

Testimony of: Parole Officer 2, James M. Long, Current Assignment: Waterbury Parole and Community Services District Office, 95 Scovill Street 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Waterbury, CT 06702 203-346-7800

Lead Union Steward, American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME,) Local 1565 Connecticut Jail Employees.

March 20, 2015: Judiciary Committee (Joint) of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Raised House Bill Number 7028.

An Act Concerning the Department of Correction, Access to the Firearms Database By Parole Officers, And Presentation Of A Carry Permit.

Good Day to Senator Coleman (Chair) and Senator Doyle (Vice Chair) Representative Tong (Chair) and to the Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee.

The Union is in Favor of House Bill 7028.

Why is the Union in favor of Raised House Bill 7028? This Proposed Legislation makes perfect sense.

This Legislation would allow Parole Officers assigned to the Board of Pardons & Paroles, Department of Correction, Parole & Community Services Division Officers access to the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Firearms and Permit Information Investigations System.

Current Practice

All Parole Officers are trained on the Connecticut on Line Law Enforcement Communications Teleprocessing System (COLLECT). COLLECT is the Connecticut Portal in which Law Enforcement Officers access the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) National Crime Information Center (NCIC) All Parole Officer's must certify and recertify as a condition of employment. All Parole Officers are issued firearms and qualify with issued firearms quarterly each year.

The access to this Database would only be on our Authorized COLLECT Computers.

Parole Officers need this access because we conduct investigations on all proposed sponsors prior to the inmate being released to the proposed residence from a Correctional Facility.

Current Procedures:

1. A Parole Officer conducts a home investigation at the proposed residence. The Officer checks the residence out. The Officer draws a floor plan. The Officer completes a criminal background check on all occupants of the residence.
2. The Parole Officer verifies all occupants through: Landlord, Department of Motor Vehicles, requesting copies of utility bills, and driver's license/DMV ID.
3. Some proposed sponsors attempt to deceive Department of Correction Parole Officers.
4. The Officer checks all rooms and closets but does not open every drawer or check the attic.
5. If firearms are found the sponsor must provide a Notorized Affidavit to the Parole District attesting to the firearms removal and to the location the firearms. The Sponsor provides Parole Officer with the contact information of the new location.

There are a few technical changes that need to be made to this proposed legislation. The Legislation Should read: insert in Section 28-28(d)(1) CGS.

To allow: State of Connecticut Parole Officer's access to the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Firearms and Permit Information Investigations System.

By allowing access to all Parole Officers, this would apply to Board of Pardons and Paroles as well as Department of Correction Parole Officers.

Let me add that this is a Safety Issue. Parole Officers should have information that a proposed sponsor has registered firearms. Currently, the only way we find out is if the sponsor discloses this information or the Parole Officer finds out when they are conducting a home investigation. The Parole Officer notices a gun safe or a gun rack out in the open.

Thank you in Advance for considering this Legislation.

I am prepared to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Sincerely,

James M. Long

AFSCME Local 1565 Lead Steward