



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

March 7, 2016

***Statement of Carol Carson, Executive Director
Office of State Ethics***

***Senate Bill 339 – An Act Concerning Conflicts of Interest Due to an Employer Other
than the State Under the State Code of Ethics***

The Office of State Ethics provides testimony in support of ***Senate Bill 339, An Act Concerning Conflicts of Interest Due to an Employer Other than the State Under the State Code of Ethics*** which is an Office of State Ethics proposal that is on the Committee's agenda today.

The purpose of the bill is to make necessary revisions to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials concerning conflicts of interest by adding a state employee or public official's employer, other than the state, to the provisions.

Section 1, which amends section 1-85 of the general statutes, extends substantive conflicts of interest to situations where a public official or state employee takes official action for the benefit of their non-state employer. The purpose is to address scenarios where a public official or state employee takes official action favorable to his or her outside employer's interest.

Under the proposed language, elected officials who have a conflict concerning a direct monetary gain or loss for their non-state employer may either recuse themselves or prepare a written statement under penalty of false statement for the agency journal or minutes and the Office of State Ethics that describes the matter requiring action, the nature of the conflict, and why they are able to vote despite it. The purpose of this subsection is to create transparency in the process. It does not further limit the actions of the elected official.

The bill likewise adds "other employer" to the potential conflicts of interest under section 1-86 of the general statutes. Under the current law, public officials or state employees can vote or take official action on matters related to their other (non-state) employer. This proposal, for the same reasons previously stated, would extend the current potential conflicts of interest to include the outside employer of public officials and state employees.

Thank you for your consideration of our agency proposal.