



*Audio Access for the Blind
or Print-Challenged*

March 10, 2015

Dear members of the Environment Committee:

Please vote against SB 106! Individuals with disabilities face very difficult challenges in securing a job, evidenced by data compiled by the US Census Bureau that reports a 40 percent unemployment rate for people with disabilities in Connecticut.

As a society, we must mitigate the barriers and challenges faced by job seekers who have a disability. One such mitigation is by ensuring that the provisions of **the Randolph-Sheppard law are protected**. This federal law was first enacted in 1936 to give preference to persons who are blind, whenever feasible, for operating vending stands to provide them with employment, enlarge their economic opportunities, and encourage their self-support. Connecticut and every other state enacted similar laws regarding state properties.

Senate Bill 106 would destroy the original intent of this law. Instead of giving people who are blind an opportunity for a career and to earn a living, it proposes generating revenues for a state agency.

Simply said, SB 106 is WRONG! Please know that if this bill is adopted, it would rob three concession operators who are blind of their jobs and their sense of pride from being self-reliant through employment. Please consider the intent of the current law and weigh it against the immaterial financial gain for the state. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Diane Weaver Dunne
Executive Director
CRIS Radio