



SB 137--AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE HUMAN SERVICES STATUTES

February 23, 2010

Good morning. My name is Nancy Carrington and I am CEO of Connecticut Food Bank, the largest centralized source of donated emergency food in Connecticut. Connecticut Food Bank serves 650 food-assistance programs in six of Connecticut's eight counties: Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham. Foodshare serves Hartford and Tolland counties. Food-assistance programs include food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and child and adult day programs for low-income people.

I am here to seek a language change to the supplemental nutrition commodities program through the Department of Social Services. This program, contractually managed by Connecticut Food Bank, uses state funds to purchase food of high nutritional value for emergency programs throughout Connecticut's eight counties. Programs are given a dollar allocation and a list of items to order from. This is one of very few options that programs have to order what their agency specifically needs.

The language from the original statute allows for a reimbursement of five cents per pound to cover some overhead costs. I would like to amend the language on the statute to reflect current needs of Connecticut Food Bank and Foodshare. When the bill was originally written 22 years ago, five cents was the generally accepted food bank handling fee. That fee is designated and capped by Feeding America, the national food bank network of which Connecticut Food Bank and Foodshare are members. I would like the language to be amended to reflect a periodically modified handling fee that cannot exceed the national standard.

As currently considered:

Sec. 5. Section 17b-791 of the 2010 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

... Such soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters shall pay a handling charge [of five cents per pound] no more than the generally accepted food bank handling fees not to exceed the national cap in order to cover the costs incurred by the Connecticut Food Bank.

This change of language would keep with the original concept. The original statute as written in 1988 reflected the national handling fee. Also, the amended language will give the food banks flexibility and provide additional funds necessary to get the food to as many places as possible. The fees help defray the costs of warehousing the food, selecting orders and delivering the food across the state. Connecticut Food Bank and Foodshare use grants and other fundraising efforts to cover the remaining cost of distributing food statewide.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Connecticut Food Bank

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