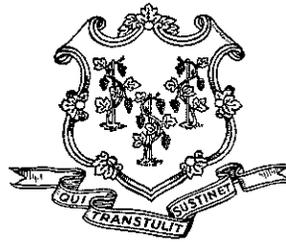


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**State of Connecticut**  
**SENATE**

*Chair*  
Higher Education & Employment  
Advancement Committee

*Member*  
Appropriations Committee  
Education Committee  
Internship Committee  
Judiciary Committee

March 6, 2012

**Testimony to the Aging Committee**  
**Senate Bill 281: An Act Requiring State Buildings To Comply With The Americans With Disabilities Act by 2018**

Senator Prague, Representative Serra, and Members of the Aging Committee:

My name is Beth Bye, State Senator for the 5<sup>th</sup> district, representing West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington and Bloomfield.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and subsequent amendments have changed the lives of countless Americans by providing them access to public and private spaces previously unavailable to them. Yet, the provisions of the ADA do not require changes to be made immediately or automatically if they are of a significant scale. I believe, when it comes to the public buildings in which citizens of this State are required to conduct State business, Connecticut can do better.

Because of the lack of universal access, persons with disabilities remain one of the few classes of individuals frequently unable to conduct personal business with the State as independent adults. This is a source of embarrassment for the individual and I believe it is also an embarrassment for Connecticut. This bill seeks to create the environment necessary to allow as many individuals as possible to interact with their State government without the need of outside assistance. This bill will allow citizens with disabilities to maintain the sense of dignity and autonomy to which they, as all residents of our state, are entitled.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.