

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 22, 2013**

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Testimony On Senate Bill No. 8

**AN ACT INCREASING THE PER DIEM COMPENSATION OF SMALL CLAIMS AND
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE MAGISTRATES**

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on Senate Bill No. 8, An Act Increasing the Per Diem Compensation of Small Claims and Department of Motor Vehicles Magistrates.

This bill proposes increases in the per diem compensation for Small Claims and DMV magistrates. Section 51-193r of the general statutes dictates the compensation level of magistrates, including the two types of magistrates that are the subject of this bill. Currently, small claims and motor vehicle magistrates receive the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars for each day of engagement.

I have several concerns about the proposed legislation. First, funding for such increases was not included in the Governor's recommended budget, so I urge you to hold this bill pending completion of the budget process. Second, the legislation does not specify what the new amount of compensation would be. Lastly, it is unclear why compensation for these two particular types of magistrates should be increased while compensation for other magistrates would not; it seems to me that a review of compensation for all magistrates as well as any issues with attracting and retaining people to fill these roles should be undertaken before deciding whether any warrant an increase.

I would like to again thank the committee for the opportunity to present this testimony. I respectfully request that the Committee take no action this bill and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.