --

All right, thank you for coming and whoever wants to take the lead go right ahead.

AMY STEGALL: Well Chairman DeFronzo, I'm Amy Stegall, I'm the President of the Connecticut Horse Council. I would like to thank you and the committee members for allowing us to speak today.

HB 5457

moves forward and is given a favorable recommendation by the Transportation Committee.

So thank you, and I'd be happy to answer any question.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you for your testimony.

Are there any questions?

Representative Mioli.

REP. MIOLI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know it's late but Ryan has stolen my thunder. I was going to suggest to my peers, privately (inaudible) the police, fire, EMT to -- at least on them. That's important because the bill that passed last year for the Move Over Law was just useless because it is only used on two lane highways and there are not that many two lane highways in Connecticut. (inaudible) and so on, which is good.

Thank you for your suggestion.

RYAN LYNCH: Thank you.

REP. MIOLI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Any other questions? Okay, if there are no questions, thank you for your testimony.

RYAN LYNCH: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: David Boomer.

DAVID BOOMER: Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrera, members of the committee, I'm David Boomer with the Kowolski Group.

HB 5456  
SB 414

I'm commenting on behalf of two bills. We represent the Connecticut Maritime Collation. The do have reservations about House Bill 5456, that would eliminate the reimbursement for travel expenses of members of the Pilot Commission and Maritime Commission; two state commissions.

If I could I'll reference the letter sent to the Cochairs yesterday by the Maritime Collation, and read one paragraph if I could. Quote, we are opposed to eliminating reimbursement to members of the Connecticut Pilot Commission and the Connecticut Maritime Commission. The citizens that serve on these commissions deserve to have their authorized travel and expense reimbursed. These Commissioners, for the most part are from the business community and their business knowledge is critical to the continued growth of the Connecticut Maritime community and to the competitive advantage of the state. Connecticut should continue to work towards a more inclusive state government through these commissions and not penalize those commission members that seek reimbursement for their authorized travel and expenses created from serving Connecticut better goods.

The second bill I'd like to remark on -- and this is in regard, we represent the Connecticut Association of Optometrists is -- on the big bill -- Senate Bill 414, Section 13, would deem several practitioners to be mandatory reporters if their patients exhibit an inability to drive. And as you know, those reports would need to be made to DMV. The Connecticut Association of Optometrists is -- has questions about this because they believe it may conflict with provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; HIPAA. And

we would just refer that to you also for the record.

Thank you.

SENATOR DEFRONZO: Thank you, David.

Sally can you make a note for staff to take a look at that issue with respect to HIPAA? Maybe ask the research staff to take a look at it.

Seeing none, thank you for your testimony, David.

Are there any other members of the public who would like to testify? All right, seeing none, we'll bring the public hearing to a close and I'll entertain a motion to --

**JOINT  
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**2010**



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

60 State Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06161  
ct.gov/dmv



*Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Robert M. Ward  
on a Bill Requested by the Agency  
Transportation Committee Public Hearing  
March 10, 2010*

**S.B. 414**  
**AN ACT MAKING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE  
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

Good afternoon, Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee. I am here today to support Senate Bill 414, which is primarily a technical bill, which includes a number of changes that will improve the Department of Motor Vehicles' customer service, achieve efficiencies within our agency and improve the administration of many of our programs.

Here is a summary of the bill.

**Section 1** eliminates the driver's license fee for a license issued exclusively for government use. This type of license is obsolete, and is no longer issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

**Section 2** requires all new applicants for a motorcycle endorsement on a driver's license to complete a Motorcycle Safety Foundation course. Currently, the course is required for applicants under the age of 18. To be clear, this requirement would only apply to new motorcycle drivers applying for the endorsement.

**Section 3** makes the penalties for an employer who knowingly permits the operation of a commercial motor vehicle that has been placed out-of-service consistent with federal regulations.

**Section 4** clarifies the out-of-state convictions for offenses substantially similar to those under Connecticut law subject commercial driver license holders and commercial motor vehicle operators to the same disqualification periods that are contained in Connecticut law (section 14-44k). This section also changes the disqualification periods for violating an out-of-service order to comply with federal law, and, in addition, makes civil penalties for violating an out-of-service order consistent with federal regulations. In addition, this section amends section 14-

44k(b) by including a conviction for the use of hand held telephones and mobile electronic devices in the list of offenses requiring disqualification of a commercial driver's license.

**Section 5** adds a section exempting a tow dolly from registration requirements. These trailers are used to tow motor vehicles that are registered, and typically they move from state to state as they are leased or rented through rental companies.

**Section 6** amends section 14-22 to permit a registration renewal for a leased vehicle to be issued to the lessee. The existing statutory language requires that these renewal notices be sent to the owner of the vehicle, which is the leasing company.

**Section 7** excludes commercial driver's license holders or commercial motor vehicle operators from participation in the accelerated pretrial rehabilitation program for motor vehicle offenses. The use of a diversionary program by a CDL holder or CMV operator is considered to be a form of "masking" a conviction under the Code of Federal Regulations.

**Section 8** removes the seat belt exemption for operators of vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating over 10,000 pounds. Currently, state law requires seat belts for vehicles under 10,000 pounds and federal law mandates seat belts over 18,000 pounds.

**Section 9** makes a technical revision to a statutory change in 2003 that renumbered certain provisions in section 14-267a.

**Section 10** authorizes the Commissioner to discontinue a requirement that insurance companies, and certain self-insurers, send a copy of a certificate of title to the DMV for vehicles that have been declared a total loss. As of March 2009, insurance companies and certain self-insurers are required to report title information for salvage vehicles to the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS). DMV also respectfully asks the Committee to consider changing words in lines 322 and 327 of this bill, which appears to incorrectly refer to a "self-insurer." DMV believes both references to "self-insurer" should be "insurance company."

**Section 11** clarifies the obligation of recyclers to report to NMVTIS, and authorizes the Commissioner to discontinue a requirement that a recycler report vehicles that come into its possession to the Commissioner. Recyclers will be required to make a report on salvage vehicles to NMVTIS.

**Section 12** establishes a limited term driver's license for people who are

in the United States lawfully on a temporary basis to comply with the federal law known as REAL ID. This section permits the issuance of a driver's license to coincide with the length of a person's stay in the country. Connecticut is required to be in total compliance with REAL ID requirements by May 2011 in order for its citizens to be able to use their driver's licenses to board airplanes or gain access to federal buildings.

**Section 13** makes mandatory the reporting of chronic health and vision problems that affect a person's ability to operate a motor vehicle. In addition to physicians, it adds physician's assistant and advanced practiced registered nurse to persons who are required to report chronic health problems, and the Board of Education and Services for the Blind to persons who must report vision problems. It makes the reporting personnel immune from civil liability, and protects them from civil actions for making a report in good faith. The Committee may wish to consider whether language should be added to this section to make the *failure* to report immune from a civil suit.

**Section 14** raises the amount of the surety bond for motor vehicle dealers from \$20,000 to \$50,000. The last change in amount was in 1993, when the amount was changed from \$5,000 to \$20,000.

**Section 15** adds to the violations for which a dealer license may be suspended by including those in section 14-52a.

**Section 16** adds a category of vehicles that is required to comply with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. This category is the same as what is already in federal law. It also deletes a reference to service buses, which should not have been included in this section during the last legislative session.

**Section 17** clarifies section 9 of public act 09-187 by adding language specifying that the time of the offense is the critical time for determining whether a person was under the age of eighteen and was operating without a license rather than at the time of conviction.

**Section 18** adds late fees that are consistent with the change that was made to an emissions statute, section 14-164c, through section 16 of public act 09-187.

**Section 19** expands the law that allows seven (7) working days for DMV to supply driver records to include other documents from a DMV record sought to be obtained by the legal process.

**Section 20** clarifies the types of vehicles that are subject to enhanced speeding fines under section 14-219. Under the current, language, only trucks

language does not accurately reflect the intent of the DMV in proposing this section, and requests that the section require the return of "any applications for new registrations or registration transfers that were not acted upon or completed by such dealer when it was conducting its licensed business."

**Section 22** allows the Commissioner to withdraw dealer registrations and license plates if it is determined that the dealer no longer needs the quantity that it was originally issued.

**Section 23** authorizes the Commissioner to require the personal appearance of a driver's license renewal applicant at every other renewal, provided that the license holder has a digital image on file with DMV and has fulfilled all of the other requirements for a renewal. In addition, this section authorizes the Commissioner to permit automobile clubs to conduct registration renewals and renewals of identity cards. Under current statute, these clubs may only perform driver's license renewals.

**Section 24** prohibits town assessors from disclosing any information from the records of the DMV that is not required to be on the town's grand list.

**Section 25** makes the issuance of a registration sticker by the Commissioner permissive rather than mandatory. DMV believes this change will allow for improved efficiencies when issuing registrations.

**Section 26** clarifies the language in section 14-253a regarding the certification of medical forms used for the issuance of handicapped placards. DMV respectfully requests that the Committee consider adding the word "and" in line 898 after the semicolon to clarify that an application requires certification of both the existence of a disability and that the disability impairs the ability to walk.

**Section 27** excludes the holder of a commercial driver's license from participation in the pretrial alcohol education program under section 54-56g. In its 2009 audit of the DMV, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration directed DMV to propose this change in order to bring Connecticut into compliance with federal regulations. The use of a diversionary program by a CDL holder is considered to be a form of "masking" a conviction under the Code of Federal Regulations, specifically section 49 CFR § 384.226.

**Section 28** adds a background check requirement for certain existing employees of DMV who are involved in the manufacture or production of drivers' licenses and identity cards or who have the ability to affect the identity information that appears on the driver's license or identification card. This is a requirement under the federal regulations implementing the federal law known as REAL ID, which, in part, aims to secure the production facilities from which credentials are issued. Under current law, section 14-9a requires a background check for new employees of DMV.

**Section 29** makes a single subsection of the administrative per se statute consistent with amendments that were passed in 2009. This section clarifies a procedure DMV has had in place since 1990.

**Section 28** adds a background check requirement for certain existing employees of DMV who are involved in the manufacture or production of drivers' licenses and identity cards or who have the ability to affect the identity information that appears on the driver's license or identification card. This is a requirement under the federal regulations implementing the federal law known as REAL ID, which, in part, aims to secure the production facilities from which credentials are issued. Under current law, section 14-9a requires a background check for new employees of DMV.

**Section 29** makes a single subsection of the administrative per se statute consistent with amendments that were passed in 2009. This section clarifies a procedure DMV has had in place since 1990.

**Section 30** repeals section 14-111a, which calls for a warning ticket to be issued for a minor possessing alcohol in a motor vehicle. A substantially similar offense is now being enforced through the issuance of an infractions ticket, payment of which carries a license suspension.

We realize this is a long, detailed bill and are willing to work and to meet with members of the Committee if they have any questions or concerns.



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 PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 414

Good afternoon Chairman DeFronzo, Chairman Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee. For the record, I am Timothy Larson, State Representative from the 11<sup>th</sup> District. I am here today to testify on Raised Bill No. 414, ACC Making Revisions to Statutes Concerning The Department of Motor Vehicles. Specifically, Section 2 pertaining to motorcycle endorsement requirements.

In May of 2008 a friend, Stephanie Pelletier, lost her son Nick Cohen to a motorcycle accident at the age of 19. Nick was operating a motorcycle without having had any motorcycle training. After losing Nick, Stephanie began to research our state's requirements on obtaining a motorcycle license

Both Stephanie and I were surprised to find out that Connecticut requires only 16 and 17 year olds to complete a motorcycle training course. This is particularly startling considering current statistics from the Connecticut Department of Transportation. In 2008 there we a total of 61 motorcycle fatalities, motorcycle drivers under the age of 18 account for only 2-of those deaths. In 2007, there were 41 deaths, with only 1 death of a rider under the age of 18. One can only assume that our 16 and 17 year old drivers did indeed benefit from the required motorcycle training course.

In a recent study conducted by the University of Southern California, 4,778 motorcycle fatalities were investigated; it was found that *two thirds* of the fatalities were due to

motorcycle rider error. They also state that the motorcycle riders involved in accidents were essentially *without training*, 92% of the riders were self-taught or learned from family or friends. Further, the study concluded that motorcycle rider training experience reduces accident involvement and is related to reduced injuries in the event of accidents.

I urge you to consider the safety of all motorcycle riders by making the motorcycle training course a requirement for *all* people obtaining a motorcycle license, and I respectfully request you report this bill favorably out of committee.

  
10SB414

Good Morning

My name is Stephanie Pelletier and I reside in East Hartford, CT. I would like to thank the committee for giving me this opportunity to speak in support of the motorcycle training bill.

On May 30, 2008 around 7:30 am my door bell rang several times....a sound that makes me cringe to this day. At my door were two East Hartford police officers and a social worker. They came to tell me my 19 year son Nick Cohen was killed while riding on his motorcycle. It is a parent's worst nightmare - to lose my child and then to turn around and have to tell my nine year old twins that their brother was never going to come home.

Nick was a handsome kid. He was very personable, happy and a caring person. He was a role model at East Hartford High School. The sadness and grief my family and I felt after his death was overwhelming and was shared by the whole community.

Often times we hear of tragic accidents happening on a weekend night, when kids are out partying or fooling around. I want to stress that motorcycle accidents can happen anytime, even on an ordinary early morning like May the 30th. The night before Nick's accident, he went to his Grandmother's house to help her with a project and have dinner and he was home early. The following morning was a beautiful sunny day. On his way to work, Nick stopped at the bank and then was heading to his friend's house so they could ride to work together. A few miles from where he was going is where his life ended. Nick collided with a minivan and he was instantly killed. Nick was wearing his helmet and what should have been a beautiful ride to work, turned out to be a heartbreaking one.

Nick had a passion for motorcycles. Nick got his bike a little (less) than a year before his accident. As you can imagine, letting Nick get a motorcycle at such a young age was a very tough decision for me.

Through this difficult time I immediately knew I had to do something to help protect another parent from going through what I have. After Nick's death, I spent time learning about CT motorcycle laws. I wanted to see if there was anything I could learn from my tragic experience and be able to pass it on to others. I was amazed to find out how easy it is for someone to get a motorcycle permit and renew the permit with out formal training. I often wonder if Nick was required to go through formal training, would he be here today. I asked myself this question everyday which led me to start talking to State Representative Tim Larson.

Currently the State of CT has a motorcycle training course known as the Connecticut Rider Education Program. However, this program is only mandated for 16 & 17 year olds. What this means is anybody over the age of 17 can obtain a motorcycle permit without any formal training. I ask you to please consider the amendment before you, which would mandate that every driver seeking a motorcycle license be required to complete the Connecticut Rider Education Program.

I now hold Nick close to my heart by wearing locks of his hair in a locket on a chain and a yellow bracelet which says " Nick, Always loved, forever remembered. My hopes are that by mandating motorcycle training for everyone, I can save someone else's son or daughter, and save a parent from the pain I feel everyday. Thank you



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**Testimony in Support of SB 414**  
**Transportation Committee**  
**March 10, 2010**

Chairmen DeFronzo and Guerrero, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, and members of the Transportation Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of two initiatives contained in SB 414: *An Act Making Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Motor Vehicles.*

The House Republican Caucus has made it a priority to promote simplicity, efficiency, and cost savings in our government. I believe sections 24 and 26 will streamline our government while at the same time enhancing the convenience of the public we serve.

Section 24 of the bill allows the commissioner of DMV to permit automobile clubs to conduct registration renewals and renewals of identity cards. Currently, these clubs are only allowed to renew drivers' licenses. This change would be a welcome to the many automobile club members who get services from such clubs to avoid long wait times and frustrations at DMV.

Section 26 makes the issuance of registration stickers permissive rather than mandatory. Registration information is available and updated regularly on the Connecticut On-Line Law Enforcement Communications Teleprocessing (COLLECT). It is more reliable for police to verify information using COLLECT than the redundant windshield stickers. Eliminating stickers could yield \$820,700 in savings in just postage and supplies alone. It will provide motorists a better unobstructed view of the road and eliminate the messy and cumbersome clean up of the adhesive left behind by old stickers.

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Another concept deserving of discussion is issuing one plate per motor vehicle. As the Committee may be aware, there are 19 states currently that require only a single plate on vehicles. If CT was to issue one plate the state would save almost \$406,000. Currently Illinois is looking at a similar proposal expected to reduce state costs by more than \$1 million annually.

By no means will this solve our budget problems. But, these are common-sense measures that save money, even in this current year from what I understand. These two sections are small parts of a very large bill. My concern is that they may become casualties of other sections where we don't have agreement. Therefore, I hope the Committee might consider creating a separate bill with just these two cost-saving sections.

I strongly believe these concepts will save the state money, enhance customer service, and offer motorists convenience. Passing these initiatives makes common sense.

Thank you.