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Public Hearing Testimony
March 2, 2010
Labor & Public Employees Committee
Dan Debicella, State Senator, 21st District

Re: Senate Bill 240 – An Act Concerning the E-Verify Program

Good morning Senator Prague, Representative Ryan, Ranking Members Guglielmo and Noujaim and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 240 – *An Act Concerning the E-Verify Program.*

The E-Verify Program, which has been in existence since 1996, is designed to allow employers to verify an applicant's eligibility to work in the United States. Eligibility is determined by comparing information obtained in the employee's I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification) to records maintained by the Social Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security.

The actual verification process takes only a few seconds. If for some reason the information in the I-9 does not match information maintained by the federal government, potential employees are always given the chance to correct data mismatches. Additionally, there is no cost for an employer who utilizes the program and only a minimal time commitment.

Implementation of E-Verify would be a win for Connecticut. It provides a simple, effective system to ensure that businesses do not hire illegal immigrants while leveling the playing field for both employers and workers by ensuring that certain businesses do not gain a competitive advantage over other businesses by hiring illegal aliens. The system has demonstrated its success in several other states. Arizona and Mississippi

require all employers to use E-Verify. Seven other states require contractors to use the system, and ten additional states require their state agencies to do so.

Also worth noting is the fact that E-Verify would be beneficial to workers throughout the state. Employers that hire illegal aliens generally pay their workers a lower wage, which has the effect of depressing wages for all workers in that sector.

In closing, I would like to thank the co-chairs for their willingness to raise Senate Bill 240 this session. I sincerely hope that the committee looks favorable on this bill so that it can make its way through the legislative process.