



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1658

Raised Bill No. 7147
An Act Concerning Comprehensive Reform of the State Contracting Process

Comments of Carol Wilson
Director of Procurement Programs and Services

Government Administration & Elections Committee
February 21, 2007

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Caruso, and members of the Government Administration & Elections Committee. My name is Carol Wilson and I am the Director of the Procurement Division of the Department of Administrative Services.

I am here today to testify regarding Senate Bill 7147, An Act Concerning Comprehensive Reform of the State Contracting Process. My comments are specific to Section 5 of the bill, which would prohibit supplies, materials, equipment or services from being produced, assembled or manufactured outside of the U.S.

DAS strongly supports the purchase of products and services from companies that are located in the United States and, especially, in Connecticut and we continually strive to add more local businesses to our list of awarded suppliers. Current statutory language provides that in awarding a contract, with all factors being equal, we give preference to supplies, materials and equipment that are produced, assembled or manufactured in the state and to services originating and provided in the state. Our current contract statistics show that **nearly 67% of our suppliers are based in Connecticut.**

Currently, we have 864 active contracts, which are serviced by 2023 different suppliers. Most of these contracted companies, including the Connecticut-based companies, provide products that are - at least in part -- produced, assembled, manufactured or originated outside of the United States. For example, the firearms our public safety officers carry are imported from Switzerland. Many of the vehicles the state purchases are purchased from domestic-based companies, but are manufactured elsewhere. The fuel that heats our state buildings and fills our automobile tanks and all other petroleum-based products, including plastics, are imported. The salt that is applied to our roadways originates in Chile. The computers we all use every day, as well as other

telecommunications devices, are manufactured overseas. Medical equipment, tools, hardware, industrial supplies and equipment, office supplies, office equipment and more would all be affected by this requirement. Exhibit A in our written testimony lists additional commodities purchased by the state that would be impacted by this proposal.

A critical service contract we administer for the Department of Public Safety is for translation services for 911 emergency calls. This is a relatively new industry, which exists only because of the recent advances in telecommunication technology. This particular contract allows any state agency, city or town to get a translator on the line within 30 seconds for any language, 24 hours a day for \$1.01 per minute. The only way any company is able to do this is to have a worldwide network of translators available to take calls when needed. We don't believe any company would be able to do this without employing staff from outside the country.

In summary, a requirement that bans the purchase of such products would seriously impact the ability for DAS and other contracting agencies to source and contract for products. Additionally, **this bill will have an unintended detrimental impact on most of our very own Connecticut businesses** as well as on other domestic companies that distribute such products.

Thank you. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Exhibit A

Various Commodities that are manufactured, produced in *whole or in part* outside of the US:

- Security Alarm Systems, Fire Alarm Systems, all Electronics
- Homeland Security and Disaster Equipment and Supplies
- Clothing, Textiles and Fabrics
- Brooms, brushes and related
- Fans, Lamps/Lighting, Meters, Motor Starters & Controllers, Circuit breakers
- Hand and Power Tools
- Hardware for builders
- General Hardware
- Industrial supplies (utility knives, safety cutters, plastics)
- Plumbing and Heating equipment (temperature control and mechanical equipment)
- Motor Vehicles and other Transportation equipment
- Boats, Supplies and accessories
- Aircraft and aircraft equipment
- Railroad Equipment
- Tires and Tubes
- Trucks for snow removal and related equipment
- Forklift/pallet trucks, etc.
- Office Machines and Equipment and related accessories
- Offset Printing and Equipment
- Athletic & Recreational Equipment and related Supplies and Accessories
- Food serving equipment, Appliances & Supplies
- Promotional items and related products
- Audio visual equipment & Accessories
- Vending, Voting machines
- Cosmetic and Toilet Preparations & Supplies
- Computer Supplies & Accessories
- Office, Educational and Library Supplies
- Paper and Paper Products
- Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals (including road salt)
- Laboratory Equipment & Supplies
- Medical and Clinical Supplies and related

Fuels to include:

- Diesel fuel
- Heating Oil(s)
- Gasoline