

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF PAWNBROKERS INC.

503 Lakewood Road, Waterbury, CT 06704

tel. 203-753-7591

Re: **Opposition to House Bill #6173 (Raised)**

3-24-09

Good Afternoon Chairmen McDonald and Lawler and members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record my name is Jay Sargent and I represent the CT Assoc. of Pawnbrokers and TC's Pawn Company of Waterbury and East Hartford. I am here today to speak in Opposition to House Bill 6173.

Pawnbrokers are one of the most regulated privately owned industries in CT. Contrary to popular believe we do understand the reasoning and intentions behind this bill. As for myself, I have worked together with many law enforcement agencies, locally and statewide for aprox. 25 years aiding them whenever possible to the best of our ability in their investigations and the recovery of items that were found to be stolen and the prosecution of the perpetrators'.

This aid is made possible by the entries that we already enter into our record keeping systems. Over the last few years local police departments have already begun the process of requiring electronic record keeping deemed appropriate by their respective chiefs of police or alike and electronic filing of these records as part of their Pawnbroker licensing procedures with all expense burdened by the licensees. These records are them uploaded to the NESPIN system already giving full access to our records to all law enforcement agencies including state police. We feel the record keeping systems should remain as they have been determined by the localities in which the businesses reside. Furthermore, we already refuse merchandise whereas upon inspection it is apparent that identifying numbers have been intentionally removed and have done so for many years. We find these proposals to be redundant in nature.

As testified to in proposed bill 6519 on 2-26-09 – we are not opposed to the photographic image of jewelry items taken in and holding the photo images for whatever length of time deemed appropriate. We understand Jewelry does not generally contain serial numbers or model numbers to identify them whereas most all other items do and this may assist in identifying stolen property. A digital photograph of all items comes with tremendous logistical issues and cost to the businesses and furthermore will have a huge fiscal impact for the state as well for the hardware to store such large quantities of images and more importantly maintenance thereof.

The proposed changes to general statues 21-41 would again have adverse and devastating effect on numerous businesses who are already struggling in these difficult economic times and will force them out of business and/or loss of employment for workers to cover these expenditures, with the proposed cost of re-purchasing software deemed appropriate again and equipment to take and store 1000's of digital images weekly per business- and the logistics of electronic transfer of so many images even with today's technology.

We believe with the plethora of Jewelry/gold buyers and secondhand dealers that have opened their doors as store fronts, through the mail scams, hotel room gold buying or home gold parties within the past year alone, that Pawnbrokers are being targeted or even discriminated against as being all that's wrong with the world. Statistically, in a study done by the NPA (National Pawnbrokers Association) less than ½ percent of items brought into pawnbrokers are determined to have been stolen.

We ask the committee to refocus their intentions toward those unlicensed dealers and to protect the commerce of the small businesses already working within the law and with law enforcement agencies to best serve CT communities.