



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

Testimony of Governor M. Jodi Rell

Presented to the
Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 17, 2010

Regarding SB 28,
AA Consolidating State Agencies and Eliminating Certain Legislative Commissions

Chairpersons Slossberg and Spallone, Ranking Members McLachlan and Hetherington, and distinguished members of the Government Administrative and Elections Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 28, An Act Consolidating State Agencies and Eliminating Certain Legislative Commissions.

My budget calls for a more streamlined state government. These budget proposals, when implemented, will save significant amounts of tax dollars while assuring that core government services and functions continue. One of the guiding principles I have tried to follow during this budget crisis is that the state has to preserve the essential core functions of government, especially those programs that provide necessary direct services to the public. In order to do that, we have to look very critically at those programs that may be nice to have but that are simply not a core function of government and do not provide direct service to the public.

Right now, there are multiple agencies that have been created simply to advocate for a variety of public policies. This work largely duplicates work performed by the legislature itself, the press and various private advocacy groups.

With that in mind, for the second year now, I am proposing that we eliminate the Commission on Aging, the Commission on Children, the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, the African-American Affairs Commission, and the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

Each of these advocacy commissions obviously has a constituency and they do a good job of making their voices heard. However, these are extraordinary times and we simply cannot afford business as usual. We have to make significant changes in the structure of our state government and get it down to a size we can afford. In this way, we can preserve public resources for the most important core functions and services on which our citizens rely.

This bill also provides for the consolidation of the firearms permit examiners function into the Department of Public Safety. This is an obvious administrative efficiency and that department is well-equipped to carry out that function as part of its existing mission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.