

Charles P. Sheehan, Brigadier General (ret)
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February 6, 2015

The Honorable Andrew Maynard, Senator, Co-Chair
The Honorable Antonio Guerrero, Representative, Co-Chair
The Honorable Toni Boucher, Senator, Ranking Member
The Honorable Thomas O'Dea, Representative, Ranking Member

Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2300
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Proposed Senate Bill No. 198

Ladies and Gentleman:

The State Legislature acted fairly and thoughtfully when they enacted a comprehensive series of laws to regulate the sale of motor vehicles in Connecticut. The fundamental purpose of these well drafted and time-tested State franchise laws, protect independent auto dealers from powerful automakers, setting out a series of measures which prevent car manufacturers from undercutting their dealers and ensuring a fair playing field for customers and dealers alike. Millions of auto consumers and some of our the nations largest Employers rely on these laws which support a business model that has worked efficiently and enhanced the safety of the motoring public for generations.

As an avid Auto Enthusiast and an informed Auto Consumer who has purchased over 200 new vehicles through the current "Dealer Managed Delivery System", I am an enthusiastic supporter of maintaining the current laws and the current business model. As automobiles have become more sophisticated with the inclusion of Air Bags, Collision Avoidance Systems, Blind Spot Monitoring Equipment, GPS Navigation, Traction Control, 3600 /Rear View Cameras and more, the absolute need for comprehensive community based fully qualified maintenance support systems, such as those highly skilled licensed independent dealer/repairers, cannot be overstated. As even more sophisticated electronic systems are incorporated into automobiles in the near future, it is unimaginable to conceive of a new delivery model, which undercuts independent dealers. Any measure, which threatens the current network of trained and equipped franchises that address the critical daily auto consumer needs and function in a regulated environment with State Government oversight, is not in the public interest.

Our Connecticut auto dealers are all major employers and responsible corporate citizens in every community they support. The collective skilled jobs they provide and the enormous economic multiplier of the revenue they generate, should not be interrupted to support a business model change requested by one Auto Manufacturer who seeks to do business directly with the end user.

I am a long-standing and very satisfied customer of the Crowley Auto Group. I trust the diligent sales and service staff at Crowley and I trust in the current system of Laws that provides oversight of this critical industry. It would be unfair to the public and it is simply unnecessary to change historic Laws, or grant exemptions that undermine these laws which have served Auto Consumers and Auto Manufacturers alike, so well for so many years.

I trust you will hear the facts, weigh the enormous benefits of the thoughtful and comprehensive laws in effect, and in the end use your discretion to maintaining our very important current delivery system intact.

In view of the foregoing concerns I urge you to defeat this Bill in Committee. Any other course could create serious consequences and is clearly not in the public interest.

Most Sincerely,

Charles P. Sheehan

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