



STATEMENT OF AT&T CONNECTICUT

Regarding Raised House Bill 6991 An Act Concerning Contractors Performing Work in Schools

Before the Education Committee

February 13, 2007

Proposal:

Raised House Bill 6991 would require any contractor who enters into a contract with a local or regional board of education for the performance of maintenance, repair or landscaping work during the school year at a school to provide such board of education with a list of the names, addresses and dates of birth of all employees or subcontractors of such contractor who will be performing such work. The board of education would, in turn, be required to determine whether any of such employees or subcontractors is registered or required to register as a sexual offender pursuant to chapter 969 of the general statutes and if so, not permit such person to perform maintenance, repair, or landscaping work during the school year at any school or on the grounds of any school.

Comments:

AT&T Connecticut requests modification of the language in RHB 6991.

AT&T shares the committee's concern for the safety of our schoolchildren. We currently require state and national criminal history checks whenever we hire an employee.

It is not clear that the requirements of Bill No. 6991 would or are intended to apply to our employees who are dispatched to a school to repair phone service or perform maintenance work. If they do, AT&T would be required, before dispatching employees to a school, to identify particular employees from a large and flexible workforce who might be available for assignment, produce identifying information for such employees, and presumably await confirmation from the relevant board of education that such employees are permitted to perform the work. This would be time consuming and costly and could compromise the company's ability to provide timely service, particularly in the event of an emergency.

As previously stated, AT&T requires criminal history checks as part of its hiring process. In addition, as a public service company, AT&T is subject to extensive regulation by the Department of Public Utility Control. The Department's oversight extends to consideration of the public safety.

Conclusion:

AT&T Connecticut requests modification of the language in RHB 6991 because as presently drafted its reach is overly broad. For a company like AT&T, its provisions are unnecessary and would compromise the ability of AT&T to provide timely and cost-efficient service to schools. AT&T respectfully requests that the bill be amended to clearly exclude employees of public service companies and their affiliates.