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PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 24, 2015

Testimony in support of H.B. 5608 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE INFORMATION DATA EXCHANGE SYSTEM and H.B. 5611 AN ACT CONCERNING ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang, Representative Rutigliano and the entire membership of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify before you this evening in support of *H.B. 5608 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE INFORMATION DATA EXCHANGE SYSTEM* and *H.B. 5611 AN ACT CONCERNING ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS*. These bills both seek to decrease fraudulent unemployment benefit payments.

It is crucial to Connecticut and our surrounding states that we participate in the state information data exchange system in order for unemployment benefits to be paid out accurately. Information regarding employment history must be shared between our surrounding states, especially for the smaller states of New England and the northern Mid-Atlantic. The current status quo allows for a scenario in which an individual could be collecting unemployment benefits in one state and earning wages in another.

Participation in the information data exchange system would safeguard the Department of Labor from paying out unemployment benefits to an individual who may be ineligible because they have found employment in a neighboring state. By decreasing fraudulent payouts the state would also lower its dependence at the Federal level.

An individual receiving unemployment benefits should also be required to appear at an unemployment office on a monthly basis, at a minimum. This would eliminate false claims by ensuring that the qualified individual to receive the benefits is indeed the collecting party. Again, by decreasing fraudulent identity claims, the overall need to borrow more Federal dollars would decline.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Prasad Srinivasan  
State Representative, 31<sup>st</sup> District