

**EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE  
CONFIRMATION HEARING  
COMMISSIONER KEVIN B. SULLIVAN, DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES**

Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee, I welcome this opportunity to appear before you today.

I am grateful to Governor Malloy for his confidence in reappointing me to serve again as Connecticut's Commissioner of Revenue Services. Four years ago, when the Governor asked me to do this, we agreed that the Department of Revenue Services needs to be more than a traditional tax collection agency. He encouraged me to help the agency be more innovative, act more strategically, better engage its employees, become more outward facing and taxpayer friendly, and be an active partner in helping shape the fiscal and economic policies of our state. Four years later, I am proud of what we have accomplished.

Two quotes are prominent in my welcome on the DRS website. The first, from President Franklin Roosevelt, reminds us that, "Taxes...are dues we pay for the privileges of membership in an organized society." The second is Mark Twain's quip, "I shall never use profanity *except* in discussing taxes." One reminds us that our true purpose is not to collect taxes but to make possible what state government does for the people of Connecticut. The other is a caution that we have a special duty to be fair and helpful under all circumstances to the taxpayers we serve.

Clearly, I am answerable to Governor Malloy and our agency is part of shaping executive branch policies. However, having served as you do in our State Legislature, I also believe we need to better inform your debate over tax policy and be a resource when your constituents need help in understanding their rights or meeting their obligations as taxpayers.

As Commissioner of Revenue Services, what you can expect of me and our agency for the next four years is best measured by our priorities during the past four years.

Today, DRS is seen as a leader among state agencies in LEAN business improvement, an active portfolio of strategic projects and a successful "Bright Ideas" engages our employees in proposing ways to work smarter and do more with less. We are continuously improving electronic filing, on-line information, taxpayer security and processing turnaround time. An external advisory board, an external editorial board and greater outreach are helping us communicate better with taxpayers and tax preparers. In my time at DRS, we have also significantly reduced tax accounts receivable that are usually just written off by the state, taken a more data-driven approach to collections, completed the most successful tax amnesty ever and launched new efforts to close the "tax gap."

Finally, if there is one measure of what we are doing at DRS, it's this: With a lower agency position count and more work, overall productivity has still increased over 40% in the past four years.

It's a great job and we've got great people working for DRS.

Thank you.