



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Testimony of the Division of Criminal Justice
Joint Committee on Judiciary – March 24, 2009

- **H.B. No. 6173 An Act Concerning Pawnbrokers**

The Division of Criminal Justice supports the concept of H.B. No. 6173, An Act Concerning Pawnbrokers, but must reluctantly recommend the Committee reject the bill unless adequate funding can be provided to the Department of Public Safety for its implementation and operation. The Division would also recommend that, if adopted, the legislation be amended to require that the reports be required to be filed no later than seven calendar days after the property is received rather than the 10 days contained in the proposed legislation. A weekly report to local officials is what is presently required by C.G.S. §21-43.

Under present law local police chiefs have been able to require approximately 50% of pawnshops in Connecticut to file weekly reports, in electronic form. These reports are currently being provided to a regional police intelligence network where they are aggregated and provide a valuable, searchable, investigative resource. Our concern is that the work which has been done in this area by many concerned law enforcement officials may be damaged if this legislation is passed and adequate funding to operate the system and to pass that information through to the regional intelligence network is not provided. What looks like promising legislation could, in fact, have a negative impact by effectively eliminating the reports which are now being provided and replacing them with a system which may not be functional until an economic recovery allows for necessary funding.

The Division of Criminal Justice does not wish to be perceived as negative on this proposal. If the Department of Public Safety is properly staffed and funded to process the information from the pawnshops in a timely fashion, and to make it available in a searchable database accessible to local investigators it can have an extremely positive effect, building on what already exists. If that funding is not available, however, we fear that we will lose the progress which has already been made in this area.

In conclusion, the Division would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to present our input and recommendations and we would be happy to provide any additional information or answer any questions the Committee might have.