



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

60 State Street, Wethersfield, CT 06161

<http://ct.gov/dmv>



Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles
Acting Commissioner Dennis Murphy

Government Administration and Elections Committee

March 7, 2016

HB 5514 . An Act Concerning the Department of Motor Vehicles and Automatic Voter Registration.

Good morning Chairmen Cassano and Jutila, Ranking Members McLachlan and Smith and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in regards to House Bill 5514.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has processed voter registration applications for qualifying customers since the implementation of the National Voter Registration Act. As required by current law, the DMV mails a voter registration card with each license or identity card renewal notice and makes available voting information and materials in each of its branches and AAA offices. In addition, branch or AAA customers who are not registered but would like to do so are given a card either at the information desk or by an examiner once they are called to a window. The Wethersfield office serves as a depository for the voter registration cards submitted at any of our branches or AAA offices. They are separated by municipality and mailed accordingly to each of the 169 town registrar of voter offices. The DMV also captures change of address information and sends it to registrars in accordance with law.

While DMV supports the concept that more Connecticut citizens should be registered to vote, this bill proposes a new electronic process that will have a significant impact on DMV's IT systems, processes and employees. It also requires the submission of voter registration information not only for license and identity card renewal notices, but upon submitting any other application or renewal form. As a result of the impact on DMV, we have concerns this would place an undue burden on DMV at the present time. The fiscal impact to the department is not known. There will be technology and equipment costs that cannot be calculated at this time.

DMV is also concerned about wait times for its customers. Since the implementation of our new CIVLS system, we have made progress in reducing wait times. However, we fear that the additional tasks required process a voter registration application for every transaction we conduct will increase transaction times, thereby increasing wait times. The bill as written requires DMV customers to submit satisfactory proof of citizenship in order to register to vote (documentation that is not required for and never associated with a registration transaction). Requiring examiners to inspect these documents adds another task to those that must be

undertaken at the counter, and will require them to be trained in making a determination of whether a person is eligible to submit a voter registration application based upon these documents. The bill also indicates that if a customer does not want to register, he or she must affirmatively decline, an additional step during the transaction.

The DMV welcomes the opportunity to further discuss this proposal. DMV is currently working hard to improve its customer service and continue to ensure the new vehicle registration system is stabilized. DMV would need at least 12 months to fully analyze the impact of this bill's proposal on its customers and the agency.