STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

60 State Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06161
ct.gov/dmv

Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles
on S.B. 409, H.B. 5454, H.B. 5458, H.B. 5461
Transportation Committee Public Hearing
March 10, 2010

Seat Belts Do Save Lives

Raised S.B. 409
AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM USING CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIT IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF STATE AND MUNICIPAL LAWS CONCERNING PARKING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THAT LIMIT OR IMPAIR THE ABILITY TO WALK AND PERSONS WITH BLINDNESS

Senate Bill 409 appears to be based on a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) report issued to the Transportation Committee earlier this year. The report recommended several ways to strengthen the enforcement of handicapped parking laws in Connecticut.

Within the report, entitled "Suggestions for Enforcing Handicap Parking Laws," one recommendation suggested the use of civilian volunteers to assist local law enforcement. The report was required under Public Act 09-187.

DMV supports this proposal and would be happy to work with members of the Committee on this issue.

Raised H.B. 5454
AN ACT CONCERNING THE NUMBERS AND LETTERS CONTAINED ON MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) would like to make the Committee aware that it currently has a modernization project underway that is preparing the Department for the issuance of motor vehicle number plates that contain space for seven characters. DMV supports this proposal.

Raised H.B. 5458
AN ACT CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF TITLE TO A PERSON WHO IS DESIGNATED THE BENEFICIARY OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

Under current Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) policy, a beneficiary

can already obtain a certificate of title change on a vehicle for the purposes outlined in House Bill 5458.

This proposal appears to make a language change to distinguish between two different scenarios for beneficiaries – applying for a title, and applying for a title and a vehicle registration.

Raised H.B. 5461
AN ACT PROVIDING ADDITIONAL TIME FOR THE REPAIR AND FREE REINSPECTION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF SUCH VEHICLE TO COMPLY WITH EMISSIONS STANDARDS

House Bill 5461 proposes to provide additional time for the repair and free re-inspection of a motor vehicle following the failure of such vehicle to comply with emissions standards, in the case of economic hardship of the owner. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) would like to point out several issues concerning this bill.

Current federal regulations and state law (section 14-164c(d)) allow for a "economic hardship" time extension of the vehicle when a vehicle owner can prove that he or she cannot afford the needed repairs to bring a vehicle that failed an emissions test into compliance. In this case, the time extension allows up to a two-year period (the length of the current testing cycle). The exact time depends on the vehicle's original testing due date.

Current law already allows for up to 60 days period to repair and administer a free re-test to any vehicle that fails to comply with emissions testing standards. Under this proposal, it is unclear to the Department how much of an extension is offered for the "free re-test" period. Is it a total of 120 days or an additional 120 days?

If this proposal aims to extend the "free re-test" period it would also impact the Connecticut program's compliance with the current State Implementation Plan (SIP). Also, the bill's language seems to be time flexible – i.e. "...not to exceed an additional 120 days." Instituting this sort of variance would be a difficult software change, if at all possible, as well as problematic to arrange with the test network.

It also unclear to DMV what the economic hardship qualifications should be under this proposal. If this proposal leads to a lower threshold for qualification, it may increase the number of applications received by DMV and the time of administrative processing it now takes under the present time extension.