

## **Public Hearing Statement**

March 13, 2017. H.B.5618.

We are Mike and Amanda Pianka. We are here to support H.B.5618. We are the former owners of M & M Redemption Center, which was located in Wallingford Ct., for 12 years. We say former, because 4 weeks ago we closed our business.

We testified at a Public Hearing last year, to increase the handling fee. We testified that, without the increase, we would probably go out of business. We tried operating our business on a 35 year old handling fee. It was just too difficult and, just about impossible. As a short example, when the handling fee was implemented, mimimum wage was \$3.10. Today, mimimum wage is \$10.10.

We are here today to support the few remaining redemption center owners. We know first hand the struggles, and the hardships they are working under. The current handling fee needs to be increased. You, the lawmakers, need to make this change. After 35 years, it is now time for the handling fee to be increased.

Thank you,

Amanda and Mike Pianka