Testimony of Jeff Aiosa of Stonington, Connecticut
Joint Standing Committee on Transportation Public Hearing
State Legislative Office Building,
Hartford, Connecticut
February 23, 2015

Good afternoon, Senator Leone, Representative Guerrera, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea, members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Jeff Aiosa of Stonington, Connecticut. I am a member of the board of the Connecticut Automotive Retailers Association (CARA). I'm president of Carriage House Mercedes Benz of New London. I am also a director of the National Automobile Dealers Association.

I am here to testify on H.B. No. 6820 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING PROVISIONS OF THE FRANCHISE ACT GOVERNING AGREEMENTS BETWEEN AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS OR DISTRIBUTORS AND AUTOMOBILE DEALERS.

I would like to first thank Representative Guerrera and Senator Leone for personally working with both sides on this issue on behalf of the 270 new car dealers of Connecticut and the 32 out of state automobile manufacturers represented by the Alliance and the Global Automakers, both based in Washington DC. Without Representative Guerrera's involvement, we would not be here today.

The last time the legislature addressed auto franchise issues was back in 2009 during the financial crisis. At that time this legislature passed needed reforms and upgrades to the Franchise Act. It was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly and passed into law.

I'm here to ask for two things - one to support this bill. But most importantly the second is to give the Dealers, and the Auto Manufacturers some time to work out additional language on our remaining issues.

I am confident that with your oversight, we can bring Connecticut's law up to the same standards as most other states. Therefore, we ask the committee to give both sides additional time to engage in good faith discussions to agree on a bill that will resolve these issues for many years to come.

Dealers are asking for reforms based largely on what other state legislatures have approved and passed and what the automakers agreed to in those states.

The bill before you today addresses most of those issues. I ask that you approve the bill before you today, but ask that you allow both sides additional time between now and your JF deadline to work towards a resolution of the remaining issues. I believe that we are close to a comprehensive bill that will meet the needs of dealers and the manufactures alike.

Thank you, I'm happy to answer any questions specific to the outstanding issues or any other questions you may have.