



Testimony to the Public Safety and Security Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

February 27, 2018

Regarding

House Bill 5220, An Act Authorizing Third-Party Fingerprinting Services

[LeadingAge Connecticut](#) is a membership association of 130 not-for-profit organizations representing the entire field of aging services and including not-for-profit nursing homes, home health care and hospice agencies, and assisted living services agencies. On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, I respectfully submit the following testimony in support of *House Bill 5220, An Act Authorizing Third-Party Fingerprinting Services*.

As employers, LeadingAge Connecticut members are required to utilize the state's Applicant Background Check Management System (ABCMS) to conduct and track the mandated background searches for new hires as required by Connecticut state statute (Section 19a-491c). The law mandates the use of the ABCMS by all nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospice agencies and assisted living service agencies.

The ABCMS has a very helpful web-based portal to assist in the process. However, it is required that the job applicants travel to a [state police barracks or the Middletown headquarters](#) for fingerprinting and this is extremely burdensome. Many job applicants do not drive or they rely on public transportation and accessing the remote barracks can be a barrier for them. The option to expand the fingerprint scanning to independent contractors may be one possible solution to this problem.

Another burden in the process is the cost. The cost of having a fingerprint scan conducted for an ABCMS search is \$75 and as it is an employer driven system, the employer absorbs that cost. The bill before you today will not ease that cost burden and may actually increase it through the addition of a convenience fee. However, while this proposal before you today may not ease all of the ABCMS' logistical issues, it could ease a major burden by making the fingerprint scanning more accessible for job applicants.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on this issue. Please consider us to be a resource to the Committee as you consider this and other issues related to aging services.

Mag Morelli, President of LeadingAge Connecticut

mmorelli@leadingagect.org, (203) 678-4477, 110 Barnes Road, Wallingford, CT 06492
www.leadingagect.org

Background on the ABCMS as posted on the Department of Public Health website:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has provided funding to States including the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) for the National Background Check Program (NBCP). The NBCP supports States in establishing a criminal background check program for long-term care facilities and providers. The NBCP aims to protect vulnerable residents and clients who receive direct care and services within a long-term care setting. In conjunction with this Federal initiative, Connecticut has enacted Section 19a-491c of the General Statutes, requiring state and national criminal history and patient abuse background searches for certain individuals in long-term care settings.

DPH has established a web-based portal referred to as the Applicant Background Check Management System (ABCMS). The ABCMS supports the background check processes set forth within Section 19a-491c, which requires, in part, that newly-hired direct care employees of long-term care facilities obtain fingerprint-based criminal history records checks, as well as checks of several relevant registries, prior to employment.

DPH has worked with CMS and the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to develop a web-based system to provide long-term care facilities and providers with a database to process the background checks. DPH will oversee the ABCMS. DESPP works with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to support this initiative.