

February 29, 2016

**Transportation Committee  
Public Hearing, February 29, 2016  
Governor's H.B. No. 5055**

Good afternoon Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Stephen Anderson and I am the President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, a labor union which represents thousands of workers employed in the private sector, as well as state and municipal governments throughout Connecticut. I submit this testimony in opposition to the Governor's House Bill No. 5055: An Act Decreasing Wait Times at the Department of Motor Vehicles. The bill would allow private, for-profit entities to perform tasks now done by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). For several years the state has allowed the American Automobile Association (AAA) to process driver's licenses, but this bill seeks to go much further. Giving private contractors the ability to issue driver's licenses and process vehicle registrations will be opening a proverbial can of worms.

There are several problems and unanswered concerns with the concept of this legislation:

The DMV systems contain sensitive data that must be accurate and free from tampering. These systems include the ability to print state and federally recognized IDs that are honored at airports and federal buildings across the United States. There needs to be serious consideration as to how opening some of the DMV's most important systems to a potentially large number of for-profit businesses will affect both the security and integrity of the system.

This legislation seeks to decrease wait times at the DMV but simply allowing for-profit businesses to issue driver's licenses and process vehicle registrations would likely do very little to reduce wait times at the main DMV branches. Wait times that have far more to do with staffing and resource shortages than anything else.

Any privatization of the DMV's core functions would seriously increase risks to the integrity of the data in the DMV's systems. What assurances will the public have that their information is protected from misuse? What certification processes and requirements will businesses wishing to do this work need to meet to ensure they have the competencies to do it properly? Under what oversight will these for-profit entities provide these services? How will the state protect against fraud or abuse while ensuring quality control?

Front line state workers can tell you from firsthand experience that the state's past experience working with outside contractors and consultants has often led to unanticipated problems. Part of the impetus for this legislation is the problems which arose from a private consultant's failed software upgrade of DMV's computer system. This upgrade quadrupled wait times after it failed to work properly. The answer to the problems that resulted from that project are unlikely to be found in further privatization.

A more responsible approach would be to work with front line DMV staff and conduct a study of the concept of this bill and the reasons why the DMV has lengthy wait times before advancing a plan that may not improve the situation, has the very real potential to make the user experience worse, and puts the integrity of our data systems at risk.

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