



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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*Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles
Transportation Committee Public Hearing
March 11, 2009*

Raised Bill No. 444

AN ACT CONCERNING PARKING FOR PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHICH LIMIT OR IMPAIR THE ABILITY TO WALK

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) understands and supports the purpose of this bill, to curb the unlawful use of handicapped parking placards and specially designated parking spaces, and has been working to implement administrative changes that would address these concerns.

In fact, just two days ago, the Department announced that applicants will now be limited to obtaining only one placard, and physicians will be required to provide their license number when completing an application for a placard. Also effective this month, DMV will run the Department of Public Health's death records against the file of placard holders and will automatically cancel credentials of individuals identified as recently deceased.

As a whole, DMV sees merit to sections of the proposal that would require a general re-verification or renewal procedure for existing placard-holders, and that would allow citizen complaints to be submitted concerning misuse. Given the fiscal note associated with implementation of these same revisions included in 2008 Senate Bill 499 (over \$1 million), DMV would respectfully suggest an incremental approach to addressing the problem that would avoid legal challenges and not raise issues over the agency's limited resources.

One avenue worth exploring would be to establish a placard renewal procedure independent of license or identification card expiration. If it is the intent to tie expiration of the identity document with the parking credential, this can much more easily and cost-effectively be addressed once the new DMV computer systems are up-and-running, probably within two years.

The Department looks forward to working with the Committee on these continued efforts to improve the entire handicapped placard issuance and enforcement system.

Seat Belts Do Save Lives