



**Public Hearing Testimony of  
Andrew Condon  
Director, Office of Research  
Department of Labor  
Public Health Committee  
March 20, 2013**

Good morning, Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, Senator Welch, Representative Srinivasan and members of the Public Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **House Bill 6647, AAC the Collection of Data Regarding Recipients of Social Service Program Benefits**. My name is Andrew Condon and I am the Director of the Office of Research for the Department of Labor.

I am here to today to speak in opposition to this bill. This bill contains language which would adversely impact the operations of certain units in the Department on a broad scale. The bill language particularly contravenes the mission of the Department of Labor's Office of Research Division.

The bill provides that a state agency that collects primary data concerning the identity of persons served by such agency shall collect and maintain data aggregated in a manner that does not identify such persons, concerning such persons' race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, primary language and disability status. It appears to require that such data collected by a state agency be maintained only in the aggregate, so that certain factors - such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability status - could not be tied to the individual. Basic demographics such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, income (socioeconomic status) are fundamental to understanding the challenges to the unemployed and our workforce. The department gathers data from numerous sources and is not limited to self reported data.

While the Department recognizes the validity of providing reports to the public only in the aggregate to protect confidential data, the prohibition against an agency's maintaining data on the individual characteristics would substantially compromise our ability to perform many of our statutorily mandated functions.

We are already subject to State and Federal statutes that prohibit us from using or redisclosing this personally identifiable information for any but limited, proscribed legal and statistical purposes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and I am available to answer any questions that you may have.

