

Consideration of Governor Malloy's appointment of Melody A. Currey as
Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services

Testimony of Melody A. Currey

Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee
February 19, 2015

Good morning Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Committee. My name is Melody Currey. It is an honor to be with you this morning, having been nominated by Governor Malloy to lead the Department of Administrative Services. I am hopeful that through this hearing process and after making your own independent evaluation of my qualifications, you will recommend my nomination to the House of Representatives.

For the past four years, I have been Commissioner at the Department of Motor Vehicles, leading an agency of approximately 775 employees and serving the 2.5 million registered drivers in Connecticut, as well as the innumerable state residents who benefit from DMV's work of licensing and regulating motor vehicle dealers and repair shops; enforcing commercial vehicle safety; overseeing the vehicle emissions testing program; and conducting the administrative hearings that could result in license suspensions for operators arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol. During my four years at DMV, we made significant progress towards streamlining services and modernizing its systems, such as developing an online portal for customer services. Implementation of the first phases of the Dot.Net system for DMV and the introduction of the first fully scheduled Branch in Stamford are examples of what is to come for that agency. I created a LEAN "train the trainer group" to assist in changes throughout the agency creating numerous efficiencies in both front and back office functions. DMV's CVSD (Commercial Vehicle Safety Division) was the first in the state to be fully E-citation equipped. I am sure you will be happy to hear that E-citation was all done with federal dollars. While at DMV I was able to implement programs that brought down the wait times to an average of just over one half hour for the customer. All of this was accomplished with a very cooperative staff that takes pride in the work they do for customers and the State of Connecticut.

My four years at DMV brought about many changes that created a more effective department for people and businesses. I will build on my experiences at DMV as I work with DAS staff and the individuals, businesses, and other agencies we serve to identify similar improvement opportunities for DAS.

From 2005 to 2010, I was privileged to serve as the Mayor of East Hartford. I was the chief executive officer and oversaw all aspects of city administration: personnel, procurement, finance, public works, fleet administration, inspections and permits, etc.

My experience as Mayor of East Hartford will be particularly valuable as I assume leadership of DAS, because the scope of DAS's responsibilities is similarly broad.

A mayor needs to be skilled at both the macro and the micro: envisioning goals and coordinating all of the details necessary to achieve those goals. From developing strong working relationships with employees to building relationships with state and federal agencies, other municipalities and regional organizations, my overarching goal as mayor and as Commissioner of Motor Vehicles was to provide the best possible service to the people.

Before that, I spent 13 years as a legislator - from 1992 to 2004. I served as Deputy Majority Leader for four years and Deputy Speaker of the House for six. During my time there, I served on numerous committees including the Appropriations, Education, Judiciary, Insurance, Select Committee on Housing, and Higher Education, as well as serving as the ranking member of the Regulations and Review Committee. I also served on many special committees of the Legislature including the New England Patriots Stadium Committee, Financial Aid Task Force, Crime Bill Conference Committee, Juvenile Justice and Child Abuse and Neglect Task Force. As a member of the legislature, I respected my colleagues, tried to understand different opinions and styles, and worked for consensus, always remembering that our purpose was to do our best to serve the public. I expect to take the same approach in this new job as Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services.

With respect to my personal history, I was born in Margarettsville, New York and spent the earliest part of my life in Downsville, New York, later moving to Delmar, New York. I graduated from Bethlehem Senior Central High School with a Regents diploma and attended SUNY at Cobleskill where I majored in business administration.

I met my husband, Don, in 1969 and we were married in 1971. After moving around quite a bit, due to the demands of my husband's Air Force service and then his jobs, we made East Hartford our home in 1978. We have three adult children, Becky, Jeff and Matt, and six grandchildren, Matt Jr., Devon, Lily, Mariah, Delilah and Maxwell.

Turning to the agency, DAS is a large and multi-faceted entity, operating under the authority granted by several different statutes. DAS employs 650 men and women, with a General Fund Budget of approximately \$142 million, and other program funds bringing the total to approximately \$333 million. DAS consists of the Office of the Commissioner (including Staff Counsel, Affirmative Action, the Communications Office and Strategic Services); the Bureau of Central Administration; the Bureau of Property and Facilities Management; the Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technology; and the Division of Construction Services. In all these areas, cost containment, efficiency and improved services to state agencies and the public is our goal.

Please be aware that DAS's Collections Unit processes approximately \$1.3 billion in paid claims annually on behalf of the State of Connecticut. We also have the Statewide Human Resources Unit at DAS - which among other things, establishes statewide qualifications

and rules relating to state employment -- as well as the Small Agency Resource Team -- or "SmART" unit -- which provides personnel, payroll and affirmative action services to a variety of smaller agencies. The agency is also responsible for an array of other statewide services that enables state government to work efficiently and effectively, such as statewide Information Technology, Facilities Management, Statewide Security, Construction Services, Fleet Operations, Workers' Compensation Claims administration for all state employees, and other units. I look forward to doing some internal reorganization to make for a smoother working agency to benefit our customers, and believe there are some additional opportunities to better serve the agencies throughout the state. Enhanced communications -- both in giving and receiving -- is a top priority for me. I also look forward to "LEANing" many of the processes at DAS to identify ways to streamline processes. LEAN, as you may know, is a bottom up process. It empowers the employees to do their job in a new more efficient manner based on data they mine. The process works and will work at DAS.

I am honored by the confidence Governor Malloy has placed in me and I am excited by the opportunity we have to work together, as we tackle the problems before us.

Thank you for you for the opportunity to speak with you today and I look forward to your questions.