



CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION

Good morning Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Andrew Matthews. I am the President of the Connecticut State Police Union, which represents approximately 1,051 Troopers, Sergeants and Master Sergeants. I am also the Chairman of the National Troopers Coalition, which represents nearly 42,000 State Troopers around the country. We are submitting this testimony IN OPPOSITION OF:

PROPOSED SENATE BILL NO. 930

“AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES’ RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTORS.”

The Connecticut State Police Union opposes this proposed Bill because it would avoid the legislative intent of CGS: 14-8, which allows DMV Inspectors to focus solely on enforcement of motor vehicle laws and make arrests for violation of those laws provided under Title 14. If DMV Inspectors are considered “peace officers” under CGS: 53a-3(9), they would be making arrests for offenses unrelated to motor vehicle laws, which would distract them from their primary role of preventing dangerous oversize/overweight trucks from traveling on our highways.

For decades, Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Inspectors have had the statutory authority to make arrests under CGS: 14-8, ***“for violations of any statute or regulation relating to motor vehicles...”*** (emphases added) By expanding their authority to make arrests under the purposed Bill 53a-3, DMV Inspectors would have the ability to make arrest for violation of criminal laws not related to any motor vehicle statutes. Essentially, DMV Inspectors would become State Police Officers with the authority to make criminal arrests ***“in any part of the state”*** (emphases added) under CGS: 14-8(a). Currently, CGS: 14-8 states, in part, ***“Police authority of commissioner and inspectors. (a) The commissioner, each deputy commissioner and any salaried inspector of motor vehicles designated by the commissioner, when engaged in the discharge of the duties of his office, shall have, in any part of the state, the same authority to make arrests or issue citations for violation of any statute or regulation relating to motor vehicles and to enforce said statutes and regulations as policemen or state policemen have in their respective jurisdictions.”*** (emphases added) ***This statute provides sufficient authority for DMV Inspectors to perform their duties consistent with the legislature’s intent to protect the motoring public.***

Furthermore, the legislature clearly intended to create a motor vehicle enforcement (DMV Inspectors) unit to only focus on keeping the roads safe -- not to require them to conduct criminal investigations (not related to our motor vehicle laws) which would take them off the highways. The “police authority” provided under CGS: 14-8 does not carry over to criminal arrests outside of Title 14. The practice of DMV Inspectors contacting the State Police, or a municipal police department, to take the necessary action when faced with a situation outside of their police authority has worked for decades. In part, this is because the State Police and municipal police departments already have 24-hour dispatch services, the equipment necessary to process and handle evidence, the necessary infrastructure to process and detain prisoners and staff to conduct lengthy criminal investigations.

In closing, there is no compelling need to grant DMV Inspectors “peace officer” status under CGS: 53a-3 -- That is why we have Connecticut State Troopers. Thank you for your consideration on this important issue.

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