



**Storage Investment
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To Members of the Connecticut Legislature's Transportation Committee;

I am writing to ask you to support *An Act Creating A Procedure For Self-Storage Facilities To Auction Automobiles Abandoned At Such Facilities*, HB-6620. My company is a professional self storage management company which operates 32 self storage properties in five northeastern states. We manage 7 locations within Connecticut of which our principals own 3 of them.

The Connecticut lien law (C.G.S. §42-160 et seq.) allows us a reasonable method of dealing with customers who have stopped paying rent or who may have abandoned their property. The problem is this law does not address the issue of motor vehicles and their titles. Presently the only alternative for the self storage owner is to sell the vehicle for parts only as the buyer will be unable to properly title and register the vehicle. This severely diminishes the value of the vehicle impacting the storage operator's ability to recoup some of their rent losses. Often there are no buyers for the vehicle because of this situation.

Both New York and Massachusetts have addressed this issue. In essence those states have forms available from the state motor vehicle department which allow the storage operator to provide the information necessary to create a new origin of title allowing the buyer to register the vehicle. This is a win-win situation whereas the storage operator is able to sell the vehicle and the state collects sales tax plus motor vehicle registration fees.

I believe it's important to understand these vehicles are often not of high value. No one walks away from a new Cadillac or Jaguar and they are not the usually the family minivan. These vehicles are more likely to be several years old and have been in storage for some time. There are also the "to be restored" vehicles which the renter stored and had big plans to restore and drive around in. These usually never get restored. Last but not least there are the people with an older vehicle they need to store for a few months while they are away – many of these people never pay again and disappear. It may be less expensive to do this than take that vehicle to a junk yard.

Every one of our seven storage properties in Connecticut has dealt with lien enforcement on motor vehicles. Those vehicles include motorcycles, cars, light trucks, boats and campers. We always check for other lien holders on these vehicles but it's rare for the original lien holder to be willing to pay the back rent in order to recover the vehicle. Most have already written off the loan as uncollectable and probably consider the cost to recover and sell the vehicle to be more expensive than simply walking away. It would be great if we could convince those lien holders to assign title to the storage operator however we are lucky if they respond to us at all and all have so far ignored our request for assignment.

So as you can imagine, the storage operators in Connecticut need a solution to our dilemma. We hope our elected legislators are able to see this issue and grant us the reasonable solution we are requesting. Please support House Bill 6620. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charlie Fritts