



**Public Hearing Testimony of
Sharon Palmer, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 10, 2014**

Good Afternoon Senator Musto, Representative Jutila, Senator McLachlan and Representative Hwang and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding **Senate Bill No. 350, AAC the State-Wide Process Improvement Initiative**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

I support this proposed bill. The Connecticut Department of Labor has engaged in Lean process improvement activities since 1998. Lean techniques revolve around a customer focus with an emphasis and perspective on optimizing value through time and resource savings to the citizens of Connecticut.

Lean concentrates on employee centered change with emphasis on individuals being heard, developing staff through education and training, encouraging change and deemphasizing blame with a "let's get it done" mentality. Respect for people and the work they do is at the core of Lean success.

Lean works by first obtaining management commitment. A process to be leaned or problem to be solved is then identified. A Lean team of employees is established and they do the actual work of the process. Brainstorming and process mapping are two of the main tools used to implement the customer driven waste reduction techniques (customers can be both internal and external to the process and organization). Results are evaluated and improvement decisions are made emphasizing a continuance for quality work production and time measurement savings.

Examples of process improvement include but are not limited to: standardization of work templates, forms inclusive of calculations, increased information sharing via intranet usage, electronic documents and signatures, and eventual usage of applications and social media.

With continued Lean culture and inter-agency collaboration, the public can expect increased public service productivity, fewer errors in work processes, increased customer satisfaction,

and internally, improved employee satisfaction and staff empowerment. Unions are supportive of Lean activities as it enhances their member skill sets, making them more competitive employees. The Department is currently participating in a Lean collaborative pilot with the Department of Social Services in streamlining efficiencies to our Veteran's client base. DOL looks forward to continued collaboration with CT Lean and all the agencies of the State of Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today.