

Transportation Committee  
Public Hearing

Testimony of Theresa C. Lantz  
Commissioner, Department of Correction

March 4, 2009

Committee Bill No. 428, An Act Concerning the Safety of Individuals Being Transported  
by State Agencies

Good afternoon, Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee. I am writing to express the Department of Correction's concerns about the potential impact of Committee Bill 428, An Act Concerning the Safety of Individuals Being Transported by State Agencies.

The Department of Correction takes seriously its mission to protect the public, its staff and the inmates in our custody. In keeping with this, the Department ensures that our vehicles are maintained and that we transport inmates in a safe manner. The Department also has written policies and procedures that address vehicle inspection and safety, employee license requirements, the use of seatbelts, by both staff and inmates, and the transportation of inmates with disabilities. For example, prior to the daily use of a vehicle, there is a safety inspection to check the fluid levels, tire inflation and the operation of the lights and brakes. The Department's Administrative Directive 6.4 Transportation and Community Supervision on Inmates can found at <http://www.ct.gov/doc/LIB/doc/PDF/AD/ad0604.pdf>.

The Department is particularly concerned about the provision in subsection (c) of the bill, which would require the executive head of the state agency to review the driving record of any individual operating a transport vehicle at least once every six months. Currently, appropriate staff regularly reviews accident reports and complaints to determine if there has been a motor vehicle violation or lack of compliance with agency policy or procedure. Additionally, the Department of Administrative Services has established strengthened accountability for vehicle use, setting up online complaint procedures and assigning compliance responsibility to high level officials who are designated as agency transportation administrators. The provisions of Committee Bill 428 would result in a burdensome and costly undertaking.

The Department is confident that its current policies and procedures ensure that our vehicles are well maintained and that we transport inmates and offenders in a safe and secure manner.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department of Correction's views on Committee Bill 428.