

Co-Chairs - Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, and all the honorable ladies and gentlemen of the Transportation Committee:

I'd like to thank you for your efforts on behalf of the citizens of the State of Connecticut and for taking the time out of your busy schedules to hear testimony on this very important bill. I am writing in SUPPORT of Raised Bill SB00930, which would add Motor Vehicle Inspectors to the definition of "peace officer" (CGS 53a-3(9)).

My name is Garfield Green from Windsor Connecticut I am currently a Lieutenant with the State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles within the Commercial Vehicle Safety Division (CVSD). I am a certified as a police officer by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) pursuant to sections 7-294a to 7-294e as are all Inspectors within the division (CVSD). I am also the unit's Commanding Officer for the Training Division and I hold several instructor certifications through the CT Police Academy. I had the opportunity to testify before this Committee in 2008 regarding this very issue and I am also aware that it has been raised several times after that. Due to prior obligations related to my duties as a Lieutenant, I am not able to be present to testify before you today; for that I apologize.

Raised Bill 930 adds Motor Vehicle Inspectors to the definition of peace officer found in CGS 53a-3(9). Currently, the peace officer definition includes police officers from varying agencies but also JUDICIAL MARSHALS, ADULT PROBATION OFFICERS and some members of the DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION to name a few. My reason for highlighting some of these groups is because in the past, opponents of this bill have mentioned that if you are a peace officer, "you shall arrest for all crimes." Obviously, some of the highlighted groups have NO authority whatsoever to arrest, thus making that theory a MYTH and simply NOT TRUE. Additionally, NONE of the members of the highlighted groups are certified police officers as Motor Vehicle Inspectors are. Opponents have also mentioned that "giving Motor Vehicle Inspectors peace officer status would increase their authority;" This is also a myth. Adding a group of individuals to the peace officer definition DOES NOTHING FOR THEIR AUTHORITY. Motor Vehicle Inspectors already have statewide jurisdiction with authority granted under CGS 14-8 to make arrests for incidents relating to motor vehicles and we do so quite frequently. CGS 53a-3(9) does NOT change our authority and that is NOT what this is about. The question then becomes, "Why would a police officer in the State of CT not be in the definition of peace officer when non-police officers are?" This is an anomaly that simply should not be.

Being the Department's Training Officer, I can attest to the fact that our officers are certified Police Officers and we are held to the same standards as all other Police Officers in the state, to include mandatory inservice training and recertification every 3 years. To become a Motor Vehicle Inspector, you MUST successfully complete the CT Police Academy and subsequent 12 week field training program as all other police officers in the state. Additionally, upon completion of those requirements, candidates MUST also successfully complete a rigorous North American Standards Training Institute (NASTI) two

week course, followed by field training. NASTI is commonly referred to as truck school; this is where Inspectors learn how to apply the rules that govern Motor Carrier Safety.

Statistics have shown that most police officers die or get injured from motor vehicle related incidents. Everyday our Inspectors go to work to protect the citizens of our state. We stop multiple vehicles and make several arrests. There is no doubt that our lives are put at risk on a daily basis. We can all remember Trooper Kenneth Hall, a personal friend whom multiple Inspectors have worked with at some point or the other, who was killed in the line of duty doing what he loved, stopping commercial vehicles to ensure they are safe to traverse the highways of our state. That is what DMV Inspectors do on a daily basis, and as tragic as it was, that could have easily been one of us. There is no doubt this is a VERY dangerous job, yet we do it without reservation and with great pride as I am certain most police officers do.

In closing, this bill DOES NOT change our authority or affect our retirement. In fact, if this Bill were to pass, it would cost the state ZERO dollars. I have already articulated that the issue of police training for Inspectors or lack thereof is an outright false statement. We are all entitled to our own opinions, but certainly not our own facts. Our Inspectors are highly trained, dedicated police officers who diligently and faithfully execute their duties on a daily basis. Last but not least, I can recall several statutes had to be amended in the past to "include" Inspectors because we were adversely affected by them. We were excluded not because it was intended, but merely because of the "peace officer" language. Ironically, there is a proposed bill right now in the Legislature that deals with excessive use of force by "peace officers" which would once again exclude DMV Inspectors and most certainly would have to be amended to include us if passed. This practice of continuously amending bills to include Motor vehicle inspectors is CLEAR indication that we (DMV Inspectors) should be included in the peace officer definition.

I want to thank you for your time and ask support for Raised Bill SB00930.

Respectfully Submitted,

Garfield K Green.

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C: Senator Eric Coleman

Rep. Brandon McGee

Attachment: 1 signed copy of written testimony