

March 24, 2009

Good Afternoon Chairmen McDonald and Lawler and members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record my name is Kris Rutkowski and I am the owner of Tri City Trading in New Britain, CT. I am here today to speak in Opposition to House Bill 6173.

As a pawnbroker I strongly oppose bill # 6173 - I feel as though my business is being discriminated against. Businesses that are buying wearing apparel, jewelry, ornaments, household goods or other personal property at a one day event at a hotel or gold buying party's are perceived differently. Consignment shops, jewelry stores, antique stores, music/video/game stores, book stores, etc. they all have the same common trade, purchase valuable items and are not held to the same regulations and laws that pawnbrokers must adhere to. For example, as a pawnbroker, we accept video games. A customer must be at least 18 years of age and present a valid photo id in order to sell or trade an item. In a video/game store, a customer is not required to be 18 with a valid photo id in order to sell or trade an item. Another example is that valuables such as gold, silver, diamonds, designer clothing, and collectables can end up at a consignment shop or a one weekend event held at a hotel and gone the next day, not required by law to report to the local police or any authorities. Antique stores purchase valuables also, each piece can be worth tens of thousands of dollars, and again, they are not held to the same requirements, requiring them to hold items for any period of time or report these transactions to any authority. A jewelry store that purchases a diamond ring and holds a precious metal license under current statues will not have to provide any transaction history but pawnbrokers who buy's the same diamond ring will??? What is the difference???

I am opposed to this bill as written while it targets only my business; I feel that all businesses conducting these types of transactions should be required to follow the same statutes. I feel that this bill, which singles out pawnbrokers, is yet another example of a stereotypical perception for a business that is no different than other retail businesses such as jeweler stores, antiques dealers or consignment shops, which all depend on an individual consumer buying and selling products. The regulations and reporting that pawnbrokers currently file electronically are not required by similar businesses as mentioned previously.

More importantly proposed bill 6173 will further increase the amount procedures that pawnbrokers alone must take. These additional procedures will cause my company to incur additional costs in the form of increased time, wages computer software & hardware in a declining economy. The additional cost that the State will incur will no doubt be astronomical as they will also require time, manpower & computer hardware to operate and secure their system.

Kris Rutkowski, Tri City Trading, New Britain