

PUBLIC HEARING

CHAIRPERSON:

Representative Joe
Verrengia

SENATORS:

Cassano, Champagne, Hwang,
Osten

REPRESENTATIVES:

Allie-Brennan, Barry,
Boyd, Camillo, Dauphinais,
Fishbein, Fusco, Genga,
Gonzalez, Hall, Hayes,
Morin, Orange, Paolillo,
Serra, Simmons,
Sredzinski, Vail

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): (Gavel) Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this morning's public hearing for the Public Safety and Security meeting. Before we get started, I am going to refer to our assistant clerk for a safety message.

CLERK: In the interest of safety, I would like to ask you to note the location of and access to the exits in the hearing room. The two doors through which you entered the room are the emergency exits and are marked with exit signs. In an emergency, the door behind the legislators can also be used. In the event of an emergency, please walk quickly to the nearest exit. After exiting the room, proceed to the main stairs or follow the exit signs to one of the fire stairs. Please quickly exit the building and follow any instructions from the Capitol police. Do not delay and do not return unless and until you are advised it is safe to do so. In the event of a lockdown announcement, please remain in the hearing room, stay away from the exit

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doors, and seek concealment behind desk and chairs until an all clear announcement is heard.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you, and today we are going to be consistent and stick with the rules that we followed previously in other hearings. The first hour is going to be reserved for legislators and municipal officials and department heads. You have a five-minute time limit for your opening remarks, and then after the hour, we will go back and forth with the public, and you will be allowed three minutes for opening remarks. If you go past that, you will hear an alarm sound indicting that you have passed your time limit. Without further ado, first on the list is Senator Hartley. I don't see her here, so we'll go to Greg Smith from the Connecticut Lottery. And, if you can just hit the button? All set? Okay.

GREG SMITH: So, good morning co-chairs and the members in the leadership and members of the committee. My name is Greg Smith. I'm the president of the Connecticut Lottery Corporation. I appreciate this opportunity to speak to you in support of lottery as an operator under House Bill 7331, regarding sports wagering in the state, and in support of Senate Bill 1015 regarding online lottery draw games in the state.

I'd like to first discuss Senate Bill 1015, the internet lottery bill or iLottery as it's called. Today, in Connecticut virtually everything can be purchased over the internet, and the idea of internet wagering is also not new to this state. Connecticut residents have been placing bets online in the state for horse races since 2013, and we can all remember the avalanche of advertising regarding

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daily fantasy sports back in 2015, and all the resulting wagers from that. Currently, in ten other states, you can purchase lottery tickets online. These are safe and secure transactions and are meeting all of the legal and technological requirements for location, age, and player verification, and responsible gaming criteria as well. If the lottery is going to be poised to maintain, potentially increased general fund transfers over time, we need to be able to modernize like other 21st century businesses. The marketplace and consumer buying habits have changed significantly over the past decade. Carrying cash and paying with cash is becoming obsolete regardless of your age. Using online accounts funded by debit and credit cards is the norm, and many customers prefer payment services enabled on their mobile devices. Selling only at retail and requiring cash limits our future growth potential, and soon enough may challenge our ability to maintain year-over-year growth like we have been experiencing. If passed, Bill 1015 would authorize the Connecticut Lottery to sell all our draw games over the internet. These games include Powerball, MegaMillions, Keno, and our daily number games, and our lotto game. From the months we start selling online, it will be just a few years before the additional annual proceeds total \$20-million dollars or more. Our five-year projections achieve over \$50-million to general fund revenues.

The Michigan Lottery as an example was the first lottery to offer all of their lottery games online and is currently delivering over \$100-million dollars annually in profits for online sales to their state. It is very important to understand

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that all lotteries selling online -- selling their games online have experienced continued growth in retail sales every year, so this is incremental growth. No decline in retail sales is occurring, and the lottery player base is clearly growing with mobile players averaging 5 to 8 years younger than retail players. The Connecticut Lottery is an industry leader with respect to its commitment to responsible gaming. The responsible gambling provisions in this bill are robust and require the lottery in consultation with advocates for responsible gaming community to set daily spend limits and deposit limits. We would also establish a voluntary self-exclusion program, widely display a responsible gambling hotline number throughout our website, and send pop-up messaging when an individual has been on their account for a specified length of time, and limit users to one credit or debit card on file. The responsible gaming controls related to iLottery are far more stringent than anything we can do in retail, and they are applied to every purchase.

Finally, we have had continuing conversations with the convenient stores in Connecticut. They are the backbone to the lottery and the experience in states that have states with iLottery has been that the commission dollars paid to lottery retailers has actually increased due to sales growth from an expanding player base. In conclusion, we believe that internet sales of our draw games is a responsible and measured approach to grow our contributions to the general fund, and we will generate substantial new revenue over time for both retail and online.

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Regarding House Bill 7331, for sports betting, which would -- which would authorize the Connecticut Lottery as a sports betting operator in the state. We believe the Connecticut Lottery is an ideal business partner for the state for two primary reasons. The first is revenue. Our estimates show that we will return about four to five times as much money per dollar wager as any other operator. This is because just like for the lottery games we would give the state all of the profits the lottery generates from sports betting as opposed to a roughly 10 percent tax on profits from the casinos or other commercial operators would pay under this bill.

Our second distinguishing factor is we are the only potential partner that is fully customizable. If sports betting is going to be successful, it needs to be conveniently available. We have always thought that having multiple operators in Connecticut was the best plan, thinking casinos and all current OTB facilities, and a commercially viable number of licensed retail locations to include some of our lottery-licensed sports bars and convenient stores. Conversations with some of the other current lottery-licensed locations show great interest with the expectation of additional hiring and -- [Bell] -- increased taxable income for these businesses. We could offer variations of betting options with simple win/loss choices on place slips handed to cashiers in stores and more sports -- more full sportsbook betting operations on Kenos -- on kiosks that provide age verification before each use. We could offer a full online sportsbook with every kind of wager authorized using the most thorough player identification and RG functionality.

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The better we do all of this ensures that we are maximizing a return to this state. It's been stated that the policy goals of sports betting are to eliminate the black market and to raise revenue in the state. If sports betting is not convenient to people, meaning geographically throughout the state and online or in mobile, betters will continue with their local bookies or their current illegal off-shore websites that they currently use, and the state will not derive significant economic benefit from the legalization.

Although this discussion is new in this state, sports betting is successfully run side-by-side with lottery operations in about 70 percent of jurisdictions worldwide. We are prepared to offer a first-class sportsbook with an experienced and successful sportsbook operator. In fact, we have been approached and are speaking with the exact same sportsbook operates as are the casinos and the OTBs.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Mr. Smith, if you could just wrap up, please?

GREG SMITH: Yeah. If authorized, we would partner with one of these operators to deliver a fist-class sportsbook experience comparable to anything developed here in Connecticut. We believe there is room for everyone in this space and that sports betting through the lottery will best provide the necessary customer convenience and return the most profits to the state. Thank you very much.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you for your testimony. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering if you could provide us

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with a list of all locations that sell Connecticut Lottery? Is that a possibility by town? Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Boyd.

REP. BOYD (50TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Mr. Smith, thank you for coming. Looking through your testimony, just a couple questions come up. How many states are doing internet lottery tickets now or lottery games?

GREG SMITH: Ten.

REP. BOYD (50TH): Ten?

GREG SMITH: Yes.

REP. BOYD (50TH): And, are they -- others in the Northeast or are they scattered throughout the state?

GREG SMITH: There's -- there's a number around the country. One -- one in New England is the New Hampshire Lottery. They began last year.

REP. BOYD (50TH): Okay.

GREG SMITH: The other ones are along the East coast and then some out in the Midwest.

REP. BOYD (50TH): Yep, and you know, for me the -- the part that I struggle with, and I'll let you kind of react to it, because I'm sure it's not the first time you've had this type of pushback or questioning as you know a lot of your testimony talks about the -- the money we can generate by expanding gaming online. You know, the -- the concern that I've always had is, you know, making it accessible also opens up to kind of a new generation for lack of

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better term undiagnosed problem gamblers, and I'm happy to see you kind of thought about some of the things with one credit card and so on and so forth, but you know, I struggle with even gambling on credit, and you know, \$50-million to the fund, and I get what you're saying, and it's the same part that I struggle with -- with cannabis is do we do it because it's the right thing to do or do we do it because there's money available, and you know, I don't want to editorialize but I know this is not the first time you've heard it. It's a concern for me, and I'm interested in your thoughts.

GREG SMITH: So, the idea of being able to apply some controls and responsible gaming interaction with every single purchase online is far superior to the attention that can be given in retail, and so there -- there's actually a great deal of strength in that and helping to manage those successfully placing these transactions and -- and limiting the amount of play that can actually occur, and you know, the idea of funding an account where your comment about people gambling on credit, we don't know what level of credit is currently occurring for gaming right now, but that can be managed by allowing funding through debit cards. Okay? So, there are a variety of levers that you can touch that would allow this to move forward and yet, still manage the controls.

REP. BOYD (50TH): Thank you. I appreciate your thoughts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. Are there -- so how many -- how many

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states are you aware of right now that do sports wagering? Are you familiar? You said you had that.

GREG SMITH: Meaning et al or --

REP. VAIL (52ND): Et al.

GREG SMITH: Or through Lottery?

REP. VAIL (52ND): Et al.

GREG SMITH: Nevada, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island. Those are the ones that come to my mind.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So --

GREG SMITH: I think I'm missing -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, ten or less? Less than ten?

GREG SMITH: Less than ten would be my answer.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, again, you beat me to the punch. How many -- in how many of those states is the Lottery one of the -- are there any states where the Lottery is involved in the -- in the sports betting?

GREG SMITH: So, there are two, and -- and I'm gonna say some in development. Certainly, you -- everyone's aware that the offerings of sports wagering outside of Nevada is -- is new phenomenon, so one of the first, Rhode Island, Lottery is the regulator of the offering, and that started last fall, and then the District of Columbia identified their D.C. Lottery as the operator of sports wagering in the district.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And -- and thank you, and we've discussed in the past that lottery tends to pay out

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way less money than any other form of gambling percentage wise. They pay out 60 cents on the dollar give or take a percentage point where casino gaming is usually over 90 percent. Do you think the lottery is going to fall in line with -- with -- in sports wagering, I think they said it's less than 5 percent typically unless you get into the parlay bets and so on and so forth, but you're hovering like less than 10 percent of that money goes, you know, out where 90 percent of the money is going out to the consumer, and that's where I focus on more than how much money we're bringing in from the state. Certainly, that's something to think about, but I'm more concerned about how much the consumer is getting back with the money they invest because in the long -- in the long haul, again, consumer's going to lose money. I mean that's how -- that's how the lottery and the gambling casinos make money, but the lottery -- they lose it much quicker in the lottery. So, my question to you is do you see yourself, if you are part of this -- if we do sports bettering -- your part of it, that you would fall in line with the standard in sports better or that you would be more typical lottery-type collections where you're only paying out 60 cents on the dollar?

GREG SMITH: We expect the latter to be in line with the other operators. If you -- if you've heard us say before, we believe there should be a number of operators -- thinking that casinos and the OTBs -- it would not make any sense for us to bring forward a product that was significant -- had a significantly lower payout, so we are expecting our products to be comparable, if not twins, in the marketplace.

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REP. VAIL (52ND): Oh, okay. and, then now -- and I appreciate your answers to that, and I just wanted to touch on the online lottery that you're proposing, and that would be more typical to what it would -- it would fall in line with regular lottery -- I would think lottery results now or scratch tickets where it's around the 60 percent market, would that be correct?

GREG SMITH: Well, so -- so yes to that where if you were to purch -- if we were allowed to sell online and you purchased your ticket online, it should not be any different than somebody bought in retail -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, it -- [Crosstalk].

GREG SMITH: So, those would be twin products.

REP. VAIL (52ND): It would be the same game. It just it wouldn't be -- I wouldn't hold it in my hand. I'd scratch it off on -- on a screen?

GREG SMITH: Well, so we're talking about the draw number games.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yeah.

GREG SMITH: So, you would have purchased your, you know, Powerball ticket, your daily numbers, your lottery tickets, so those are not the scratch products.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Oh, not the scratch --

GREG SMITH: Not the scratch products.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Those just -- those games -- just the -- the ball games?

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GREG SMITH: Yeah, think of every game except scratch tickets.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay.

GREG SMITH: Okay.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, scratch tickets are off the table altogether?

GREG SMITH: We're not bringing those forward. If -- if you are interested in us selling those --

REP. VAIL (52ND): I'm not.

GREG SMITH: Because a larger conversation --

REP. VAIL (52ND): I'm not, so we don't have to have that conversation.

GREG SMITH: Okay. [Laughing].

REP. VAIL (52ND): All right. Thank you.

GREG SMITH: All right, bye.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here Mr. Smith. When you mentioned revenue estimates, is that gross estimates or is that net? And, what I mean by that is obviously you're gonna have to either hire staff or bring on staff or contract out to a vender, so the revenues that you talk about are they net or gross?

GREG SMITH: Those are net -- those are transfers to the state, so all -- all -- all expenses considered remaining proceeds.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, so is there a -- I know you said there's no -- no steep decline in

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retail, but does that -- those proceeds take into account the possible somewhat declining retail of someone who wants to play the lottery and instead of going to the retail does it online? I know there's not a huge number that shows that people will opt to do it instead of, but I'm sure some people would appreciate the convenience of purchasing a Powerball or MegaMillions ticket from their couch instead of having to drive to the convenient store?

GREG SMITH: While I am sure that people make those choices, there is zero experience of any decline in retail sales from all of the states that went online, so when -- when you mentioned that the decline wouldn't be steep, it is actually an increase in sales because the player base has broadened in all these locations, and those players are also now visiting retail in addition to us with different promotions and enticements causing players to return to retail to cash in or do different opportunities, so it is -- it has been an incremental increase in revenue for the state and an increase in commission dollars paid out to retail across the board.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay, and that's a good followup -- that's a good segue to my next question. So, as we know when a retailer, convenient store, gas station, whatever it may be, grocery stores sells the winning lottery ticket they receive some portion of the winnings or some cut of the benefit. Now, obviously, if it's a \$5-dollar win, it's no big deal, but if it's the \$450-million-dollar Powerball that's being drawn tomorrow, then obviously that would be a bigger deal. Who does that -- for lack

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of better word -- cut go to if that ticket was purchased online?

GREG SMITH: If -- if we stayed with our same practices today, there would not be a retailer selling because it's just an online product, and so it is -- it is an expense not incurred.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): So, would it go to a vender? Would it go back to the Lottery for --

GREG SMITH: It just becomes proceeds back to the state.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. So, it would not go to the vender if there was a vender selected for this online lottery?

GREG SMITH: That is correct. That is correct.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Okay. And, that would be included in the language in the contract, I assume?

GREG SMITH: We absolutely could include that language, but that -- that -- that payout commission is only available to our licensed retailers, not our venders.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): I just have a question. You had mentioned the \$50-million dollars; is that in the Lottery drawings or is that in sports betting?

GREG SMITH: The \$50-million dollars was our estimations over the first five years of iLottery.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, do you have any estimations with respect to sports betting?

GREG SMITH: We had done some modeling -- bear with me one second -- I believe that with our estimations with us selling in retail what we call the commercial viable number, and a poll online that we were in the early years delivering between \$15 and \$20-million as the return back to the state, understanding that there would also be OTB and casino operators as well.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. And -- and those projections, would that include every retailer would have the ability to sell or would it be limited to the buy in?

GREG SMITH: Well --

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): How does that model work?

GREG SMITH: We've been using a description as a commercially viable number. When you think of selling online, there's the technological infrastructure. As soon as you go into retail locations, you're gonna have to have a physical product, and so we don't picture having all current 2900 Lottery licensees selling sports betting. That is not our model. We expect that the legislature will either define how many we can have or you know, allow us some room to figure out what the commercially viable. We've used the description of possibly up to, you know, for convenient access to customers a licensee in every town, but that also needs to be understood as probably more simple win/loss betting occurring as opposed to a full sportsbook occurring at each vender location.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): There are some critics that say giving the Lottery sports betting is not a good bet, and the reason that comes up the most in the conversations that I've had was that the profit margin in sports betting is very slim to begin with, and sportsbooks, if you will, they tend to lose if everyone bets on one team. The way they make money is ideally they have 50/50 on a game, and it brings you to a point that this past year the Superbowl was Patriots, and some states actually lost money as a result of being here in the Northeast. The larger casino operators or sportsbooks say they can absorb those losses because they're national, so they have a national customer base, if you will, versus a Lottery, whether it's here in Connecticut or anywhere else. I was -- I was just wondering if you could respond to the -- to that?

GREG SMITH: So, certainly, there was news about the net losses from the New Jersey operators, and I also believe the Rhode Island operators who were new. The Las Vegas operators were speaking more that they did not succeed on the results of the game but the end-game betting was much more profitably for them, and so that's where they stayed above -- their head above water on the Superbowl. The idea of having losses from an event such as the Superbowl or any individual pro sports match is possible. Now, the Lottery currently offers games that go by the names of Play3 and Play4 that we, you know, offer every day twice a day. We have experienced when we'll draw numbers 1-1-1 for Play3. The most commonly played numbers in the game and on that day's drawing we experience a net loss, and yet, our full portfolio turns a profit that we give back to the state for the day, so those same opportunities can

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occur. It won't just be from Lottery. You know, that same outcome could be achieved by the casinos and the OTBs, and yet, the net over the full week or a couple of weeks will bring everybody right back up to being solvent and able to -- in the Lottery's instance -- bring our full return to the state and the other operators to pay their tax or fee that's applied through this bill.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay.

GREG SMITH: It's not a new phenomenon.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): All right. Thanks for explaining that. I thought it was important that you respond to those critics. Any other questions? Representative Paolillo.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Greg, thank you for your testimony. You had mentioned the Lottery being in position to maximize revenue four to five times. Can you -- can you just -- I didn't catch all of that and didn't understand all of that, so if you can just go back to that comment --

GREG SMITH: Okay.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): And explain?

GREG SMITH: So, each operator will have its gross handle of wages placed, and its payout or win, and that's being estimated in the low 90 percent range, okay? From that remaining dollars -- let's -- let's pretend it was \$100 dollars initially and \$90 dollars was paid out to the winners, and there's \$10-dollars left. All of us will have operating expenses and after the Lottery pays its operating expenses, we will give all of the remaining money to

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the state. From that \$90 dollars, the other operators will be charged roughly 10 percent or \$9 dollars, and that will be what the state benefits from, so at -- you're just asking them for roughly 10 percent of their net after they -- you know, and they'll cover their expenses with that. We will have those same expenses, and we will give you all the money left over, and so the math shows that our return to the state is in that four to five percent range of greater than other operators. It's just simply by applying that -- that fee to them where we can get everything back.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you for that clarification, and then one last. You are hosting a sports betting iLottery forum?

GREG SMITH: We are this Friday afternoon, and I believe that all of you have been invited, and we would look forward -- we think we've got a good experience for people lined up to come and get a good hands-on and view of what the systems will look like and also the play for consumers.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you.

GREG SMITH: Yeah, appreciate it.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Any other questions. I just have one last one. Do you think the Lottery should ask venders to put money up front to the state as they bid for this? The iLottery? You're gonna have venders?

GREG SMITH: Okay. I'm sorry. I wasn't quite sure which topic we were on. So, with iLottery -- so do we think that they should put up a fee first?

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Kind of like the casinos when, you know, they put up an application fee or a licensing fee. I'm assuming you're gonna engage the iLottery with a vender?

GREG SMITH: The current model in other states is that whether the online -- whether the online Lottery operator is our same gaming vender or a different gaming vender that they are compensated by their investment through a percent return on sales. Just like through Lottery sales right now, so I am not familiar with a model where they would come through and put down a -- a payment or a deposit towards that just based on the investment they need to do in either infrastructure or technology in advance, so I can ask to see if there's been other examples of -- of what you're describing, but I am not aware of any.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that. Anyone else? Okay, we're good. Oh, yes, for the record, Senator Osten's request information, can you also submit that to the clerk for the committee?

GREG SMITH: Yes. Yeah, we'll send it to the full committee. The full list of currently licensed Lottery sellers in the state.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Yeah, and we'll make that part of the record.

GREG SMITH: Okay.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Thank you very much.

GREG SMITH: You too.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay, up next is Senator Hartley. I believe she's here. No? Senator Hartley's not here? Okay. Brenden Bergeron? Brenda? Oh, Brenda Bergeron. Oh, you know what -- I'm sorry, Brenda. If you could just -- Senator Hartley is here. I know she has to -- to leave. Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): My apologies. I just didn't want to crowd the room anymore than it is. So, Chairman Verrengia and ranking members, Senator Hwang, Representative Sredzinski, and all of the members of the Public Safety Committee, thank you very much for allowing us to appear before you today. I know this is a very busy day, and we will try to be very efficient with your time. With me today -- I'm just looking to see who's with me [Laughing]. I've been losing people all -- all along as I'm going. With me today, are my colleagues, Representative Reyes and Representative Cummings, and Chief Fred Spagnolo from the city of Waterbury. Also, who has signed up, sir, but is unable to be here because he's hopefully not still on the side of the road is Alderman Victor Lopez, who is the executive director of the Hispanic Coalition, so he's not gonna make it with us today. But we are here today in support of HB-7332. Very briefly, committee members, this seeks to address the public safety issues involving the habitual repeat juvenile offenders engaged in motor vehicle theft. To appropriately frame this conversation, it's important to note that the judicial offender legislation, which was passed in 2010 and then subsequently in 2012, was a positive step in dealing with youthful offenders in the judicial and in the corrections systems, but not unlike other milestone

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legislation, it is iterated, and once we enact these significant pieces of legislation and they roll out, very often we need to perfect them, and that is exactly what the intention of HB-7332 is -- is all about.

Its purpose is to address the extremely -- an extremely targeted group of repeat juvenile offenders who are engaged in auto theft and whose habitual crimes have escalated to the level of a serious public safety risk, not only to themselves but to the general public at large. And, if I just might -- Alderman Lopez who was going to be with us was going to share with you his own personal story. About 6 months ago -- well, I guess it was in September -- he was driving his two children to school. Their ages 7 and 10. Coming down to -- to bring them to school, he -- thank God -- near missed a t-bone, and the car then went -- veered off and two other vehicles observed this, and they boxed in this -- this car, and it was a 14 year old and a 15 year old who were going out on a joyride before they went to school at 7 o'clock in the morning, and so it's manifesting itself throughout our city but quite frankly throughout the state, but I'd like to defer my colleagues, Representative Simmons and Representative Reyes, and then to hear from the Chief who has been working with this every day. Representative Cummings.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): Thank you very much, Senator, and thank you to the committee for undertaking this very important bill that's impacting all of our communities. Statewide, according to the 2017 FBI statistics over 7000 cars were stolen in our state of Connecticut, and Waterbury has one of the highest

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numbers of over 800 cars stolen. It's impacting all of our communities. If you are a parent who is trying to get to work and your car was stolen out of your driveway, that really impacts your ability to provide for your family, and it's something that we really need to address in our communities, and I am very thankful that our Chief is here today, and he will be able to provide you much more of the details regarding this epidemic that we're seeing around the state. Thank you.

REP. REYES (75TH): Thank you very much to this committee for hearing our testimony. Representative Reyes from the 75th district of Waterbury, and I come here in strong support of -- in advocating for something to be done because of the simple fact that this is now affecting quality of life and people's lives are being affected, sometimes to the point where we're going to funerals. In my district, in the last two years, a personal friend of mine lost his daughter directly resultant of a car chase that ended up with a car wrapped around a pole, and a -- and a dead person that was a passenger in that car was a friend of mine's personal daughter. These stories are getting very close to home. On my -- on South Main Street, which is in the heart of my district, again, a car that was on the flee from the police ran over and hit a mother and -- and her child -- both her children -- killing one and doing some pretty physical damage to the mom, and it's -- it's getting complete out of control, and I normally find myself advocating on the other side trying to give second, and third, and fourth chances to these juveniles, but I think in my estimation the law right now is leaning towards too lenient, and -- and Senator Hartley framed this perfectly. We're

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talking about a very small percentage here, but the repeat offender need to be dealt with in a different way, and I defer the rest of my time to our Chief of Police, Mr. Fred Spagnolo. Thank you.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Good morning, my name is Fernando Spagnolo. I'm the Police Chief for the city of Waterbury. I thank you for the opportunity to address this honorable committee this morning. I'm here to show support for House Bill 7332, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE WELFARE OF REPEAT JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND THEIR VICTIMS. As you are aware, this bill requires the automatic transfer to criminal court. Cases of juveniles charged with larceny involving the theft of a motor vehicle when the juvenile has at least four prior adjudications or convictions for felonies, and to change the factors, courts must consider when determining whether to transfer a case involving a juvenile charged with certain felonies.

In the calendar here of 2018, in the city of Waterbury, 972 cars were stolen. A majority of these cars were stolen by juveniles. Of the 972 cars throughout the year, 545 were recovered in the city of Waterbury. Some of those were reported stolen out of town, 195 to be exact. In those cases, 52 juveniles were arrested for charged related to stealing a motor vehicle. Of the 52 juveniles arrested, 6 were repeat offenders. The six repeat offenders were arrested on an average of 10 times each and charged in total with 75 crimes, 41 of which were felonies. These felonies range from larceny related car theft, assault with a deadly weapon, robbery, possession of narcotics, and possessions of a firearm.

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Just this past weekend, one of the six offenders I speak to you about today was arrested by the Waterbury Police Department with the assistance of the Watertown Police Department, and charged with multiple counts of burglary for breaking into two used car dealerships in the west end of our city in an effort to steal cars from their lots. This juvenile was also involved in a robbery earlier during the day on Saturday of a furniture store where two elderly people were injured and their car was stolen.

In 2018, the Waterbury Police Department arrested 684 juveniles for various offenses within our city. It is staggering for me to think that 6 of the 684 arrested throughout the calendar year were responsible for nearly 10 percent of the charges brought against juveniles in Waterbury. There are about 19,000 kids registered in the school district in the city of Waterbury. Of those, 9900 are of middle school age and high school or in the adult education programs -- 9894 of those children each and every day in Waterbury get up and do the best they can. They come from a variety of socioeconomic situations, family dynamic situations. They deal with substance abuse impacts. They deal with a variety of support or lack thereof from the households that they come from, but they get up each and every day, they make their way into the world, and they contribute to our city. I am very proud to be part of a system that helps these children and supports them. What I am not proud of and what I am extremely frustrated with is the six repeat offenders that we as a community, as a state have failed. We have no ability to help them in my mind.

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In Waterbury, these offenders are in crisis and they're in danger.

In 2018, there were 46 crashes involving stolen cars, and these incidents were crimes related to the crash and the stolen cars. The juvenile who is -- [Bell] -- believed to be involved in the motor vehicle was stopped by a home owner and (inaudible - 00:39:21) to the Waterbury Hospital in the latter part of 2017. There have been documented multiple situations where force was used by law enforcement necessary to stop the threat posed by juveniles in stolen motor vehicles throughout the state of Connecticut. These children are putting themselves are risk each and every day. Albeit, they're a small percentage of the population of children that are involved in the juvenile justice system; nevertheless, they are at grave danger. The way we are handling these juvenile multiple repeat offenders is not working, not only in Waterbury but statewide. We are putting these children at risk and we are exposing our community to danger. This bill, if enacted, will provide stronger consequences for children who are no longer getting the help from community-based services provided by the juvenile court. I thank you for your time, and I respectfully ask you to consider this bill.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you for your testimony. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to most of the Waterbury delegation. Senator Hartley, nice to see you again. Representative Cummings, Representative Reyes, Chief, just a few questions. Some of the committee knows that I work for a municipal police department

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on the civilian side managing a 9-1-1 dispatch center, and this issue is not isolated to one part of the state or another. This is happening all over the state of Connecticut, and we can debate what has caused that, but in your opinion, Chief, is there anything in particular that has changed in Connecticut that has resulted in the increase of these car thefts by juveniles?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Has resulted in a decrease?

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): An increase. The increase that we're seeing. The spike in numbers.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Right. Well, you know, the -- the age being raised obviously has -- has a considerable factor on the statistics, but the fact still remains that, you know, your 15 to 16 year old kids out there that are stealing cars, and a very small percentage of those children, in Waterbury anyway, less than 1 percent of that population is not learning and not able to be provided for with the community-based services that are available through the juvenile court system.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Understood. And, would you say that any of these car thefts are gang related in any way?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: We are seeing a connection currently in Waterbury with local gang relations to automobile thefts. Some of the car thefts that have occurred in Waterbury that have been stolen by juveniles, that juveniles have been charged for have been related to drive-by shootings that adults have been charged for that do have gang affiliation, yes.

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REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): So, would it be a logical conclusion that the youth, because of their inability to get severe punishment for motor vehicle thefts, are stealing cars for gangs so that they can perform other more serious crimes?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: That would be part of it, yes.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Have we seen increases in other minor larcenies, like larceny 6?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yeah, we've -- we've seen a significant increase in the -- the charges related to theft of a motor vehicle. What concerns me in our police department is we're beginning to see a trend of juveniles involved in other violent crime incidents such as weapons, weapons in a motor vehicle, and drug-related activity.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): But, you know, minor larcenies aren't included in this bill. This is more for serious crimes. I know that's why we're here -- for more serious crimes.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Right.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): I just wanted to point out that this doesn't mean that if you're caught stealing a pack of gum you're gonna be automatically transferred to an adult court system.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: This is for a very, very limited portion of the juvenile community that is engaged in the juvenile justice system. They would have to have four felonies prior to the transfer that would either have to be adjudicated or convicted of before they would go to the adult court.

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REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay, and so I'm looking at the bill, and it looks like it has -- some of the testimony refers to two charges and others seem to indicate four?

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): If I might, Representative? Yeah, there has been some discussion as to what that threshold should be, and the bill that you see before us represents the fact that there were a number of different thresholds we were talking about, but the language in the bill does say two right now. Of course, you know, as we go through the -- the screening process, I'm sure that will be considered.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Of course. That's part of the process, and so that was going to be my next question is where do you think it's -- what do you think that threshold is? And, I -- and any of you can answer that question -- 2, 4, another number?

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): So, if I might just continue? You know, to your point about the pack of gum. This is not about going back and unraveling the -- the milestone legislation that was put into effect. This is about perfecting it and refining it, and -- and -- and making it accomplish its purpose, and so where we see these flashpoints with this very small group of people -- now, in the city of Waterbury, correct me Chief, it's about 1 percent. Is it?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): Of these habitual repeat offenders, and when you get into the double digits where some of these cases have ten of these offenses, clearly, you know, they're calling out for

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some kind of a response. Now, I -- I leave it with this committee and all of the experts 'cause so many of you are law enforcement, former law enforcement. This is a great committee. I used to have the privilege of chairing it at one time, and I know that -- that the important work and the vetting that you do, so I'm -- I know that that will go on. But, if I might also mention, and you know, I'm not the boots on the ground, but I am hearing from teachers, from family, from community associations, and what typically happens is a youth that is apprehended is brought down to -- in our case -- to Bridgeport, and they know that there are really no consequences at the Detention Center, and they literally are walking out the door, and apparently, my understanding is that staff is told not to go after them or pursue them. They can just literally walk out the door, say goodbye, hop over the fence only to return most instances for another event, and you know, back in the community, there's a lot of bragging rights that are going on. You know, these individuals and conversations are kind of, you know, creating this aura about them, and there becomes a competition, so somebody steals a Toyota today, and of course, appears being who they are, are very competitive, and the next day the other -- the other fella is going out, you know, getting a BMW, and -- and -- and then they go on to get the Mercedes Benz. It has become a sport, and so I also feel that the intent of this is to obviously reach out to those children who are at risk, and to my way of thinking, we can't deal with this or address this right now because of, you know, some of these changes, and we only give those individuals 24 months to become more expert at -- at this trade, and so by the time they

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reach age 18, do you think at that point the light is going to go off and say, oh, no, I'm done with that, we're over? No. It's to the contrary. They have become engrained in this particular way of life, and we have -- we have lost 24 months in trying to reach these kids.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Senator Hartley, and -- and to your story about them arriving at court or arriving at the jail and being released, I hear that over and over and over again, so like I mentioned, it's not an isolated incident. Two final questions. I know my colleagues have questions. Chief, would passing this bill increase law enforcement safety, officer safety, or decrease it?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Oh, it increases it, absolutely.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Increase. And, would you feel that passing this bill would increase or decrease public safety overall in your city?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: I think it would increase public safety. It would increase the safety of the juveniles that's limited percentage of the population that's involved in this activity, and it would be good for the police officers on the street.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you very much for your time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Senator Hwang, followed by Senator Osten.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome. The question is juveniles sometimes do not have the capacity or the brain development to know

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what's right from wrong sometimes, and -- and we set up the juvenile courts to be able to protect them before they get to the age consent, but in this case, as you direct this bill, you're not talking about the one time mistake. You're not talking about a kid who makes a bad mistake. You're talking about repeat offenders, people that clearly violate the law and knowing that they're getting protection meanwhile. Can you explain a little bit more some of the circumstances that you're encountering from these repeat offenders?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Well, it would be repeat felony offenses, so we have a particular incidents -- we'll go back to one of the six that I just discussed that just this past weekend who was currently in 2018 he was arrested ten times by the Waterbury Police Department all on felony charges. He was arrested three times for larceny 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree related to motor vehicle theft. He was arrested for having a weapon in the motor vehicle. He was arrested for possession of narcotics, and multiple burglary, robbery 1st degree, a multitude of misdemeanor charges as well. You know, this child who goes into our -- our juvenile justice system in Waterbury, gets sent to the Detention Center in Bridgeport, and he is screened, and you know, he's identified as someone that can utilize the program whether it's a locked facility or some other community-based program that the juvenile justice system has to offer, and then he waits in detention. And, he's there in detention because he's been deemed to be a risk to the public, right, so he sits there, and on a weekly basis, the juvenile court reviews his case to determine whether he continues to be a risk to the community or he can

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be released to a guardian or a parent. On a weekly basis, this kid keeps going back to court, and he gets released, and as time goes on, his behavior may determine and his situation of circumstances at home and in his family may allow him to be released. The problem is that he never gets into the program. He's still on the waiting list for the program, so he's not really receiving any services. When he's in detention, it's idle time. If this child were to be on the Superior Court docket, there would be condition on release, there could be a probation officer that gets engaged, and I believe that there's many more services that are available, and the case would be expedited much quicker than it would in the juvenile system to give this juvenile the services necessary to try to get him on the right track.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you. That -- that's a terrific clarification, and -- and obviously, when we look at you sitting up there as law enforcement, I also see your terrific Waterbury representation from Senator Hartley, Representative Cumming, and Representative Reyes that this is not a bill that's just kind of a reaction of law enforcement. It is a reflection of the community reaching out to legislators to say, look we want to protect our community, and these individuals although they may be part of our community they are a real threat in a repeated way to the community as a whole. So, can you elaborate a little bit more of your outreach to not only from a law enforcement perspective but from a community policing. You're getting these kind of requests from your constituents that are concerned that these individuals now only are getting a -- a slap on the hand and getting out into committing

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these crimes, but they're a threat to the community and any of you can -- can answer that as terrific constituent interactions that you have share that this is an outcry from your community and your constituents to request some corrective action on this, would that be correct?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes, in Waterbury, there's 23 organized neighborhood organizations in the city. I've been to all of them, and each and every one of them has concerns and fears of the issues of stolen motor vehicles within our city, and if they haven't had a vehicle stolen from their neighborhood, which is highly unlikely that they haven't, they've been involved in an accident with a stolen motor vehicle or witness or known somebody who has been involved in an accident in Waterbury with a stolen motor vehicle. There -- we have through our community relations division -- ten or so folks that I know have written testimony that's been provided that I'm sure will get to this committee at some point, and I do believe that we have one victim of a crime from our community that's here today to testify for this committee if so desired. It's a big problem in Waterbury, and at some point -- I mean it's a big problem throughout that state as was pointed out earlier, and you know, the amount of damage -- property damage and -- and the insurance claims that are being created by this situation, and I just -- I cannot even get my head around it.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): If I might just add? So, we did a little digging, and in 2016 -- this is nationwide -- the insurance industry assessed the value or the cost of stolen vehicles at \$6-billion dollars, and so there will be other members from our

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community that will be here to tell their story, but knowing how busy you all are as you approach your -- your deadline, we have other folks who have just submitted written testimony, so -- and they're all their individual stories, and we've been joined by another member of the Waterbury delegation, Representative Napoli.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, through you Mr. Chair, if it's okay for me to extend to the alderman? And, it segues perfectly, and I want to applaud, Chief, for your outreach to the 23 community groups. You don't get enough credit for those kind of outreach credits that's important. But perhaps, to the alderman, could you share some of the stories of the community's outreach on this issue?

REP. NAPOLI (73RD): Sure. So, thank you. I'm Ron Napoli. I'm a state representative from the 73rd district, also a member of the Board of Alderman, but we work very closely with the police chief. You know, in Waterbury, we have very active neighborhood groups, and the police chief and his command staff will attend those meetings and answer questions, and really educate the public on what's happening and what safeguards they can put in place to rectify some of this.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, and one last question. I -- I think in the proposed bill there was an additional language that stated at first the best interest of the child, but the new language added to the best interest of the community. Could you elaborate what the intention of that would be? Through you.

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REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): The current language right now reads that a prosecutor in determining a discretionary transfer has to consider the best interest of the child and of the community. What we're looking to do is to expand the discretionary powers of the prosecutor in looking at the community and the child, but not having to weigh them equally, so if they find 99 percent in favor of the community and 1 percent for the child, they can still transfer that case up. Now, I may also add that once that case reaches the adult court that court can remand the case back down to the juvenile court if they do find some sort of mitigating circumstances, which overrides the child's ability to be in the adult court, so it's not like you're -- you're going up there and that's the end of it. If the judge in the adult court find that there's some sort of outstanding circumstances that warrant you to be better adjudicated in the juvenile court, they can still remand you back down, and this has nothing to do with sentencing, which is also a common misperception when it comes to this bill. There's no sentencing requirement in this transfer. The judge will still look at the totality of the situation, and by the time the child is even reaching the actual judicial branch, they have gone through a variety of remedial programs such as Juvenile Review Board, so the first stop is not the justice system. There is a variety of steps that they've taken and that they haven't learned their lesson from prior to even reaching the judicial branch.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Just a point of clarification, I'm reading the bill and -- and I think it's line 50 and 51, but what you're saying is

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that it's already in statute that the court has to consider the best interest of the child and the community, and I'm reading it to -- to say this is now new to include the best interest of the public, but I think the other point I'd like to get a clarification on is in considering that it's -- it's -- it's weighed and balanced between those two interests, but what you're saying in this legislation is that one weighs more versus the other? I'm just trying to get that clarification just to protect the interest of the child versus the interest of the community, which is always important. It's a delicate balancing act, but does this statute change that balance one way or the other because I think your explanation literally says it does? But, correct me if I'm wrong.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): Right now, the language in my reading of it says that a prosecutor must find that it is both in the best interest of the child and of the community in order to transfer a case to the adult court when looking at the discretionary component. This is aside from the automatic transfers, which is the first part of the bill that would increase two or four previous adjudications now is considered an automatic transfer. The statute has automatic transfers designated and it has discretionary transfers designated. The language change that you're referring to is just in regard to the discretionary transfers, which currently say, you must find the best interest of the child and the community. The language change would allow for a more of a balancing test and looking at the totality of the circumstances and what the situation has provided. Does that answer your question?

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SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, and -- and again, this is a work in progress, and I welcome the opportunity to get this kind of input and have this kind of dialogue. My last question is, through your hard work, have you worked with the state's attorney and the public defender's office in regards to these changes in -- in sentencing requirements?

Through you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): Yes, through you -- through the chair. Yes, state's attorney has been involved. We have met with him and -- and worked on the language.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): And, if I may? The state's attorney has specifically requested that change in the best interest of the child and of the community saying even if you changed it to or would allow for more appropriate discretion for the prosecutors, and there has to be a hearing in order for this transfer to happen under the discretionary component as well, so it's not just on a whim.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you for the indulgence. It raises one final question, if I may, Mr. Chair? Is has the proponents of this bill considered a -- a midway point between juvenile court and superior court a -- a redirection? I think the Chief mentioned that there is a significant backlog in the detention centers. Is there any consideration with having probation into a community center or work-release program that -- that creates a punishment for this individual, but a corrective facility within the community to possibly be an alternative between the two, a midway point of a solution to say, look, we're gonna punish you for this crime,

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but rather than putting you into the system, perhaps look at alternative punishment but also a corrective action avenue to be able to do that? Would -- would the -- would the proponent of this bill consider a midway point solution to -- to create a win/win opportunity.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): I just want to point one issue that comes with the probation. Adult probation has around-the-clock probation, so a probation officer knows where their client is at all times. Juvenile probation, they clock out at 5 o'clock and they go home. Same thing with the weekends, there's nobody actually monitoring those juvenile offenders when they're in the juvenile component of the probation officers, so even being able to transfer them to the adult court for the adult court probation to be able to monitor them all the time -- because let's be honest these crimes are happening most of the time after 5 p.m. and on the weekend -- which is where we have a complete deficiency in what the probation opportunities actually are for those juveniles.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank all of you for raising this very important issue, and I hope to be able to continue working with you, and I think the key phrase that we talked about earlier is the delicate balancing act between the best interest of the child versus the best interest in the community, and -- and I hope we are able to reach that delicate balance and resolve the solution of the ultimate public safety in the community. So, I want to thank the chairman's indulgence. I want to thank you all for being here. Thank you.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): Thank you very much. And, I just wanted you to know, and I really thank you, Senator Hartley. We talked about this briefly the other day, and most recently, there was a town public hearing in the town of Hebron for exactly the same problem, and so it's not just happening in cities. It's happening in rural areas, so I don't want people to think this is just a one-time issue in the city of Waterbury. This is actually happening across the state and in a variety of communities, and they had people driving into Hebron to steal motor vehicles, and so I just pointed out I want to thank you for bringing this forward and for your testimony today. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): Thank -- thank you, Senator Osten. And if I might? I really appreciate the time and -- and the interest that this committee has in this, and when we're talking about the interest of the child and -- and the public safety, they are not mutually exclusive, and the -- and the truth is if we do not address this, we are not acting in the best interest of the child because after 24 months of this kind of activity and becoming so adept in -- in doing this kind of a thing, we are not gonna change an individual on their 18th birthday, and I say that is in the best interest of the child.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Thank you. Chief, how long you been on the job for?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Twenty-eight years.

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SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Twenty-eight years, okay. You've been around long enough.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): 1990 came around, we had a crack cocaine problem in the state of Connecticut. Crime went through the roof. Who did the gangs use the most during that time?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Juveniles.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Juveniles. They used juveniles because we all know in law enforcement -- I see a bunch of chiefs and some other guys who have been on the job -- we all know when it goes to juvenile nothing's gonna happen. We all know that.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Right.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Right. It's a given, and when we -- when time came and they were switching 17 and 18-year-olds into the juvenile system and we kept saying, well, you know, we got to give them a break, but you know, they had a lot of breaks. They never got a record on their -- their first, second, third, sometimes up to a lot more, so we changed the law to protect somebody when we didn't need to, and everybody in law enforcement -- and I see a bunch of chiefs and lieutenant -- we all knew what was gonna happen. We knew that they were gonna be used in the same manner. All right. And, we kept saying, no, well, we've gotta -- we've gotta do the best interest of the child and the community. Well, I'm sorry a car driving 100 miles down the road -- 100 miles an hour down the road, there's only one person I want to watch out for at that point, and that's the community because this -- the -- the person

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driving that car knows what's gonna happen if they crash, and it's a sad thing to say, but it's the truth. The -- when you -- when you arrest somebody, Chief, and there's no consequences, what's gonna happen?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: There is potential for them to violate the crime again.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. Arrest them again?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): And, what's gonna happen when nothing happens a second time?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: It's a continuous cycle.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): And, I can keep going, you know what.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Chiefs over here you guys know that. This is -- this is a cycle that needs to be broken, and we're talking about stolen cars here, and -- and it's -- that's a dangerous thing for somebody to be driving down the road, and -- and getting involved in, but we also know that there's other crimes out there, crime shopping. Do you know what that is, Chief?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): You know? Okay. And, I'm sure Waterbury is plagued with that right now too, you know, but that's on a different level. You know, I went to your town when I was on the job many years ago, and I asked for assistance. You guys gave me the best assistance. It was great. As soon

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as I gave you the two names, you said, oh, yeah, yeah, they live on this road, c'mon, we'll take you right over there. A couple detectives brought me over there. They weren't there. Knew the whole family. These guys were on probation for stealing from all over the state of Connecticut, and they had a -- they liked to steal from K-Mart. That was their thing. So, their probation said, you can't steal from K-Mart, you can't go into K-Mart. That didn't stop them, you know, and these guys as well as many others have not the 10 to 18 arrests when I first started, and I thought as a rookie, wow, 18 arrests, oh my gosh. That's a lot of arrests. How common is it to see people with over 50 arrests?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: It happens. You know, I can't give you a number. I'd have to review the stats, but we do have multiple repeat offenders in our city.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Same people.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Yep, and -- and if I told you those names of the people I'm thinking about -- in fact, you may actually have an idea because I name K-Mart -- you'd probably recognize them.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Yeah, and I can probably go to each chief, lieutenant, and I could name people from your city, yeah, yeah, we know them. They're good job security, you know, and -- and this is what we're talking about here. We get juveniles and we put them into the system and nothing happens. We help, and they don't start out with -- you're

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right, we set a juvenile review, and it's great when we can grab kids, and at the Juvenile Review Board, we can stop them from committing more crimes, but now, we're past that. We arrest them again, all right. We know that now we're on a path, and when you get up to four, five, six you're on a clear path. You've gotta stop it, and if it's not gonna stop in the juvenile court, you've gotta take it somewhere where it's gonna be stopped, and that's the adult court, and because you're right, you can get them on the probation system, you can get them on the bracelet, and they have a lot more rules and that have to be followed. This is a good law. This is going to help everybody in the state of Connecticut, and this is the -- the innocent people who don't break the law, who are just driving to work, driving to school, walking their kids. They don't have a 3000-pound weapon going throughout their city with somebody who doesn't even have a driver's license. I think I can keep going, but I'm going to stop there. I think I kind of made my point, and hopefully -- we'll see if I have any followup in a minute. But, thank you guys for coming. Thank you for bringing this forward, and you're right, it's not just Waterbury, it's across our entire state, and we've got to stop this because I'm sick of reading in the paper of people getting hurt because of it. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay, thank you. Sorry about that. Representative Brennan.

REP. ALLIE-BRENNAN (2ND): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you guys for being here, and thank you, Chief. I just wanted to -- I know we're kind of criticizing the juvenile justice system, and I don't think it's

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fair to do that without saying that it hasn't be adequately funded in years, and I'm wondering if you think if we did actually adequately fund the juvenile justice system, do you think we would need intervention like this to put the into -- into adult?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Thank you, Representative. I -- I think we're talking about a very, very small percentage of the population, again, so 684 kids arrested in Waterbury, charged with juvenile crimes. We're talking about 6 that would fall into this category. I don't -- I don't know what we could add to funding of the juvenile justice system that would assist these six juveniles. The -- the community-based services that are there failed them. Maybe if there was intervention early on and that funding was available for them a year or so ago, and they got into a program in a locked facility and received the -- the support they needed, maybe things would be different, but now, we're faced with this, and that's just Waterbury, and you know, I think if you look across the state the numbers are probably about the same in each, you know, major urban area. It's probably about 1 percent of the juvenile population that would benefit, at this point, from a transfer to the superior court docket because the case would be gone through the system much quicker, the services would be provided, and yes, there is a punitive component to it that could be a deterrent as well.

REP. ALLIE-BRENNAN (2ND): Thank you, and I'm gonna guess that -- so these kids would be gong on to adult centers, and there, you know, they'd be, you know, there's solitary confinement, there's not

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really a need for rehabilitation intervention, so I just feel that they'd eventually get back on the street and they're even in worse condition, so that's just my concern, but I also was wondering if you were aware that federal law will soon prohibit housing for youth under 18 by December 21, 2021? So, seeing how that kind of comes into play with all of this.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: So, in the adult system on the superior court docket, they would actually be afforded an opportunity to make time or conditions of release, which is a little different than now. Now, if they're posed as a -- or labeled as a risk to the community, they're sent to the Detention Center on a weekly schedule that -- that basis of -- of risk to the community is reviewed by the juvenile court, and they're either sent back to detention or they're released back into the community or through a program that they're waiting for, so on the superior court docket, they'd have the opportunity to make bond, have conditions on release so they could be out back in the community with certain conditions on them and the potential of probation officer or going through a screening through the probation system while they're awaiting for the -- for their court -- for their case to be heard. As far as housing, we (inaudible - 01:10:36), which is a juvenile facility here in Connecticut. I'm not well versed and completely familiar with all the regulations though.

REP. CUMMINGS (74TH): I just want to clarify. This bill does nothing for sentencing, so in order for a juvenile to get into the -- the adult, you know, prison, they would have to be sentenced

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appropriately and for solitary confinement something would have had to be triggered within the correctional facility to warrant that, and another point is that the Chief has worked really hard on intermediary programs in Waterbury that has nothing to do with the funding of the juvenile justice system. The PAL Department has worked really hard to create programming that would help children who have the opportunity to right the ship, to get into this program and to work with mentors to get their lives on track and to be able to, I think (inaudible - 01:11:24) those charges; is that correct, Chief?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Well, PAL is utilized at times, you know, through the juvenile justice system as a program for children. We do do a tremendous amount of mentoring, and you know, we make our best efforts to avert arrests, to diversion a program, especially for a first offense. We utilize the Juvenile Review Board. We have a program and the acronym is called KIDS. It's Keeping Individuals Driven for Success. All our first and second offense juvenile arrests out of the school system go to that program, so we are trying our best to keep these kids out of the system and provide mentorship for them and support services outside the regular course of business.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): And, if I might, Representative? I am very sensitive to your -- your question and your point. This in no way is denigration of the legislation that we have put into effect in 2010 and 2012. It is to the contrary. It is to perfect it, and the numbers will show you that in the city of Waterbury it is 1 percent. In the state, it is less, I think, than 5 or about 5

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percent. We are talking about a very, very small group, and it's -- it's incumbent upon us, I think to recognize this and to deal with it, and -- and to perfect the legislation that we put in -- in place, so that it is working to the benefit of all. We don't want to be writing off anybody, so I take exception to that. It is not about denigrating the juvenile detention process at all. It is about perfecting it.

REP. ALLIE-BRENNAN (2ND): I appreciate that.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): Thank you.

REP. ALLIE-BRENNAN (2ND): And, I know -- and I just -- I feel like if we did have full funding we'd be -- it wouldn't be so hard on the department and you wouldn't be having to use so many resources to do, you know, things that are not really in your -- your purview. You know, you're going above and beyond, and we all understand that, and I appreciate that, but I know this year even with the governor's budget they can be federal mandate, so that's just something that's been on my mind, and I appreciate all you guys have to say.

REP. REYES (75TH): Thank you. Representative, thank you very much for raising that point because that's a very important point that you raised about the juvenile funding, and for these Senators, but I have associations and organizations, nonprofits, with boots on the ground, and I am very closely associated with (inaudible - 01:13:47) Foundations, (inaudible - 01:13:48) Memorial, the Hispanic Coalition, Connecticut Republic. These folks deal with just less than 1 percent of the population we are dealing with, and they themselves are almost at

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their wits end in saying they're really -- we have failed these kids so much. That, you know, if there was an easy solution they would have already implored it already. The Chief is spot on. We are talking about a very, very small population, but I -- I do like the point that you are raising that we cannot take our eye off of Juvenile Detention Center and juvenile fundings because it's very important that we try to -- we're also here as the Senator said to balance this particular law, but thank you for that question.

REP. ALLIE-BRENNAN (2ND): I appreciate it. Thank you.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Representative. Any other questions from committee? Representative Dauphinais.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for being here today. I -- I just had some document in front of me. It's an email from Deputy Chief of Operations in the Meriden Police Department. He brings up several issues, and I just wondered if you could speak to the challenges that maybe some of these issues bring, and one that is on the list is the increased difficulty in allowing police to bring a juvenile to a detention facility. "In the past, when a juvenile committed a serious juvenile sense, the officer could simply transport the juvenile to a detention facility. Now, the officer must go through a laborious process of finding a judge who needs to sign an order to detain an order to hold the juvenile in its detention center," and it goes on to say, "but in order to detain cannot be signed even when it's in the best interest of the child," and he talks about the law

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that -- that enforces this and the Connecticut law enforcement officers field manual. Can you just speak to how that may bring a challenge to you and -- and actually prohibit you from doing your job?

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: So, this -- this whole situation is -- is strenuous on law enforcement. There are more steps in the juvenile justice system to have a child detained. You know, we deal very closely and work very well with the juvenile court, the juvenile prosecutor, and the juvenile judges in Waterbury, but it is more work, and it certainly takes some more time. You know, the investigations that ensue because of these stolen vehicles are -- it's an unbelievable amount of time that not only the patrol officers who, you know, are on patrol trying to conduct who are active patrol and engage in community service policing for -- for our city are taken away to either investigate accidents or respond to houses. There's -- you know, it's no uncommon in Waterbury for officers to get a call to a specific neighborhood and have a report of 8 to 10 vehicles gone through on one street, and one of those vehicles have been stolen, and it will be a short time later that that vehicle will be -- will be reports of reckless driving, and then suddenly we will be responding to an accident either with property damage or worst case scenario personal injury where our officers are tied up for hours on end investigating the accident, you know looking for video footage trying to build a case. Often, these kids will go to the juvenile justice system, go down to the Detention Center, wait for a program that's too full, get released back to the community, and repeat the whole cycle again, so it -- it's a tremendous strain. You know, police cars -- I'm

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suffering for police cars in my fleet. They're all damaged. You know, often times these kids -- somebody mentioned it here throughout the course of the conversation today -- majority if these kids, almost all of them have no driver's license, very, very limited driver experience except for on like a video game, and they go out in the streets, and they don't understand traffic laws -- they don't understand traffic laws, and not only do they endanger themselves, they endanger the community, and they endanger the police officers that are responding to the calls.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH): SO, would you say that the closing of some -- the state juvenile detention center has been a problem as well and just adds to the complication of what you're trying to do, that complicated the mix? I understand there's less now than there were before.

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: So, I know that there's a lot of juveniles that are waiting for programming and there's no room available. I know that. And, I don't know what the circumstances would be if programming were available for these kids. I mean we may not be in the situation that we're in now, but here we are.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH): And, one other issue that he brings up -- I don't -- I don't -- he mentioned that he's not sure if there's truth to it or not. I don't know if you've heard anything about it? But, of the idea that schools may be disincentivized to report or have a student arrested for an issue because of funding; have you heard of that? That -- that a particular school might be struggling with that issue?

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CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: I can only speak for Waterbury. We have an excellent relationship with our -- our school district, our school superintendent. The KIDS program, Keeping Individuals Driven for Success, was actually created in collaboration with the school department and our youth division, and these are diversionary programs that we use to keep kids out of the juvenile justice system, especially for minor offenses. You know, I have school resource officers from the middle schools on up. They are in the schools every day. I have youth squad detectives that are visiting schools -- the elementary schools that don't have school resource officers. We have really strong relationships with all their administrative staff, and we're not experiencing that issue in Waterbury, but I can't speak for other departments throughout the state.

REP. DAUPHINAIS (44TH): Okay. Thank you. Appreciate it.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Representative. Any other questions? Chief, thank you very much --

CHIEF FERNANDO SPAGNOLO: Thank you.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): For being here today and to the Waterbury delegation.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair --

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY (15TH): And to all of the members.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): We're going to move to our public list and alternate. First off on the public list, Michele Mudrick.

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MICHELE MUDRICK: Good afternoon, distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting. I'm Michele Mudrick. I'm the legislative advocate with the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ and Executive Director of the Coalition Against Casino Expansion in Connecticut.

Our Coalition against Casino Expansion is a group of 14 faith-based communities and organizations representing over a million people in Connecticut. I am also writing on behalf of the 233 congregations and more than 67,000 people in our state churches. We're in support of the two study bills to study the effects of legalized gambling and online gaming. However, our support assumes that the comprehensive study will be conducted by a truly independent objective party that has no ties to the Mashantucket or Mohegan Tribes or anyone in the casino industry. We recognize that Spectrum Gaming Group, which did Connecticut's last study in 2009, may bid to do the study. Mr. Adam Steinberg, the Executive Vice President of Spectrum Gaming Group, testified on March 1, 2008 at the Informational Hearing on Gaming that Spectrum has performed work for our Tribal Nations in Connecticut. The comprehensive study must be performed with no conflict of interest or bias. We recommend hiring an independent expert or experts who can give our state a true picture of the social and economic costs of casinos. I would like to emphasize again that Spectrum Gaming Group is not only a key consultant to the gambling industry, but is affiliated with Spectrum Gaming Capital, which helps finance casinos; therefore, they are an integral part of the gambling industry and do not qualify as an independent expert. Also, a

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Spectrum's study did not attempt to provide a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis, so therefore, the value of the study was compromised. We would recommend hiring a qualified academic research and analysis team from a first-tier United States university and include a detailed cost/benefit analysis. We do support paying for the study from unclaimed lottery tickets.

In 1999, the U.S. National Gambling Impact Study Commission enacted by Congress recommended that states conduct periodic cost/benefit studies analyzing the socioeconomic impacts of gambling activities, especially before any expansion of gambling takes place. Connecticut is required by law to conduct a gambling impact study every ten years. Based on both Connecticut law and the National Commission's recommendations, we strongly encourage the legislature to approve undertaking this study this year before any new casinos are built in Connecticut.

We are in opposition to establishing a commission on gaming. Establishing a commission on gaming would put more power in the hands of very few people, rather than the entire legislature and public. The Gaming Commission would control all gaming policy in the state, and therefore, the voices of Connecticut's citizens would not be heard. We believe the residents of Connecticut should decide where and when if gambling should increase in our state, not a few individuals. [Bell]. We oppose it because we are concerned that the commission would consist exclusively of pro-gambling people or people in the gaming industry. If a Commission on gaming is established though, the Commission must include

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individuals with expertise in problem gambling, health policy, and statistical training. The Commission's responsibilities should also include public reporting on problem gambling data. We suggest an annual report that tracks problems with gambling such as embezzlements, increases in problem gamblers, weakening of nearby businesses, reductions in property values, increases in broken families, increases in crime, bankruptcy, suicides, illnesses related to pathological gambling, social services, increases in school-related costs, and DUI data.

So, I know my time's over, so I'm gonna end here. We also are opposed to ACT -- the ACT CONCERNING SPORT WAGERING IN THE STATE, which I testified a lot on two weeks ago. Sports betting is especially dangerous to American children. Studies have shown that children in those countries with legal sports gambling are repeatedly exposed to harmful messages and advertising about sports gambling because it normalizes it for children. So, thank you -- [Bell] -- for this opportunity to talk to you this afternoon, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Michele. First up, Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chair. Welcome, Michele.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you for being here.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Such a strong advocate. You mentioned the request for the study. When was the

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last time that the state had of Connecticut conducted such a gambling study?

MICHELE MURDICK: The last time to my knowledge that the state conducted a study was in 2008, and the study was finished in 2009, and that was done by Spectrum Gaming Group, who I mentioned in my testimony, and they -- the executive director did testify on March 1, 2018, we had Information Gaming, that they do have ties to the Mashantucket and Mohegan Tribes, so we feel -- we are very much in support of doing a study because it has been ten years, and by Connecticut state law, the state of Connecticut is required to do a study every ten years, but please we ask that the study be done by an independent, nonpartisan entity expert from a top-tiered university and someone that has no ties to the gaming industry for it to really be a good study.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): You talked about the various organizations that have kind of been cobbled together to support this issue. Can you name some of the significant religious organizations that have stood out for it as well as some of the prominent members? It isn't just one segment. It is a cross-section. Could you elaborate some of the very strong advocates and the voice that you have in this issue against sanctioned gambling?

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you for that question because it's really an important question because, you know, if you read in the newspapers, you watch the tv, you know who's getting all the press in this issue. MGM is getting tons of press, our tribal nations are getting tons of press because they do have millions of dollars to spend on this issue.

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The Coalition Against Casino Expansion is the public. We represent over a million people in the state of Connecticut. Our members -- I will read them -- are the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church of Connecticut, Connecticut Legal Women Voters, the Connecticut Catholic Conference, Family Institute of Connecticut, New England Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Connecticut Association for Human Services, the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport Advocacy Unlimited, Farmington Valley American Muslim Center in Bridgeport Islamic Community Center, the Resident Bishop of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church, American Baptist Churches of Connecticut, the Presbytery of the Southern New England -- of Southern New England. We also have a letter from the Western Connecticut Council of Government, and I submitted that two weeks ago when I testified. That is all the selectmen from -- it goes from about Greenwich down to around Bridgeport. I think it includes maybe about 20 first selectmen. They are opposed to another casino being built in Bridgeport, and lastly, we also have the support of all the bishops from the Catholic Conference. They have also submitted a letter that they are opposed to casino expansion, and we have joined together in a nonpartisan alliance, and it's really unique also because our coalition is made -- as you can tell -- of conservatives as well as liberal viewpoints. We have come together saying the way -- the smart way to economically move our state forward is not to build more gaming. We have two of the largest casinos in the world in our small state. They have been excellent partners to us, but we do not need

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more, and the public is saying we don't need more. Please, ask your neighbors and your friends, do you want another casino, would you like to -- ask yourself, would you like a casino to come into the town where you live in? The public is saying, no, but we are in desperate times. I understand that the state is desperate for money. When we're desperate for money, we do desperate things, and I'm pleading with you please look into your heart -- really, is another casino going to move Connecticut forward? I -- I know not, and the experts around the country are saying not. Thank you.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair. I -- I just would like to close by simply saying that you are a registered lobbyist on behalf of the organization, and we -- and you cited earlier the -- the vast amount of advocates and lobbyist representing the various other gambling entities. Just on a quick estimate, how much do you all have right now in your terrific organization that represents the collection of over -- as you say -- a million people in the state -- what's your kind of operating budget is kind of estimating right now of how you're doing this work and getting this information out?

MICHELE MURDICK: Well -- [Laughing] -- we have \$800 dollars in the bank. We are -- we are just advocates that are passionate about this issue. We do not have thousands or the millions of dollars that MGM has or that our tribal nations have. We're nonprofit organizations making minimal pay [Laughing], and we have \$800 dollars.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, I think it's important, for your lack of money, you've described the

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coalition of advocates has close to representing nearly a million people. It's an ironic -- it's ironic that -- that you struggle so hard to have your voice heard and representing such a large swap of people, so I want to thank you for being here. I want to thank your coalition for being a voice for people that are trying to raise or stem the tide of gambling expansion in the state, so thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you, Senator Hwang.

REP. BARRY (31ST): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for being here and for your testimony.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you.

REP. BARRY (31ST): You testified that the study should be done by an independent expert. Is there someone that you would recommend that other states have used?

MICHELE MURDICK: Yes. Thank you for that question. Admittedly, there's not a lot of people around America that do these studies, and again, these are studies that have -- that have -- someone who does this has no ties to the gaming industry, but yes, there are a few experts from top-tier universities -- University of Illinois, Temple University, Professor David Mustard from the University of Georgia does these studies throughout America. It's Mustard just like ketchup and mustard -- M-U-S-T-A-R-D -- Professor David D. Mustard, and he's from the University of Georgia. He does these studies around America.

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REP. BARRY (31ST): How do you think a gaming commission would change the dynamics of gaming in Connecticut?

MICHELE MURDICK: Excuse me -- also, thank you, Representative. That's -- that's a great question. So, I -- the bill in front of you is should we establish a gaming commission in Connecticut, and we are opposed to that. I spoke with residents in Massachusetts who have a gaming commission, and if a gaming commission was established, the public's voices would not be heard. It would be five to seven individuals on the gaming commission that would be making key decisions, and in Massachusetts, they're very concerned about this. In Massachusetts, it is a state law if you build a casino in a town you have to have a referendum. The casino industry wanted to build in Milford, Massachusetts. The residents of Milford said, no way. We don't want a casino. The referendum was defeated. In Palmer, Massachusetts, the casino industry wanted to build a casino in Palmar, Mass. The residents said, no, we don't want a casino. No casino was done. In West Springfield, Massachusetts, the same thing happened. The residents voted and they said, no. So, Massachusetts is very concerned. They don't -- they are not happy about a gaming commission, nor would we want one in Connecticut. In East Windsor, this is the situation in Connecticut. The residents of East Windsor were denied a referendum. They don't want the casino in East Windsor. The selectmen do but the residents don't. They were denied a referendum, and there was a bill in this legislature last session that would have given the residents of East Windsor a vote to let the public -- let the people in East Windsor

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decide if they want a casino in their town or not, and this legislative body said, no, we're not gonna let the residents of East Windsor vote. The -- we had the Quinnipiac study in 2015 that said three to four residents in Connecticut they do not want a casino, so if we have a gaming commission -- to answer your question, Representative Barry -- it would be the public's voice lost in this. You know, we are kind of, you know, saying -- people, you know, talk to are saying we're accepting casinos and gambling is an accepted activity. Well, you know, our coalition and the people that we represent and the public that I talk to are saying, no, we don't need anymore. We need the people's voices to be heard. Thank you.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Representative. Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon.

MICHELE MURDICK: Good afternoon.

REP. VAIL (52ND): You mentioned East Windsor. I am going to pick up on that for a second. They didn't have a referendum vote, but I'm pretty sure they had a town meeting?

MICHELE MURDICK: They had a town meeting. I was in attendance there.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Now, in a town meeting, they can still take a vote, correct?

MICHELE MURDICK: They did take a vote. They -- I believe they gave the residents three or four days' notice. It was held at a location at a school, and it was at seven at night, so of course, three-

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fourths of the town can't come because it's seven at night, you know people that work at night, and then there was people that came and they had to move it across the street into another building because too many people came, so half the people left, and the vote was taken close to ten at night, so it was really very hard, especially there's a lot of elderly people there from East Windsor that did not want the casino, and unfortunately, they were too tired by ten o'clock to stay [Laughing], so you know, it's -- it's really a shame. In 2015, there's 200 people that came out to Enfield town council meeting, and Enfield said, no, we don't want the casino in our town. The town council said the same, and then Windsor Lock they said the same thing. We don't want the casino. I'm sure our tribal nations knew the dynamics of East Windsor. They knew that in that town government it doesn't require a referendum, so it's an easy target to put it in East Windsor.

REP. VAIL (52ND): But, I live in Stafford Springs. We have a very similar form of government, and we have had town meetings to vote on things, but it did pass, correct? Just a simple yes or no.

MICHELE MURDICK: Where?

REP. VAIL (52ND): In East Windsor, it did pass in the town meeting?

MICHELE MURDICK: Yes.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, we've had committee votes in Stafford, and -- or town meetings, and then we petitioned on short notice to have a referendum vote as citizens. We needed x amount of signatures, so there was still -- I would assume -- that East

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Windsor would have had that same opportunity. Was that correct?

MICHELE MURDICK: Yes, but we -- our voices were not heard. We have petitioned.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I understand that. I'm trying to --

MICHELE MURDICK: They were not acceptive.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I'm just trying to narrow this down.

MICHELE MURDICK: The selectmen did not accept them.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I don't want a big explanation. I just want very just succinct answers if I could?

MICHELE MURDICK: Sure.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, then you mentioned church leadership. You know, I'm catholic. I attend St. Edwards church in Stafford. I was never asked by the clergy or the bishops or anything about how I felt about sports wagering, so would it be fair to say that the church -- the different church groups you have coming together that it's the leadership that's pushing this, that they didn't put that out to a vote of the people that are involved in their church?

MICHELE MURDICK: No, in the -- I work for the United Church of Christ. The way it happens is we vote. We have annual meetings every year and delegates from our churches come to these meetings and they vote -- we vote on the issues that we would like our church body to work on, and as a legislative advocate, it's my responsibility to carry -- they're called resolutions -- to carry out

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the resolutions that are passed at our annual meetings. We have five resolutions opposing casino expansion. We have resolutions, you know, increasing the minimum wage and paid family leave and gun safety and I could go on and on. One of these issues that we support is -- and it's the people from the pews who came to these meetings and voted.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay, so again, it's not the entire church that voted because I know I wasn't --

MICHELE MURDICK: Well, that would be 67,000 people.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, I understand that, but I bet you some of those 67,000 people would be okay with sports wagering is what I'm saying.

MICHELE MURDICK: I -- I would probably agree with you.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, of that million people that are represented in all those churches, there may be some that aren't opposed to that, so that's kind of -- [Crosstalk].

MICHELE MURDICK: I agree with you, Representative Vail. There probably are some in that million, absolutely.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, again, my line of questioning may seem like I'm going -- I'm just trying to get facts so I can make good decisions.

MICHELE MURDICK: Sure. Absolutely.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I put out a poll locally, and more people favored it than didn't favor it, but the ones that are against it are more passionately against it, which is something you take into

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consideration as well, but thank you for your testimony.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Representative. Any other questions? Michele, thank you.

MICHELE MURDICK: Thank you so much.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Next up, Brenda Bergeron.

BRENDA BERGERON: Thank you very much.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you. Good afternoon.

BRENDA BERGERON: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. I am Brenda Bergeron from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection -- DESPP commonly known. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 7291, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL SECURITY. The department appreciates the intention behind this bill and would like to highlight the work currently undertaken by DESPP and the Department of Education with regard to the school security and safety plan standards. Section one of the bill amends Connecticut General Statute Section 10-222n to require DESPP in consultation with the Department of Education to evaluate and update the school's security and safety plan standards starting January 1, 2020 and every three years thereafter. The section also requires the Department of Education to distribute the standards to all public schools within the state. Currently, under the current legislation, section 10-222n(b) requires DESPP already to submit the school safety and security plan standards to the Public Safety and Education Committees of the

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General Assembly each year by January 1, and also to provide any recommendations for legislation regarding such standards. In order to implement the statute, DESPP through the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security or DEMHS conducts an evaluation of the plan standards each year. DEMHS convenes a school security working group made up of state and local partners and subject matter experts. The group initially drafted the plan standards as well as plan templates that could be used by schools to meet the standards. Each year, the group reviews the standards and plan templates and recommends adjustments, which are made and then submitted to the legislature. The updated standards and plan templates are also sent by the Department of Education to school systems throughout the state.

Section 2 of House Bill 7291 is a new provision that would require DESPP to evaluate and seek methods to simplify the documentation required from local and regional boards of education to comply with the reporting requirements of section 10-244m and 10-222n(a)(6). This new section would require DESPP to report -- to submit a report by January 1, 2020 to the Public Safety and Security Committee identifying the essential components and documentation required for such reports and indicating how the department will simplify the required documentation. The new requirements must be implemented by July 1, 2020. We believe we have already complied with the intent of this proposed legislation. Section 10-222n(a)(6) is the statutory requirement that local and regional boards of education annually submit reports to DESPP regarding fire drills and crisis response drills. The section just before that in the statute 10-222n(a)(5) requires that local law enforcement and

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other local public officials evaluate, score, and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills. DESPP/DEMHS has combined these two requirements into a one easy-to-use form, which is literally this. This is the form with instructions and then the form itself. The form is part of the school security and safety plan packet that is provided to towns and school districts each year. This year DEMHS also put out a FAQ to help the local public officials address the requirement that they evaluate the drills.

Our recommendation, which was sent to all towns and school districts, recognizes that "while it is of course impossible for every official to attend every drill at every school, it is a best practice to have the town public safety team -- fire, police, emergency management, EMS, etc. attend at least one drill per year as a team. That way team members can share observations and ideas with each other. Then each individual public safety official can attend a representative sampling of the other drills in the year." DEMHS has also simplified the process by interpreting the statutory requirement to score the drill as a more general requirement to provide an assessment. With regard to simplifying the documentation required under 10-222(m) that section requires each local and regional board of education to develop and implement a school security and safety plan for each school in the district. The plan must meet the school's security and safety plan standards released by DESPP, which are largely established by statute and have been developed by that working group of state and local subject matter experts including local school, police, fire, and emergency management officials. DESPP/DEMHS has

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developed plan templates to assist school systems in complying with that requirement, but there's no requirement that school systems use those templates. They just have to meet the standards and follow the format. They are meant -- those templates are meant -- [Bell] -- to assist communities in meeting their statutory obligations and our DESPP regional offices provide technical assistance as needed. Each year, the school security planning packet also contains an email address where questions can be sent and answers are promptly given.

Just to briefly summarize, section 2 of the bill also requires DESPP to evaluate methods to simplify the documentation required in the school security grant program -- the competitive grant program. I will tell you that we have received over 2400 schools have applied. Over 1140 schools have received school security grant through our program, and the -- the requirements are statutory or also are audit requirements, so the system seems to be working. The last section requires DESPP to develop criteria to -- to identified qualified school security consultants operating in Connecticut and then maintain a registry of these qualified consultants. Currently, statute requires us to maintain that registry of school security consultants but does not require the development of criteria. [Bell]. This requirement would potentially increase the state's liability regarding the work of the consultants and would require additional resources. So, thank you very much for your time, and I'm -- I'm glad to answer any questions that you may have.

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REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Brenda, for being here today, and I want to thank you for being a part of the process, and when we set out and created the school safety and security working group back in April 2018, we set out to answer the question are we doing everything we can to keep our children as safe at school as possible, and I want to thank you and your team at DESPP for providing that. It's been quite a journey. It's been a very long learning experience, and as you know, we've gone back and forth. We've heard from superintendents and teachers and police chiefs, etc. down the line, and while I appreciate your testimony, just a few questions for you because I think that possibly some of the problems that we're having is a lack of communication between districts and DESPP, and again, I want to practice this by saying we know it comes down to funding, and if you don't have the funds available to staff certain departments or staff them adequately, then of course services will have to be reduced, and we get that. what we wanted to do is send a message to try to improve the process. Obviously, the system is not perfect. It probably will never be perfect, but we want to improve the process, and we wanted to come up with ideas, notions, and begin the dialogue back and forth to see what we could do to improve the process. So, with that being said, on the third part of the bill, it talks about requiring the department and the school's safety infrastructure council to report on implanted -- I'm sorry -- implement and simplify documents. So, we heard from -- [Coughing] -- excuse me -- many school officials

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that yes they have applied for grants, yes they've gone through the process, but that the process was very tedious and is very difficult, so we thought let's start a dialogue on trying to make the process a little simpler. We understand it's complex things. These are facilities. These are schools. This isn't -- this can't be a one-page document that -- to submit and say we want money to do this. We understand there's architectural drawings involved, but we just thought we would start the dialogue on what we could do to make the process a little simpler. So, in your experience in working in the department, do you think that there's any room for improvement there?

BRENDA BERGERON: Well, there's always room for improvement. The -- the requirements of the grant program were initially established in Public Act 13-3, and they're pretty stringent. The -- the school's part is required to have the plan in place, and one of the things we've done to make it easier for them 'cause many -- what we see is generally school systems are really trying hard to put the plan in place and to make sure that they're making their kids as safe as possible, but it's difficult sometimes to get that first plan in place. Once it's in place, then you're -- then you're better off, and so what we've done is we've said, look, we will assist you in putting your plan together. We will assist you in the grant documentation, and we will start to provide you with the reimbursements. We will withhold the final reimbursement until you have your plan in place, so we have a very flexible system. We -- our goal -- our number one goal is to make sure people are as safe as possible, so we're not gonna withhold, even though, you know, we're

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technically required under the statute to withhold the funding until they have a plan in place, we do work with them on that. We also have just like we have that email address for if you have a question on the standards we have the same thing on the grant side, so our grant people work with all of the schools that have applied, and make sure that they have what documentation is required. I don't think we go to the level of architectural drawings. There's also the construction services side of the Department of Administrative Services, which also has school construction grant programs. That may be where some of the more complexities are, but we do have -- there are specific things that Public Act 13-3 said that school systems could get and other things that they could not, and so we work very closely with the schools themselves to make sure that the documentation is in place, and Public Act 13-3 sets the parameters for prioritizing schools, so we also work with them as well on that.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Sure, and I agree with a lot of your points, especially on 13-3, which is obviously a state law, which can be amended. I know it's a -- it's a bill that was passed after the Sandy Hook tragedy, but it's something that if there are points in there that can be looked back six years later and say, we can do it a little bit better or a little bit different, I think that's something that this committee would be willing to look at. I'm not saying that we need to eliminate or modify everything [Clearing throat], but if there are some areas that in -- in practical application would work, I'm sure I'll be in contact with your office, but --

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BRENDA BERGERON: And, I do have a suggestion on that. There's within 13-3, which is codified in 10-292r(b). It's an odd situation. There's an asterisk that says look at basically 13-3. I think that the assessment -- the school assessment that's suggested in that original legislation we now have probably a better assessment checklist, if you will, that's right in the plan template, so that's an example where they're being required to use something that might be a little bit obsolete, and that's something we could certainly work with you on.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, in section 4 of the proposal, and this is something we heard from a lot of people, and I've heard anecdotally as well -- that schools have approached the state asking for, you know, we want to hire a school consultant because realizing that the state was strapped for money, didn't have the funding available to provide school security consultants to every school district in the state of Connecticut. In a perfect world, we would because, like you said, our mission is to keep people safe. With that being said, they would reach out and say, we want to hire a security consultant to do this, and a lot of times they were told, you know, just, you know, look it up, figure it out, we don't have any list you can use. I understand your point about the liability, and I'd be more than happy to include some sort of as language in the bill that would provide for a limited liability of some kind. That's really a question for our attorneys, but having the consultants on a list that you could have school districts reach out to would be a tremendous assistance in help so that they wouldn't have to go and do research and look at

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websites and look at reviews and call other agencies. It would be just -- in my vision of it -- would be a list of people that could be called, emailed, contacted and a school district knows that they've been vetted in some ways, that they're not just, you know, Joe Smith, working out of his basement that will help you fix your school up. It's gonna be someone who has done this before, who has experience, who is tried and true and kind of has that -- that ability, so that was our intention with number 4. Do you believe that within your available department right now with an available appropriations. That's something that could be done, and I'm not saying in a month or two, but that's something that over a period of time could be accomplished?

BRENDA BERGERON: There's two things I would say to that but first as a general comment about the assessments, we have a -- there's a checklist within the template that -- that gives schools a fairly simple checklist to follow on an assessment. At DESPP, we have a number of different units that will provide an assessment, and we're also working on an assessment curriculum so that schools will be able to do it themselves, so that's sort of a separate issue, but we are making a lot of progress on helping all schools have a resource available to them that comes from the state. With regard to the -- the contractors themselves, a couple of concerns, and I am a lawyer, so I think that's probably where the liability language came in to a certain extent, but I also think that there is the best answer that a school system can get on a good consultant is to talk to other school systems in Connecticut that have used that person, so what we could do maybe is

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set up some kind of a system where if a school has hired them they could have a rating system that we could put together that would be available because the concern I have is that we're looking at it top down as the state, and these are school systems that are actually dealing with a consultant and would be able to -- you know, we could maybe help set up what the rating system would be so that people could look online for that, so yes, I guess there's room for something we could do.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you very much for taking the time today to be here.

BRENDA BERGERON: You're welcome.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): I look forward to working with your office in the future on this important matter, so thank you.

BRENDA BERGERON: Thank you.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you very much.

BRENDA BERGERON: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Up next is Diane Goode. Thanks. If you could just hit the mic button? Yeah, there you go. Hit it again. There we go. Thank you.

DIANA GOODE: Representative Verrengia and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on these bills. My name is Diana Goode. I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling. On behalf of the council and the approximately 35,000 Connecticut

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adults identified as meeting the clinical criteria for problem gambling disorder as well as the additional 287,000 who are at risk of developing a problem in their lifetime, I would like to submit this testimony for the record. So, we submitted written testimony, so I'm just going to hit the highlights in three minutes or less.

SB-1014, FUNDING FOR COMPULSIVE GAMBLING TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION. We respectfully recommend that equivalent of one to three percent of revenue from expanded legalized gambling including sports bet, online wagering, casino expansion to be dedicated to problem gambling services. This is new revenue, so there's not reason not to dedicate a small portion of it to protect our citizens. To maximize effective treatment and prevention, the funds should be dedicated to the Chronic Gamblers' Treatment Fund. This is an account that makes available state -- funding for state agencies and private nonprofit. These monies will go to expanding statewide coverage of treatment programs, prevention programs to provide school-based education and awareness activities, expanded cultural relevant outreach and community awareness activities to vulnerable special populations, operation of a statewide problem gambling helpline and marketing for that helpline. Criminal justice integration and awareness programming, coordination of advanced level training for service professionals.

So, SB-1015, ONLINE LOTTERY and SB-7331, SPORTS WAGERING. As stated, when I was here two weeks ago, we believe that expansion of legalized gambling in Connecticut will likely increase gambling participation and problems unless safeguards are

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established to minimize harm. These safeguards include ensuring that any expansion includes dedicated funds to prevent and treat gambling addiction, requiring all betting operators to implement responsible gaming programs, assigning a regulatory agency to enforce the regulations that are enacted, conducting surveys of the prevalence of gambling addiction, establishing a consistent minimum age for sports gambling and related fantasy games.

HB-7290, STUDIES OF THE AFFECT OF LEGALIZED GAMBLING; 7330, A STUDY OF ONLINE GAMBLING. It is our strong recommendation that the state, through a neutral organization or institute of higher education, conduct surveys of the prevalence of gambling addiction prior to expansion and at regular periods thereafter to monitor the impacts and have data that will support evidence-based mitigation efforts. As pertains to recommendations regarding the licensing of online gambling providers as outlined in House Bill 7330, such operators should be required to have responsible gaming programs, which should be specified in the regulations. Compliance with these responsible gambling regulations should be a condition of licensure and renewal.

HB-7334, ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION ON GAMING. We believe that the designation of an independent regulatory agency with a specific mandate to minimize gambling related harm is imperative to protect consumers and ensure responsible gaming provisions. This agency should be given full staffing and resources needed to fulfil its responsibilities. While the Connecticut council

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does not advocate for or against gambling, we feel that it is necessary to require reasonable regulations that will protect individuals from addiction issues that are highly likely to be unintended consequences of expanded legalized gambling. We're happy to work with any stakeholders to further strengthen the safety net to ensure the health and well being of our residents going forward. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Mr. Chair, good afternoon. So, again, and you just said it. You -- you take no position. You just want to make sure that there is money dedicated to programs that will help people with problem gambling, and you brought up an act establishing a commissioner on gaming, but do you think that that's the proper place to oversee what you had in mind or do you think it should be -- should we create this new agency? Because you didn't say whether you supported that or didn't. do you think that's the proper place to -- to solve some of your concerns?

DIANA GOODE: We do. We think using Massachusetts as a model is what we'd really like to go for. They've got a dedicated gaming commission there. They work strongly with their Massachusetts council on compulsive gambling.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. So, you support House Bill 7334?

DIANA GOODE: Well, we try to remain neutral, but [Laughing] -- yes.

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REP. VAIL (52ND): You try -- if it were to meet the criteria that you -- that you mentioned earlier, then -- then you think it would be a good thing?

DIANA GOODE: Yes. Thank you.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Anyone else? I'm seeing -- I'm sorry. Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. I think it's afternoon. Yes. Thank you for your testimony. I just had some basic questions. 1014 calls for 25 percent of any revenue that's seen by the state to go for problem gambling services; is that -- that's how you read the bill?

DIANA GOODE: Yes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, do you think that's enough or would you -- are you -- has that been the pattern, is that sufficient, are the budgets you know burgeoning, you know should it be 50 percent? I just -- you know, what is your position with regard to the 25 percent?

DIANA GOODE: We think 25 percent is reasonable.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And, you had mentioned that somebody should be setting minimum ages for online gambling, and I didn't hear some sort of recommendation. What would you recommend?

DIANA GOODE: What we're recommending is a consistent age. Right now, it's kind of all over the board. You can go to a casino and gamble at 21. You can buy lottery tickets at 18. We would really like a consistent age. We would hope that it would be 21, but we think the age should be consistent.

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. Why 21?

DIANA GOODE: We think that that kind of takes it a little bit further out of colleges where we think there's going to be a huge issue with sports wagering.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. We -- we hear, especially with the marijuana argument, that the developmental brain and addiction actually is more prevalent with individuals 24 and higher --

DIANA GOODE: Twenty-four and younger?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Twenty-four and younger, yes. You know, is there any thought/talk about 24 being the age or have we already opened up the gate 21, and we can't pull it back?

DIANA GOODE: I think we've opened up the gate at 21 and can't pull it back.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. The -- the 7334, the commission on gaming, have you had an opportunity to look at that language?

DIANA GOODE: Yes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): I know it's a long -- it's about 101 pages long.

DIANA GOODE: Yeah. No. So, I didn't read all 101 pages, but my wonderful co-worker, Art, did.
[Laughing].

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. So, I don't know if you could perhaps answer my questions or you know, if the chairman -- with the chairman's indulgence, you know, defer to Art, but you know, I was looking particularly to lines 7 -- well, it's line 2293. It

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appears that functions of the Department of Consumer Protection and the commissioner that are currently in law would be given to this commission and even more. Am I fair to say that?

DIANA GOODE: Correct.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And, it appears looking at line 2293 it said that the commission would have the power to delegate to three or more directors powers and duties as it deems proper. Do you know what that means?

DIANA GOODE: No.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And -- and currently, the legislature has power through the Commerce Committee at the very least over the commissioner of Department of Consumer Protection. Do you know if the legislature would have any powers over this different commission body to that same extent or would it be a quasi stand alone?

DIANA GOODE: Again, I don't know.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. There's also changes in here with regard to the Lottery. Did you have an opportunity to look at those?

DIANA GOODE: Changes in that same bill with respect to the Lottery?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): In the same bill, yes. Starting on --

DIANA GOODE: Oh, yes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Page 79. And, do you know what those mean?

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DIANA GOODE: Changing the structure of the Lottery, are you referring to getting rid of the Board of Directors of the Lottery and having the Lottery be housed under the Gaming Commission?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): There's stuff that seems to -- to say that. Is that how you interpret this language?

DIANA GOODE: That's how I interpreted that.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And, there's also, particularly at line -- it's line 2506 that says that the -- this new language would go into effect July 1, 2019, and then it goes on in line 2508, commencing July 1, 2011 and annually thereafter until July 1, 2019, which is the change, so the effective date is the same date of the termination date.

DIANA GOODE: [Laughing].

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You have no idea what that -- and I just -- I'm not -- I'm just trying to figure out what's going on here, so?

DIANA GOODE: Right.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you very much for your testimony.

DIANA GOODE: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Up next is Susan Hamilton, followed by Chief Riddick. And, just a quick announcement. I forgot to say it from the onset of

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the meeting. My good friend, Senator Bradley is not here today because he is home ill, but he assured me that he'd be watching the show -- this meeting from -- from his house. [Laughing] [Laughter]. All right. So, I'll give him a little shout out, but I hope he feels better and back here soon. Okay.

SUSAN HAMILTON: I have big shoes to fill. Now, I have to put on a show apparently. So, good afternoon, Representative Verrengia and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you this afternoon. My name is Susan Hamilton, and I am Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection with the public defender's office, and we are here to offer testimony in opposition to Bill number 7332, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE WELFARE OF REPEAT JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND THEIR VICTIMS. As currently written, this bill would unnecessarily expand the types of cases involving children that are currently automatically transferred from the juvenile to the adult court. More specifically, again, as currently drafted, the language in the bill would require the court in any case involving a child who has had two prior delinquency adjudications and a pending motor vehicle larceny charge to automatically be transferred to the adult court from the juvenile court without the benefit of a hearing. This change in our opinion is unnecessary and actually counterproductive to both the goals of the juvenile justice system, which include the goal of both accountability, best interest, and public safety. Under existing law, these larceny cases are already eligible for discretionary transfer to the adult court following a transfer hearing in the juvenile

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court. The court has the discretion under existing law to transfer these cases to the adult court if the best interest of the child and the public will not be served by maintaining the case in the juvenile court. In making a determination, the court's already required to consider the prior criminal behavior of the young person, the seriousness of the pending offense, any evidence that the child has an intellectual disability or mental illness, and the availability of services in the juvenile court that can best serve the needs of the youth. This bill as currently drafted will completely eliminate the course of discretion right now to consider any of those factors and to hold a hearing prior to transfer. Along with making the specific larceny charged automatically transferrable to the adult court, this bill also changes the language that in existing discretionary transfer hearings the court needs to consider prior to transferring the case, and by doing so, it -- it really negates the court's ability to consider or to use the best interest of the child as a criteria for transfer. The language in the bill does allow in the discretionary transfer having the court to consider the best interest of the child, but it can transfer the case based solely on the interest of the public, and we think the existing language in the discretionary transfer hearing statute strikes the proper balance and allows the court and requires the court, frankly, to consider both of those things.

Connecticut has worked hard, as many of you are aware, for many years to limit the number of youth being transferred to the adult court in part because it is an ineffective tool for rehabilitation and

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does not promote the goal of public safety. Most youth who are transferred to the adult court receive little or no jail time. One study of the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management show that 80 percent of transferred youth received a sentence of probation. These youth return to their communities saddled with a criminal record and without the beneficial age-appropriate treatment and services that would be made available to that person under a juvenile sentence. Furthermore, studies show that individuals who were transferred and sentenced in adult court recidivate at a higher rate and graduate to more serious crimes.

While a recent study showed that there is some deterrent effect to serving violent offenders in the adult court -- violent juvenile offenders in the adult court, that -- that evidence does not support transferring some of the lesser class B felonies and class C and D felonies to the adult court. The current process for transferring youth to the adult court we believe strikes that proper balance. It does allow the court to consider the factors that I mentioned, and many of the young folks who are involved in the types of cases that this bill is aimed at actually do receive currently under existing law a discretionary transfer hearing, and their cases are in fact being transferred at a higher rate to the adult court system. Automatic transfer and as this committee I'm sure is aware, you know, many changes have been made over the last several years in the area of juvenile justice, and the change that carved out class B felonies from the automatic transfer language is relatively new, and it was done intentionally to ensure that really the violent crimes and the more serious repeat offenders

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are in fact eligible for transfer and in my cases, automatically transferred to the adult court. There's no reason to make at this point automatic transfer of juvenile cases to the adult court easier. This decision requires an assessment of the child [Bell], the circumstances -- the circumstances of the case, and should continue to be made by the court when it's given an opportunity to consider the circumstances not only of public safety, not only of the history of the youth, but the other services that are available in the juvenile court to hopefully reduce recidivism. We urge the committee to reject this proposal, and I'd be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Thank you. Now, the public defenders have showed up before to support things like this, and I ask for statistics, but so far, I haven't been given any, so I'm going to see if you can give me some. One of the things you talked about was recidivism, and you said that juveniles that are transferred from the juvenile court to the adult court have a higher recidivism rate. Can you give me those numbers?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I can certainly get the data for you in terms of the total number of youth over the past several years that were transferred to the adult court that came back with a repeat offense and a repeat conviction.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): So, you don't have them with you?

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SUSAN HAMILTON: Not with me, but I'm certainly happy to provide that.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Now, being in law enforcement for as long as I have and in the room we have some law enforcement --

SUSAN HAMILTON: I didn't notice that there were any today. [Laughing].

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Yeah. The -- one of the things -- I guess one of the questions I have is how often does the juvenile court refer a case to the adult court?

SUSAN HAMILTON: There actually have been -- there's been an increase over the last year in terms of the number of cases that have been transferred from the juvenile court to the adult court since the language was changed in the statute, so I don't know if I have the numbers with me, but there has been a steady increase in the number of cases transferred to the adult court.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): You don't have those numbers?

SUSAN HAMILTON: But, I can certainly provide them to the committee.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay.

SUSAN HAMILTON: The discretionary transfer hearing process last session, as you may recall, a similar bill was proposed --

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): I wasn't here last session.

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SUSAN HAMILTON: Oh, well, the committee may be -- may be aware that there was data provided at that point that there had not been actually requests by probation or by the prosecutor's office who transfer cases. We've seen an increase over the last year in those requests, and then therefore an increase in the number of cases actually transferred to the adult court.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): And -- and how many felonies does it take before the juvenile gets referred, do you know?

SUSAN HAMILTON: The court has discretion. You can do it on the first felony. If it's a class A felony, it goes automatically.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Or they could -- right. Or they could not do it for the first 20?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I think that I'd be hard pressed to say that you'd have a case with that many felony convictions if the state were to seek transfer, but the discretions left with the court to hear the evidence under the existing framework.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. And, you said they want a balance between the public and the offender. When somebody drives a car and they drive at high rates of speed, do you consider that a weapon?

SUSAN HAMILTON: That's a dangerous -- that's a dangerous situation, yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. And, would you consider -- you know, an inexperienced -- you like to refer to them as juveniles -- driving down the road at 100 miles an hour, is that a weapon or is it reckless driving?

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SUSAN HAMILTON: Well, I don't know what the charge would be for that. I can say that that variable would be considered a safety risk when the court is looking at that underlying charge in that incident, so I'm certainly not here to say that some of the cases that the committee is concerned about are not serious, and --

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Well, this is the case. This is the case we're talking about, and this is as we've heard from Waterbury delegation and the Waterbury Chief of Police, it's a small number. In Waterbury, it's six. That's a big city. We're talking about six that repeatedly steal cars, repeatedly reckless manner, and -- and I forgot the exact numbers, but I think he said they had 800 stolen and they arrested 100 and something, so obviously, we have a large number not, and I've been in a pursuit. As a police officer, I've been in a pursuit a couple of times, and -- and it's dangerous. It's dangerous for everybody around. You do it in limited circumstances. I got into a pursuit with one juvenile. He flipped the Toyota Supra up into the woods. Thankfully, he wasn't killed, but I had broken that pursuit off long before because I saw how dangerous it was, and the other ones were all, you know, armed felons that, you know, create -- they were dangerous in and of themselves, but these are people that we're chasing, and you know, as I said to the last person, at what point do we say enough is enough as a community? Because Waterbury has said it. They said it -- and we have some chiefs sitting behind you, and I'll bet you they're sitting there saying the same thing -- enough is enough; yet, we don't put -- you know, when we're balancing this -- this one issue, we're

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putting public safety and the juvenile who's a repeat offender -- I'm sorry but public safety's gotta outweigh that, and you know what? The juvenile court in -- in my experience -- those that go to the juvenile court don't face a penalty. So, you talk about recidivism and I can talk about recidivism all you want because that's what I did my master's thesis on, and it's horrible in Connecticut. I mean it's horrible and the main reason is because we don't convict people. We let them go over and over again, and that's the adult court. And, then when you talk about the juvenile court, it's even worse. So, you know what, if the system isn't working, we've got to find a way to fix it. That's our job here.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Right.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Our job here as a legislator is -- is to protect the citizens of this state, and -- and all of us in every one our communities and everybody sitting here we see these stolen cars all the time, and -- and if the juvenile court can't handle it, we've gotta send it somewhere where they can handle it.

SUSAN HAMILTON: And, I -- and, Senator, I don't disagree with anything that you've said in the context of we need to figure out what is the best way to address some of these issues that we're seeing, and what -- what I'm here to say is that the existing proposal before this court does not address the public safety concern in the way that I think you would like it to, so what we're saying is --

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Keeping the public safe?

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SUSAN HAMILTON: No. I'm saying right now the bill as -- as drafted just says automatically without a consideration of all of the variables and the interventions that are available in the juvenile court that it will automatically go the adult court, and then I think just -- if you let me finish for one moment -- that there's an assumption that the transfer then to the adult court is going to then promote the goal of public safety, so I -- I -- I don't agree with that position. I think that that is -- there may be some instances where that may be the case, but there are more often than not occasions where the young person is going to be and the public will be better protected if the case remains in the juvenile court. So, this committee is probably aware there were -- there was a change in jurisdiction from DCF to CSSD that took us back July 1, of last year, the juvenile training school closed, CSSD has you know developed an infrastructure and a service rate including secure residential placements for kids that -- that really just were recently brought on line at the end of this past year in light of that jurisdictional change. So, the system is also in a state of somewhat fluxed because of the -- the closure of CJTS and then the lack of available programming, particularly secure placement settings if that's what you're suggesting would be the -- the solution to the public safety concern. I'm not sure you are saying that, but -- but there is now on line the both secure -- staff-secure and community-based services in juvenile court that really had not been available over the course of the last year in light of the jurisdictional change.

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SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. Well, we -- we obviously know that the courts -- the juvenile courts are all underfunded completely. I mean they're underfunded, and -- but the point is -- is that you know every since the 1990s when I was a policeman and crack cocaine rolled into the state, you know. The gangs used the juveniles. They use them to do the serious crimes, and those juveniles when you're driving them to juvenile detention will tell you, you know nothings gonna happen. You know I'm gonna be out probably within an hour or so, and they're right. They're out in an hour of so. In fact, not only are they out, they're back on the corner selling the drugs again or they're back stealing another car. That's a problem when we're not monitoring these repeat offenders, and you know what, public safety has to be number one on this one. We're not talking about the kid who just got arrested one time or maybe even two. We're talking above that number when -- when they're over and over again. Recidivism -- this is lining kids up for horrible recidivism --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Because I've gotten away with it every single point, and then one of the other points you said is that this is going to give that juvenile a record by going to the adult court. All right, when that juvenile turns 18, does that juvenile have a juvenile record anymore?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): It doesn't erase it?

SUSAN HAMILTON: It can be erased after a certain period of time.

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SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Can be erased? Can be erased?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Can be erased?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah, yeah.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): And -- and when they go to adult court, are they offered other programs?

SUSAN HAMILTON: There are other programs.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): That will result in nothing on their record?

SUSAN HAMILTON: There may be other programs made available.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Right. [Crosstalk]. There is.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): There is.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): And, there always has been.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yep, so -- and --

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): So, the point being made is that when you throw the term around that they're going to automatically end up with a criminal record, it's not true because the juvenile records are sealed. Even if they're in adult court, it -- it -- it still goes through the same process, so I understand where you're coming from, but you know, on -- on cases when you have a 3 to 10,000-pound

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weapon being used driving down our roads that can cause considerable harm to those walking, to those driving, you know if you have a repeat offender who does it over and over and over again, it's time to stop it, and this is the best way to do it, I think.

SUSAN HAMILTON: I appreciate your comments, Senator.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Good afternoon.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you for your testimony. Just a scenario for you. I had a client a few years ago who was 16, had a girlfriend, and had access to firearms, went to the shooting range and put a picture of -- he had broken up with the girl -- put a picture of the girlfriend on a target and took shots, and then took a picture of it, and one of his friends showed it to a parent, and got to the police, and my client 16 years old was arrested. I think it was 53a-62 threatening. That sort of scenario, if this bill were to pass, would that case go directly to the -- to the regular superior court?

SUSAN HAMILTON: The only -- the only change that this bill is currently proposing is an automatic transfer for a youth who has a pending larceny charge involving a motor vehicle.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay.

SUSAN HAMILTON: And, two prior felony convictions.

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay.

SUSAN HAMILTON: So, it wouldn't address the issue that you're talking about. Again, back in 2015, class -- all class A felonies are automatically transferrable, and several class B felonies including motor vehicle larcenies were carved out of the automatic transfer language.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay, so you have to --

SUSAN HAMILTON: So, it wouldn't address this particular scenario.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Sure. So, you have to reach a pretty high bar here for the automatic transfer, I guess. Are there statistics that show whether or not when somebody -- a youth is arrested it's the first occasion that they committed that crime? Does that statistic -- because in my experience people don't get arrested the first time.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Right, so there -- there are diversionary programs that are available for folks depending on the severity of the charge, so there might have been a diversion or a prior intervention with the Juvenile Review Board, or --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): No, what I'm saying is many times a youth is not arrested the first time they steal a car. It's the third or fourth time.

SUSAN HAMILTON: I think it depends on the case to be honest with you.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Are there stats to that affect?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I wouldn't know the number -- we would have the number of arrests of cases that --

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that were presented to the juvenile court. I wouldn't have the data on how many of those -- but you can probably look to get it -- how many of those did not devise to an arrest. We would only know the ones that actually came to the juvenile court where an arrest was -- where an arrest was made.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, as part of an intake or something like that, questions are not asked?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Probation -- probably probation would have that information.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah, that --

SUSAN HAMILTON: If there had been prior interventions that did not devise to an arrest.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah, there's a lot more victims out there than, you know, of the actual arrest. Why not as a sort of middle-of-the-road situation that, you know, the Senator asked you about 20 different felonies keeping on in juvenile court, what about just, you know, one shot, done? And, after that anything else automatically goes. What would be wrong with that?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Well, I -- I think what we have to be cognizant of is what is the goal that we're trying to accomplish? I think there's sometimes a misperception that by transferring a case to the adult court, public safety will be enhanced and accountability will be increased, and recidivism will go down. I think we really collectively have to be looking at what are we trying to accomplish and what's the best way to do it, so my position would be that, you know, a first conviction -- depending on the nature of the chart. Again, all serious

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crimes right now, class A felonies at least at a minimum are automatically going to the adult court anyway. We don't have great outcome data on the adult system for those kids who are automatically transferred. I think that would be helpful to know how well or not are those kids doing when the case does go to the adult court, but the class B felonies that were carved out in 2015 do allow the court to consider a whole host of things that I mentioned, so I wouldn't support the concept of, you know, if it's this charge and it's the first conviction it should automatically go. A lot of thought went into coming up with what -- what crimes should be discretionary and what crimes should be automatic, and I -- and we're obviously still willing to be part of that conversation. We think it's an important conversation to be had, but I -- I think the existing language strikes the right balance that allows the court to transfer these cases, and I the court is in fact transferring these to the adult court, so I -- I, you know, I think again there may be a misperception there's no ability to get these cases to the adult court under the existing statutory framework, and many of them are going now as we -- as we speak.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): No, I --

SUSAN HAMILTON: So, yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): I totally understand that. I just, you know, you had mentioned what is the purpose of that court process, and you know, in my opinion, it's to give remedy to victims of crime. You know, but for the bad act of a human being, and but for those things happening there would be no need for that court to exist, so you know, I'll tell

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you that in my district there is an epidemic of youths breaking into and stealing cars, and I'll tell you that every night I wake up in the middle of the night and I check, you know, my garages just about every night. It's very disconcerting. The balancing test for the discretionary transfer is the best interest of the child versus the benefit of the public.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Well, the existing language is both. Both need to be -- are required to be considered, yes. Both of them.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah. So, is it a balancing -- I mean how does that -- how does that actually work? Because it's discretionary, so is it --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Well -- yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): That the best interest of the child outweigh the public interests or they're both supposed to be considered --

SUSAN HAMILTON: They're -- they're equally -- they're both supposed to be considered with equal weight, so the language in the existing statute says the court shall -- needs to consider the best interest of the child and the public safety and whether or not that can be promoted by maintaining the case in the juvenile court, and if not, then the case will go to the adult court.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. So, can you give me an example where it would be in the best interest of the child to transfer to the family court -- to the regular superior court?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I think when the court looks at the underlying criminal factors and history in the case,

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the court may come up with a determination that the services in the juvenile court are not going to be sufficient to address that young person's needs perhaps in the juvenile court, so for example, I do think that as I mentioned, the system struggled with being able to provide secure residential programming for some of the youth that were in the deeper and perhaps had engaged in a -- a pattern of behavior. There might have been situations during the closure of CJHS where the state did not have the capacity to provide an interim secure placement. That might have been an instance where the court might have concluded that it would be in the interest of both public safety and the child to transfer the case to the adult court.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): In the process with the crimes that we're talking about at that level -- I know with DUIs there's a victim's impact panel that the perpetrator many times has to sit and listen to victims. Is there a similar process with these sorts of crimes?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yes, in the juvenile court, the victim --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): No.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Oh.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Not -- in the regular superior court 'cause, you know, the juvenile court is so sealed I mean an aspect of the juvenile court -- and we're going to get to that in a moment -- doesn't allow for the -- the openness of the process. I'm talking the regular superior court, you have a juvenile; is there a process similar to the DUI process where that child has to sit down and

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listen to victims of having waking up in the morning and their car being gone or their car being broken into and that kind of stuff, is there a process for that?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And, what is that -- what is that program called?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I don't know if it has an actual name to it, but -- and again, I think it is somewhat similar to what happens in the juvenile court, and I know you're drawing distinctly between the two, but the victim has the opportunity to participate and attend the hearing, and -- and -- and just, you know, address the court, and --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): No, this is --

SUSAN HAMILTON: And -- and the defendant.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah, this is something different.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, in a DUI, there's a panel of individuals who have let's say lost a family member because a drunk driver killed -- you know, has it their car or something like that. It's a -- it's a group of like five to ten people --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Oh, okay.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Who have been impacted --

SUSAN HAMILTON: I see what you're saying.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): By these sorts of crimes, and the perpetrator sits down and listens to their

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stories and you know, perhaps learns that there are victims of these crimes. Is there a process similar for this?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I believe that there is, yes, and I can -- we can -- I can clarify that for you because --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay, 'cause I have never --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Like a victim impact panel for this type of situation?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): For --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Yeah, so that children that are criminals or at least committing crimes learn that there are actual victims because I -- I mean I don't do a lot of criminal defense work, but when I'm there, I've never heard anybody sent to --

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah, yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): A panel like that.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Right.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, I guess the one benefit of the juvenile court is the -- the lack of embarrassment for the -- the youth who has committed these serious, serious crimes. It's not an open court. Everything's sealed. You know, it's like one case at a time. I think that's an aspect of going through the process that's really invaluable. I mean I'll tell you that I got busted for drunk

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driving in 1986, and you know, my going through that process changed me a little bit.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Sure.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, insulating when we still can perhaps change somebody's life -- insulating them from the full effect of the process, I don't know is in our society's best interest. So, I appreciate your testimony, and thank you for your answers.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Thank you.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions have been asked and answered, thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Vail, followed by Representative Morin.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I feel like -- thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel like I should get my own law degree now.

SUSAN HAMILTON: [Laughing].

REP. VAIL (52ND): [Laughing] I'm sorry. I have some -- so obviously you were here for the earlier testimony with the Waterbury -- do you recognize that there is a problem?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Of course -- of course.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, -- and you're in opposition to this bill, and am I to understand that

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you think that the current system is working just the way it is?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I think that the -- let me say this. We -- we share the concern that has been raised about -- about what appear to be upticks in -- in motor vehicle theft among juveniles. We have data that it shows that it's been -- it's been trending upward, and then over the last quarter trending downward, but the reality is I'm not gonna say that there isn't an issue that we think needs to be given some attention. What I am saying thought is that the -- the cases that they were talking about that seem to be that small number of five or six cases where the young person has a very significant history of criminal behavior, prior attempts at being, you know, receiving juvenile court intervention, to say that has failed, slaps on the wrist, nothing has ever happened. Those are the cases, and I do plan to follow up because I would like to have a conversation with the folks that were here to find out specifically what cases they were referencing so we can see actually what did happen in those individual cases because what I am saying is that the existing language in the statute and the opportunity for the juvenile court to consider all of those variable actually exists and is being implemented and is happening, and we are seeing the numbers for those discretionary transfers to the adult court following a hearing like this. It is on the -- it is increasing, so that -- that's my position. I -- I'm not here to say -- and we do want to work together to see if there's some solution that -- that will address this in the way that we think ultimately will promote both public safety and the -- the goals of the juvenile justice

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system, which do include accountability. We're not here to take the position by any way that -- that, you know, we -- we support, you know, the lack of accountability or we're okay with issues regarding the public safety risk that some of these cases involve. We just think that the transfer system as it exists does work.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, you do recognize that the other testimony says that it doesn't?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I do. I do.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, you know, I always get a little bit concerned with the word discretionary. To me -- and I understand that there's different situations, but that -- that's kind of a scary word for me. The law should be the law, and you know, it should be interpreted a certain way. There's obviously a problem here where these six -- and this is just Waterbury -- you know, where we heard that case where six people, probably 20 or 30 times, and haven't been referred to, you know, adult court. That doesn't make a lot of sense, and I don't see when you're committing felonies obviously that's a pretty big deal. There's usually victims involved, and you have two felonies before it's mandated. It's not like it's being mandated on the first -- the upper class B and C felony, I believe. I mean this is like -- this is like a three strike, and then you have to go to adult court. I don't see how that's unreasonable, and you still have your day in court. It's not as if the adult court is -- is going to, you know, throw away all the rules and say, oh, this is your -- your third time. You're still going to have your day in court, you're still going to have a lawyer,

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and you're still going to have your rights, but when you're perpetually offending over and over again, why shouldn't there be some guidelines and why should -- you know, we're presented with a problem here that's not fixing itself, and we want to take prudent action to make sure that this doesn't happen, so I don't see where the opposition to that is.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Well, I guess I would say -- just to clarify the word discretionary -- that the statute provides great discretionary transfer hearing if the prosecution in these types of motor vehicle larcenies that are included in the bill. They can ask for the discretionary transfer hearing. The court holds a hearing, but if the court makes the findings that are referenced -- that I referenced earlier -- the court then shall -- the language is shall transfer the case to the adult court. So, it's discretionary, the state has to ask for the hearing, which as I said, when we had a similar proposal last session, there really had not been many requests for a discretionary transfer hearing. Since -- since over the course of the last year, there had been more requests by the state to have these hearings, right, and when the court has the hearing, makes those findings. It's not then discretionary for the court to say, well, you have proven all these things state, but we're going to keep the case in juvenile anyway, so --

REP. VAIL (52ND): My --

SUSAN HAMILTON: I don't know if that helps to address your question?

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REP. VAIL (52ND): Well, the larceny part that you keep mention larceny, but this isn't like stealing a candy bar.

SUSAN HAMILTON: No, I know. It's --

REP. VAIL (52ND): These are class B and C larcenies, they're felonies.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yes, they're -- yep, they're motor vehicle felonies, yeah.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I mean and we're not mandating it. Like I said, on the first one, it's you know a strike three. I don't know. I think -- I'm certainly going to listen to the rest of the testimony.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Sure.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I'm sure we'll debate this when it comes up, if it comes up for a vote, and I'll listen to it, but so far, I don't see any reason why this is -- there is anything wrong with this. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Morin.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hello.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Good afternoon.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Good afternoon. Thank you for coming and testifying.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yeah.

REP. MORIN (28TH): As you could tell by everyone's test -- discussions by my colleagues this is a highly charged issue.

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SUSAN HAMILTON: Sure.

REP. MORIN (28TH): And, you and I have spoken previously.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Yes.

REP. MORIN (28TH): And, I represent Wethersfield, and you know, our -- our police department's exceptional. You know, does the best they can to protect our community, but this is an issue, you know, that I've shared with you that is making my constituents very anxious. I can't tell you how many conversations I've had directly specifically relating to this one issue. I'm gonna say, Mr. Chairman, I'm extremely frustrated because I can sit down and I have sat down with my Chief of Police and other people in the community and listened to what they explain to me, and everything they explain to me makes perfect sense, and I understand. And, then I've sat with you and other people and listen to what you have to say, and I said, wow, this makes sense too. So, what's the problem? Is it because I just don't get it? Is it because numbers are numbers and we can all make numbers kind of do things, so let me ask you this 'cause you know the one thing that I'm -- I'm not so sure I'm buying is if we send these to adult court right away, and the reason I say that is because a very dear friend of mine was a Hartford police officer, and he used to admit to me he would come home after working his shift -- he worked 4 to 12 -- and he would come home and we'd be talking, and he'd say how frustrated he was when he would catch people doing stuff, bad stuff, and the next day they were just hanging back out doing the same thing. So, they were adults and they were sent back. So, is it the system actually

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above before what our men and women that are on the frontline doing? 'Cause they can do all they want but if the court system's not addressing it, is that a different discussion? Am I off base here?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I don't think so. I think the reason why we struggle is that it's a complex issue, you know, and I think when -- when we -- you know, we are trying to work in partnership as best we can with all the folks that are involved in trying to promote the goals we're talking about there, there aren't necessarily black and white clear answers as to how do we address the problem, so I -- I do think that, you know, law enforcement -- there has been some changes that law enforcement, I think, believe have made it more challenging for them to detain a youth right on the first interaction perhaps if it is at night or you know on the weekends, they have to go before a judge, but the judge has the ability and does detain -- and I'm talking about young folks at this point and children -- but they do detain and they do -- and the court can and does detain folks at the front -- you know, after a request by a frontline investigator or police officer if they pose a risk to public safety, so those -- those criteria are still there. I think that -- that perhaps they're feeling that it's more challenging to actually secure the order and detain the youth, but those public safety criteria -- in fact, that was one of the changes that was made as part of the -- these advancements was to actually specify in the legislation, and for the court that if the youth poses a public safety risk they can and are detained. So, I -- I don't know if I have an answer to your question. I think that, you know, there are some areas of consensus I think. It might not seem

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like that as we sit around the table and have this conversation, but I do think, you know, our office and representing the -- the -- the kids involved in these cases, we don't want them to recidivate. We don't want them to go into the deeper end of the system. We want them to be successful, and we also support the goal of promoting public safety. This isn't, you know -- so I -- so I think there's room to work together on some of the language. I just don't believe the -- the bill as drafted is going to accomplish the goal that this committee is looking to accomplish.

REP. MORIN (28TH): And -- and so again my frustration is the Senator who was a police officer -- you know, somebody that's on the frontline maybe has a much better perspective than I might as to the frustrations of how this is allowed to happen. So, I -- I -- what I really would like, Mr. Chairman, is for the -- the stakeholders that don't seem to be able to be in agreement on this that -- that the leadership of this committee gets them in a room and says, hey, what can we do to make something that people are gonna understand and maybe we can -- maybe we're not that far off.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Right.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Maybe we're not? And, maybe there is some issues that are out of all of your control like we don't have the infrastructure in place to take care of kids that we once did. I mean that's a real problem, and like many things we deal with in the budgetary process or for whatever reason, but when -- if you don't have enough spots maybe we need to look at finding a way to do that because I don't believe anybody wants -- I really

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don't want to see the next story being, you know, some -- some 15-year-old kid who just you know 15-year-olds, anybody that raises them knows they're -- they can be a challenge in themselves just on a good day, so.

SUSAN HAMILTON: [Laughing].

REP. MORIN (28TH): But, when they're doing something, they just don't have to wherewithal, and they -- they're actin erratically, and they're hurt -- they could hurt any of us.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Sure.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Nobody wants that, but how do we get where there's some satisfaction for our constituents?

SUSAN HAMILTON: Well, we would welcome the opportunity to work together with folks on this. Again, I don't -- I'm not disagreeing with anything that -- that the folks are saying around the table. I think we have to -- you know, it's a complex issue, and we have to figure out the best way to address it, and I would just -- you know, I appreciate the comments about the resources because regardless of whether you're in an adult court and we have lots of young people in adult court as we sit here this afternoon -- whether you're in adult court or juvenile court, the services that are needed both secure and otherwise to help prevent escalation into the deeper end of the system is what I think we ought to be -- be focused on as well.

REP. MORIN (28TH): And, just the last -- the last thing. I'm sorry to take up so much time. I think there's a bill in Judiciary -- 'cause frankly, if

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this bill comes out of committee, it's gonna get referred over there anyway, I'm guessing. So, I understand Judiciary is raising something. Are you aware of that?

SUSAN HAMILTON: I don't know about what specific bill that they are raising. I know that committee is -- is working on this issue --

REP. MORIN (28TH): Okay.

SUSAN HAMILTON: As are others, and trying to figure out -- again, with all the myriad of proposals that are out there, can we bring people together and try to come up with something that might be a workable solution? So, we're not here to say every -- you know, everything's fine, don't worry about it, but you know, again, just with regards to this bill, I think it doesn't -- it's not -- it doesn't solve the problem.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Thank you.

SUSAN HAMILTON: But, we're happy to participate in the solution.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Thanks. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, just to followup on Representative Morin's comments, you know, one of the reasons why this bill is in front of us is because of proactive approach by the leadership of this committee to meet with the various stakeholders, and I think at the very least what we're doing today is bringing this very important issue to light so that we continue to have this conversation. Regardless of what happens with this bill, I am hopeful that we will get a version of this bill out of committee, but regardless, I'm

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committed to working with all the stakeholders to try to come up with something that we can all live with. There's no question in my mind in talking to the various stakeholders that there's a common denominator amongst all of you, and that is that you have our youth at heart. We may disagree on how we get to where we need to go, but that's certainly not lost on me, so I certainly appreciate your comments and the work that you do, and I -- as well as the -- the individuals who have a different opinion and some who we're gonna hear from today, so thank you.

SUSAN HAMILTON: Thank you. I appreciate that, Representative.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Next up is Chief Riddick. I'm not sure if you want to bring -- if you want to come up by yourself or some other chiefs? Step right up and just for the record, if you could introduce yourselves for the record? Thank you.

JAMES CETRAN: Thank you, Representative Verrengia and distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee for allowing me to speak today. My name is James Cetran. I'm the Chief of Police in Wethersfield, Connecticut. I am the President of the Connecticut Police Chief's Association. First off, I want to clarify one thing. I'm not advocating throwing kids in jail. We've never said that. What I am advocating is that every human being has to have a deterrent from committing crimes. The more serious the crime, the more the punishment that person should receive equally and fairly. We cannot give anyone a free pass to victimize other citizens, and that's what I'm afraid of has happened in this -- in Connecticut. What -- with the best of intentions. I understand why

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things have changed. I just don't agree what -- what those changes have brought. There has to be a system in place that protects the law-abiding citizen from deliberate criminal -- deliberate criminal with intent to deprive that citizen of its property and wellbeing. Not every teenager is a wanted criminal. We understand that. In fact, it seems to be a relatively small percentage out there who has realized that they can commit crimes and pretty much get away with it. We need to figure out a way to stop these individuals from hurting people without throwing everyone in jail.

I have a letter from an inmate in prison who has been there for the past 21 years. He's from Wethersfield, and even though I helped put him where he is, he's intelligent enough to realize that his actions are what landed him in jail. It was well written and researched letter that has the main theme that has -- that a person has to be taken to task for -- for his crimes. He might not have committed the crimes as he did -- he might not have committed the crimes as he did as an adult that landed him in prison for almost all of his adult life if he understood that back when he was a juvenile. He did not understand at the time that his actions could cause the loss of his freedom because it had never happened before, and this was even before the Raise the Age legislation.

There's a lot to do with protecting of the kids that -- that has been spoken here today, and I agree with that. Some of these kids have some really risky, you know, behaviors that if we don't curtail that it's gonna cost them their life. There was a case in Newington where they wanted and tried to hold the

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kid. It did not fit the criteria, so no matter what they did or said or went to a judge, even a judge couldn't hold the kid based on what they had at that time, so there is no discretion, the kid is released, and he was dead within 24 hours. That's what we're trying to avoid.

The state budget has decimated to courts, including the juvenile court and probation, we have apprehended kids. It's relatively rare because of the behaviors that the kids show when they're committing these type of crimes, especially with the stolen cars and the chases. I mean you could have 100 stolen cars. If we catch one or two or three at the most, but in almost every instance that we have caught someone, it always turns out to be a juvenile. Now, I'm not saying every stolen car is done by a juvenile, but it sure looks that way, at least of late, to the point where these individuals truly don't understand the ramifications of their actions. Like the letter writer are shocked when they become adults and now they are held accountable for their actions.

The members of the CPCA are strong advocates of what is best for the child, but what is best for the criminal teenager is being held accountable for their actions, so they learn from their mistakes and don't commit worse crimes. One of the statements that was made by the last speaker I actually have a response from that from the Supervisory State's Attorney out of the Chief State's Attorney's Office on that exact topic. If you would like, I'd like to read this section from -- from him? Public Act 16-147 eliminated the following grounds to detain a juvenile.

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1. That means we cannot hold a juvenile in any of these instances based on that statute. A strong possibility that the child would want to wait prior to court hearing or disposition, so if a kid is on the run, he or she gets arrested, the police want to put the kid in detention to be safe until the reasons for running away are address or if the kid tells the police that he is going to run away again when he is released, we still cannot hold that individual. Detention is no longer an option for the police or the judge.
2. A strong probability that the child will commit or attempt to commit other offenses incurious to the trial prior to the court disposition.
3. Probable cause to believe that the child continue residence in the child's home pending disposition poses a risk to the child because of the serious or dangerous nature of the act or acts that the child is alleged to have committed.

It has to be a class A felony or some class B felonies. There are a lot of crimes out there that don't fall into those categories that are pretty serious, so if a kid has a serious drug -- here's an example, so if a kid has a serious drug problem, gets arrested for even something minor, the kid cannot be put into detention so he or she will be safe until admitted into a drug rehab program or if the concern is that the kid might do something that could be injurious to himself or to others to impress friends as part of a gang initiation, putting that kid in detention to protect the kid is not an option, and that was the case in Newington.

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In such cases, shelters might not always be available on short notice or in the middle of the night when a kid -- putting a kid into a shelter may not or cannot afford the protection that the kid really needs. Such immediate short-term care and protection is only provided by the detention facilities.

A finding by the court that the child has violated one or more conditions of a suspended detention order -- this is the one that kills me -- so, if a judge gives the orders, the kid must follow the conditions of his release, and if he doesn't follow those conditions, he still can't be taken into custody. Actually, it goes on. I don't want to belabor this, but I just want to make sure that everyone understands that it's not as easy as it makes it sound in trying to detain a child. There are rules that we have to follow and in most instances, we cannot hold a child for more than 6 hours, even if it's in his best interest to hold.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you for that testimony. Before we get to any questions, is there anyone else in the group that wants to speak, make comments? And, if so, just please identify yourself for the record.

CHIEF VERNON RIDDICK: Good afternoon, Chief Vernon Riddick of the West Hartford Police Department. By ways of the Waterbury Police Department for 24 years, so I know you heard earlier testimony. Born and raised in Waterbury. This is a life and death situation that we're talking here, and I'm not exaggerating. Some of the instances that were testified earlier, I was on the scene for many of those to see juveniles killed in car accidents. The

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results of car accidents going into buildings and injuring innocent people. This is not fantasy. This is reality. Coming from an urban environment that is not our intention nor is it our goal to just start mass incarcerating youth. Sitting on the Executive Board of the Police Activities League, where out of 19,000 kids in the town of Waterbury, 4500 of those kids are part of the PAL program, so that's a diversion. That's things we need to do. With that being said, as I transitioned over to West Hartford, a lot of the same issues, believe it or not.

Last year in 2018, out of 120 juveniles referred to juvenile court, 35 of those individuals were repeat offenders. Those numbers do not include at least over 26 that were sent to the Juvenile Review Board. Some of them were felony referrals, assault referrals, murder with special circumstances, burglary, weapon motor vehicle, possession of the weapons of the motor vehicle, larceny second, larceny third, weapons on a school ground, threatening. We talk about repeat offenders, which is the most important part of our conversation here this afternoon. One example, and it could be an outlier, but I think my colleagues here would -- would let me know and agree with me that it's not necessarily the case. In four years, we had one juvenile who was arrested 11 times and 9 times in a 4 year span, and 9 of those arrests were for violent acts, one including threatening to shoot a student and another one utilizing a baseball bat. This is why we're here -- preservation of life, trying to find that balance between reactive and proactive actions to preserve life, not mass incarceration, so that we can do collectively between us, you, and the

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public we're open to that, and we hope that collectively we can come to a good solution. I thank you for your time.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you, Chief. Is there any one else that have any comments? Okay. First up is Senator Osten followed by Representative Sredzinski.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): Good afternoon. I was going to say good morning, but I think we passed that a long time ago [Laughing]. So, I just have one quick question. The inmate that you identified, could you identify him to us?

JAMES CETRAN: Sure. His name is Michael Levowitz, and I actually -- I have his letter here if anybody wants a copy of it?

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): If you could give that to the clerk so we can have that as a matter of public record? Thank you. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and just before I get started, I'd just like to have all the Chiefs just introduce themselves whether it's, you know, verbally so we can kind of get an idea of the gravity of the situation?

CHIEF SCOTT SANSOM: Yes. Chief Scott Sansom, East Hartford Police Department.

CHIEF JOHN GAVALLAS: Chief John Gavallas, Watertown Police Department.

MATT HAWKINS: Deputy Chief Matt Hawkins, East Hartford Police Department.

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REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you very much. We already heard from the Waterbury police chief, and I know that you do represent the Connecticut Association of Police Chiefs, and [Clearing throat] -- I asked the Waterbury chief some questions, and I'm not going to do as many questions, but in your experiences -- and any of you can take this if you want -- do you believe that underlying issue here is gang activity?

JAMES CETRAN: It all depends on what you highly define gangs. Yes, I believe that there's groups of individuals out there that are doing this on a regular basis, whether or not they're actually part of an organized gang, I'm not that sure of. It's probably more prevalent in the urban areas. Where I'm from it's a suburban area, but they are groups that are coming in that are stealing the cars, that are doing the crimes. They have escalated also. It's more than just stealing cars.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): So, let me ask you a different way. Do you believe that there are adults behind the scenes of these minors and juveniles that are orchestrating some of these crimes?

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, I believe that there are adults involved in this.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Do you think by passing this bill it would make our communities safer?

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, I do.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, do you think it would make law enforcement's job safer?

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, definitely.

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REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Thank you. No further questions.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Hayes.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, guys. Nice to see you again. Somebody tell me what is the age of a juvenile?

JAMES CETRAN: It's 17 and under.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Okay. So, now when you're talking repeat offenders, are we talking somebody that's in the age of 16, 17?

JAMES CETRAN: Or even younger. We've had 15-year-olds that are out here committing these crimes.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Okay. So --

JAMES CETRAN: Repeatedly I mean.

REP. HAYES (51ST): So, the question I needed to ask was do you think that the Raise the Age has anything to do with this?

JAMES CETRAN: Oh yea. Yes, sir.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Okay. And, that's been a big effect since -- since that's taken place?

JAMES CETRAN: 2012, yes. Right. There's -- I would venture to say that there are probably more 16 and 17-year-olds being arrested today for crimes than probably the 15 and under altogether.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Okay. Do you think having this bill is at least gonna give you something to work with and help you out until we could talk about a fix?

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, sir.

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REP. HAYES (51ST): Okay. So, this bill is very important to you and to our communities?

JAMES CETRAN: I believe so, yes, sir.

REP. HAYES (51ST): Thank you. I'm all set.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Thank you guys for coming. I understand that this is a problem, and -- and everybody I've heard from it's just an ongoing problem. I -- and when you walked up, you said the right thing. You know, we're not looking to lock all these juveniles up in prison and throw away the key. What we're looking for is a solution because, you know, -- and you probably feel the same way I do. When they're out there and they're driving, especially when you try to pull them over, that car they're driving is a weapon.

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Every one of us have been in law enforcement for a long time, and every one of us have seen the destruction that an automobile can do not only to the human body but to anything around it. I mean it's just horrible, and to do whatever we can to stop this I think has to be a priority, and -- and I saw a couple heads knock when I -- when we asked the last one -- does every one of you believe that this law will help?

CHIEFS: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. That's all five -- all five chiefs saying, yes. Thank you. And, I'm

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gonna leave it just at that. Thank you for coming up today, and -- and thank you for supporting this.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you.
Representative Morin.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hello, Chiefs, especially my chief. So, one -- one thing that always -- and I'm lucky, I'm fortunate to have a -- the ability to have a good dialogue and to just be able to sit down in an office and talk to our chief about these issues. Let me ask you this though. It's I hear -- and on the chases, often times I'm told that -- that the men and women of the police departments kind of back off due to public safety; is that fair to say?

JAMES CETRAN: Yes, sir.

REP. MORIN (28TH): So, how -- walk me through how you actually catch these kids and find out who the heck they are? Because if you -- from what I've been told and the conversations listening to some of my colleagues, the cars are found wherever they're found with really nothing even done to them, right?

JAMES CETRAN: Sometimes.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Sometimes?

JAMES CETRAN: They're usually banged up a little bit. Normally speaking, the only way that we're ever going to catch them is if they crash some place up ahead, and then -- I mean I can give you an example. We had a car that was stolen out of Wethersfield and a couple hours later it crashed for no reason at all -- they crashed up on right near here -- right near Aetna, near -- and the four people that were in that car ran into the garage,

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and Hartford was there relatively quick with the actually help from the state Capitol police, and they captured the four kids -- kids that were in that car. And, that -- actually, that car was taken in an armed robbery. That was a carjacking. Those four kids all of which were under 18 years of age. I think one or two of them at least were 15. They were kids. They were driving like maniacs, and there wasn't even any reason for them. It wasn't a pursuit or anything like that. They just crashed into a light pole down on what would have been Farmington Avenue, and then ran into the garage, which was fortunate, and that's an unusual situation. That's what I'm saying. You could have 100 of these cars that are stolen. If we make arrests in one or two or even three, that's a significant amount, so that's why it's always hard to argue with the statistics and when they ask you. Well, all right, why are -- I've heard this claim -- why are juvenile arrests going down if you have this epidemic that we described? Well, there's the reason. It's very rarely do we get to arrest them, and even when we do, we can't hold them, and they're back out again doing the same crime. They say it to us. That's what sometimes really gets you is when they claim that -- they actually laugh -- see I don't even understand that. My -- I -- why would they run so hard, why would they risk their lives and the lives of everyone else to get away from the police, when they in fact know that nothing's gonna happen to them anyways? It just doesn't make sense, but maybe that's the -- you know, that's the problem with the age and the mental growth of their brains.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Well, people like us just aren't thinking like that, Chief. It's --

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JAMES CETRAN: Maybe that's it. I don't know.
[Crosstalk].

REP. MORIN (28TH): But, so I guess -- and the one you just eluded to at the Aetna, those kids caught -- they don't fall under this issue because they carjacked somebody, correct? That's --

JAMES CETRAN: No, don't --

REP. MORIN (28TH): Right, that's a different situation, right?

JAMES CETRAN: There's an escalation there. They've been stealing cars for a while. It wasn't, you know, now what they've -- it's because they have gotten away with it for so long and it is so easy, and that's a problem in and of itself, but then what they do is they escalate, so now what they did is was they actually followed a gentleman home from a convenient store, and they robbed him of his car. They had guns in their hands. Absolutely (inaudible - 03:05:35) 'cause the guy resisted.

REP. MORIN (28TH): But that point -- the point I'm trying to make is --

JAMES CETRAN: I know what you're saying yeah.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Is -- is if this was the first time that happened, that particular incident would not fall under what we're all concerned about. Am I correct?

JAMES CETRAN: No, it would fall under.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Like, well -- [Crosstalk].

JAMES CETRAN: Well, armed robbery is a --

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REP. MORIN (28TH): Armed robbery I mean I gotta believe --

JAMES CETRAN: I think that's one of the class B felonies that fall into that.

REP. MORIN (28TH): I was gonna say if that lets them off then I'm going home.

JAMES CETRAN: It's not a class A felony though, right? I don't know. It should be. [Laughing].

REP. MORIN (28TH): You know, I -- so again, I appreciate what all of you do, and I bring it to the table. The discussion I think needs to have something we all want, something that's going to try to keep our -- our residents safer, and I -- and I think people have to get in a room and work on it because it doesn't do us any good if we push hard and we get something out of the committee, but it's not able to get passed. That's my take on it. Thank you, MR. Chairman.

CHIEF SCOTT SANSOM: Can I comment on that before we close?

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Yes, Chief.

CHIEF SCOTT SANSOM: So, what we're really talking about here and what we see ourselves on the frontline, and we're really here to just tell you what we see. It's up to the community to come up and you know, decide what they want to do and how they want to handle it, but is we're really setting expectations I know through the juvenile justice programs over the last few years. we've all seen the reports about how the human mind is not developed until 25, I believe, and well, it's kind of compounding so it's kind of interesting. Well,

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yeah, the human mind is not developed, but what we're seeing is these kids are smart. They're sitting there or they're watching us, and we're setting expectations as we let them go, and I used to get sick to my stomach when I -- I, you know, walked across the floor, I'd hear there was a big car chase, and I'd get in there and I'd see the carnage throughout the town of East Hartford that it created, and there's -- there's four or five young kids sitting at the detective's desk, and they're getting statements and things and waiting for the parents, and we're all arguing about well we can't do anything with them. We gotta let them go to the parent, and there's nothing really we can do, and they're watching all this, and we're setting an expectation right there. They know what's gonna happen -- nothing. So, what happens is they leave, two or three weeks later, we see them back again. We've had some individuals committing horrific crimes in Hartford. I remember one individual, I believe -- I believe he ran over a lady on Albany Avenue. We had him and about two weeks later he was laughing about that saying, nothing happened to me for that, and he had stolen cars again in East Hartford, so we're kind of setting expectations. I almost -- I cringe when we arrest someone for the first or second time 'cause I know we're contributing to that expectation, setting the expectation for him saying it's okay for what you're doing. So, get back to the letter, and that's what happened to that individual. The expectation when he was a juvenile was set that really nothing's gonna happen to ya, so they start escalating the crime, and because we're not doing anything and they're seeing the frustration with the police

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knowing that they can't kind of confirms that, and then we're left with when they become adults, when their minds are developed, that they're committing horrific crimes, and then we have to deal with them and they're locked up on corrections for a long time.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Morin.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Could I say one thing? Just to answer your question. I just want to share one example. We had a group of -- well, an individual who called us on the phone and said, this vehicle has been following me since I came from New Britain, I'm headed to work. He was on route 5. We ended up stopping the car because the car crashed. We -- we got information from the juvenile in that car -- "I was following the wrong car. We stole two cars in New Britain. I thought I was following the right car. My buddy was the car in front of them, similar vehicles." So, sometimes that's how we're getting information. These juveniles are sharing the information, and they're open and up front with us because they know nothing's gonna happen to them, we're gonna bring them to the station, mom and dad or guardian is going to come get them, and we're going to release them. That's the problem. That's the challenge that we face every day.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Genga.

REP. GENGA (10TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, chiefs, for coming today and for all your testimony. It's valuable, and I will tell you that I want to recognize two individuals here who I've

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gone to over the years for their experiences, Chief Samson, who's had many years in Hartford and now putting those to great use in East Hartford, and my former neighbor and buddy of my children, Matt Hawkins, who also went through Hartford, and I got a -- after the last hearing we had, I asked both chiefs for their opinion on some information, and I got a valuable text telling me what a police officer is, and I would -- if anybody wants to see it, just let me know, and I'll text it to you. It's invaluable, but I also know that what we're hearing and what we're hearing from the public defender is there is a disconnect, and I believe in the guy who's pounding the street, and I've been hearing this -- car thieves -- car thefts are on the rise, juveniles are on the rise, and we can be nice to juveniles, which we should be. No matter what every kid has some good in him, but we also have to bring the greater good and remember that the public safety is what we're really got to drill in, and I support what these gentleman are saying. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, I just have one last question, if you will. I've heard from the opponents of this bill, and they say that car thefts are nothing short of a property crime, and that's the majority of these cars that are stolen are unlocked, and I -- I was just wondering if anyone would want to comment on that? If --

JAMES CETRAN: I don't think that's untrue. I think a majority of the cars are unlocked. There are even cars that are running in driveways that are being taken. In fact, that was the situation in West Hartford when they ended up 45 minutes later in Wethersfield, and then they robbed a 13-year-old boy

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standing at a school bus stop waiting for the school bus to come, a totally innocent individual, and he was beaten pretty badly for his phone, so it's not just cars, but the problem is that there is an escalation. The problem is just what the Senator has said before. These cars that are being stolen are or have the potential to be some serious weapons, and there is no -- they are not restraining themselves in any way shape or form. I don't -- I truly don't understand it -- the mentality that it takes to drive at 105 miles an hour on a city street knowing that there's citizens around, knowing that their own lives are in danger, but they continue to do that even if they're not being pursued by the police. It's like a thrill. I can't explain it, but that is not in my opinion strictly a property crime. That is a dangerous scenario for anyone involved.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Well, thank you all for your testimony. Thank you very much. You know, today, we are talking a lot about juveniles and transfers and the chair is going to take the privilege of transferring the next guest up, the Roselle family, and they are going to bring their young children as well. I'm going to move you guys up. Guys, setting in, in front of a microphone there, and just identify yourself for record.

MICHAEL ROSELLE: I am Michael. Hi.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Just your full name.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: I'm Debbie Roselle. My husband is Officer Phillip Roselle, and these are my two sons, and they wanted to share their story and what has

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been going on since my husband was accidentally shot, and we are here to support Bill 994.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Good. Thank you and welcome.

RYAN ROSELLE: Pretty much what I want to say is since my father's been shot things have been different. The first thing that's been different is -- what had been different from beforehand financial wise has been different. He's different. Just like how he's in moods. There's things I can't do with him anymore. There's things that are going on in my mind that wouldn't really go in my mind. Like, there's times if he didn't come home at a certain time, yeah, I got worried, but now I get worried like all the time 'cause he's forever having dialysis and sometimes they don't go right, and there's many times I've had to call the ambulance on like health reasons about him. Many times I had trips to the hospital about his health. There's many times I've been pulled out of class from the police because of health, so -- and then not just the health part but like his personality is different. He can get mad real quick over little stuff, not like beforehand. I mean when he was a cop he always had a short temper but not like this, and -- and it's not just like temper wise, it's like emotional too. The first couple days when he came home from being shot, he was just depressed all the time. I mean like we had to get a dog. That's how bad it was and 'cause you know we wanted to have him happier, and also, there is -- I've been on so many news channels and stuff like that, that pretty much everybody in my school knows me, which isn't a bad thing, but like yeah, you know, and it's also it's

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just like the police department they really don't, like some of them really just don't know him anymore. They don't treat me the same way I was treated when he was a cop. One time I was coming out of school and a cop was there, and I think I said, like can I get a ride home, and he told me to get out of his face, he had to go somewhere. So, like I mean there was another cop there who ended up giving me a ride, but not a lot of them like same respect I got beforehand, except for the old ones that like were -- that worked with my father, so you know, pretty much I'm just a high school kid to some of the cops, which is totally fine. It's not like it would bother me.

I mean I'm not even at the police department anymore like how I used to be, but not to change it -- you know, that kind of changed the subject, but you know, just the city is -- the city had things for my father. They threw fundraisers and stuff like that, but nothing from the police department. The first couple of days he got shot, he had like a couple baskets and stuff like that saying, feel better, but after those couple of weeks, gone as if nothing ever happened. And, like I said beforehand with financial wise -- money wise, I remember him always having dirt jobs and getting more money, and now he is not, so yeah, that's kind of a problem. You know, we originally we were -- he was working towards just getting a new house and moving and retiring, but when he got shot, the money went down. He was off Workmen's Comp, so that was something too. Now, he's back on, but yeah, and then so just a lot going on, and you know, I hope I can fix this -- this bill can help others so then people like kids that are my age or my little brother's age

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don't have to go through what I went through, so yeah. And, there's many times I have been twice as depressed as how he was just form like -- I mean, yeah, I didn't get shot, but I mean I still gotta go through it, and you know, having cameras in my face all the time and stuff like that, so, yeah, I just hope this bill gets through.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): All right. Thank you.

DEBBIE ROSELLA: And, this is Ryan.

RYAN ROSELLA: Hi, my name is Ryan Malcolm Roselle, and I support this bill, and I'm gonna tell you what happened the first day -- first day my dad got shot. So, I was in school that day and my -- I heard that my mother said my dad got in a car accident, but she lied just so like there's no stress on me or scared, and I appreciate for what she did, and the rest of the school day I got really sad, and I didn't know what happened, and my friends were trying to cheer me up, and it didn't work, but -- so my grandma picked me up after the school day, and it turns out I slept over, and -- and like she had to go school sopping to like get us some snacks, and then I saw my dad the next day, and yeah, I was very happy and very shocked for what happened, and I don't know why I was just -- I don't know what happened, and I just got mad that -- I got mad at my mom and that she didn't tell me my dad got shot, and I'm really sorry. I just -- what happened is like he's not the same. One time when my friend -- when we were in school, my friend said to me -- my friend Gabriel, he said, hey, do you want our dad and my dad and us to play catch a pitch, and I sadly had to say no because my dad got shot on his right hand and that's the hand he catches with and usually, I remember we

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did play catch one time when he didn't got shot, but then when he did it was just different. He sometimes can be moody but then he gets down a lot, and I have to sleep with him because I don't want him to worry or I don't want him to see -- like one time when I wake up he's dead, and so usually, I tell him -- I tell myself don't worry and just go to sleep, and -- and I usually when I wake up he's awake still, and I say to myself whew.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Good job. Thank you. Thank you. I want to thank the committee -- the Safety Committee for putting this together and allowing us to be here. This is really important and my children wanted to come and share the experience, and I think it's important that they share what is going on, and -- and you guys can hear that, so what happened was I was at work. It was September 5, 2017, and my worst nightmare came true. I mean you hear about your husband's out, your husband can get shot, but you don't really think it's gonna happen. So, the Deputy Chief came to my job, and told he Phil's been shot, so we went to the hospital. I didn't know what happened. I didn't know if he did it to himself. I had no idea. So, when I went to the hospital, I was still in shock like Phil. You know, we went through the motions. I knew he was going to be okay, so I -- I felt good about that. As the days went on, he seemed to get better, and I was feeling positive and optimistic, and then the six month into it, unfortunately, his kidneys failed due to the gunshot wound, the accidental shooting, and from that time on, Phil -- I've seen a massive decline both mentally and physically. His mental

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stability -- and if you're not mentally stable, then your physical is not going to get better, so unfortunately, Phil is not on the transplant list. He needs a transplant. He's not on the list because physically his body seems to continuously decline, and so we're trying to keep his spirits up, and so basically, I have been doing research since this started, and I've been looking and seeking support by myself, and I wasn't able to find it anywhere in Connecticut, and so I came across a gentleman named Mario Oliveira in Massachusetts, and he is a police officer.

He was shot six times, essentially died. He came back to life. He is a true hero. He told me about something called the Special Legislation. I knew nothing about it, so then I started to call various police departments in the state of Connecticut, and nobody knew about it. Special Legislation is when a police officer retires you're able to get 100 percent of your pay tax free. If you are critically injured at no fault of your own and in Phil's situation, he's been on for over 30 years, and he had no intentions on retiring that day on September 5. Unfortunately, again, at no fault of his own, he has to retire. In fact, he has two weeks to retire left. He has to retire by April 1, so this bill is very important, not only for Phil but all first responders in the state of Connecticut. These men and women go out every day, they put their lives on the line because that's what they want to do. They do it -- they give 150 percent no questions asked, and if something happens at no fault of their own, they should be taken care of and they should not have to go through the mental torment of Worker's Compensation and city abandonment and everything

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else. It's no fair, it's not right, and we need to step up and do the right thing for the personnel, for these first responders that put their life on the line for all of us, and it's just the right thing to do, and I feel alone because I'm the only one fighting this, and I'm not just doing it for my husband. I want this for everybody, and I really want to give my husband some hope. He wanted to retire with dignity and respect, but unfortunately, he couldn't do that, so let him get dignity and respect and get his full pay that he deserves. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you for your testimony.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Anyone? Oh, I'm sorry. Yep.

PHIL ROSELLE: It's okay. Obviously, you know I am Phil Roselle [Clearing throat] -- excuse me. I've been a police officer, it will be 31 years on the 10th, actually, it is today. I've been a cop, always wanted to be a police officer as long as I can remember, since I was young. I come from a family of law enforcement officers. It's in our blood. We like to serve the community that we live in and give back to the community. The day I was shot was September 5, 2017. We were doing a little light training class, and while in the range, my Sergeant realized his gun was loaded. Well, when I was cleaning mine and the bullet went through my arm, which paralyzed my arm, into my chest where I still carry the 9 mm between my ribs. They can't remove that because if they do it could be

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detrimental to my health. I could die, and due to the stress of everything that went on, I -- I'm on dialysis now because my kidneys have failed. I guess what I'm basically saying is that prior to this happening I had no intentions of retiring. I enjoyed what I did to the fullest. Now, that I can't, I'm forced to retire with a lower amount of money than I received if I were to retire being healthy. I was the breadwinner in my family. Not only that, but I was the foundation of my family. Since the shooting, I've declined a lot. I don't feel like I'm the father I should be.

I feel like what did I do wrong because the city and all have turned their back on me, and I don't know why I have to day-after-day show that I've been shot, show my injuries, show what I'm going through, and I'm not the only officer that's going through this. Other officers that have gone through this throughout the state and throughout the nation, and these men and women have done all that they can to protect the civilians in the towns that they work in, and all I'm asking is a fair shot that I can retire like anybody else with dignity and all the other officers that have been injured and all can do the same without having the stress of not only the disability part but wondering how they're going to support their family, their kids, if they're going to still be able to live in the house that they raised their children in, send their kids to college like I did my other kids. So, I support this bill, and I hope that it does go through 'cause not only myself but my son is also a police officer in New Haven, and he's only been on for five years, so if this were to happen to him, I don't know what would become of him. Thank you for all listening to us.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the Roselle family for -- for your story. It's obviously very difficult, but I'm really glad that all of you came up and shared your story and was honest and poured out our heart to us. The bill is presented to us is a may, not a shall. What I mean by that is it allows us -- a town to establish program, but doesn't require them to establish a program. Are you aware of that and is that something that you'd like to keep in there or change?

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Ideally, I'd like to make this a law. Ideally, I'd like to make this a law because then you're kind of back to square one and you're fighting again. I mean we've been fighting since September, so -- of 2017, so I mean -- but I guess I'll have to explore that.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Understood. And, one of the aspects of the bill talks about the making up the difference, so the town or city would make up the difference between Worker's Compensation and the amount the officer would have normally received. I'm assuming that'd be like base pay, so let's just say for even numbers, the officer is making \$100,000 dollars a year base pay, and Worker's Comp covers \$50,000 dollars. The town -- the city would be able to establish a program to make up that other \$50,000 dollars. Is that your understanding of that bill?

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Wouldn't it be the retirement? Isn't it the retirement, you said? Yeah?

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PHIL ROSELLE: Well, basically, it's like if an officer is killed in the line of duty the family and all receives 100 percent. They have no problems whatsoever. Unfortunately, officers like myself that survive incidents, it's we're getting more -- we're getting tormented more. It's better off that we would have been better off or the family would have been better off if we were dead 'cause I'm alive, which is great, but I'm struggling every day, you know, and what we're looking for is that those officers are not gonna have their salaries declined but will be the same so that if indeed something happens to me or happens to another office the family is taken care of, you know, because anybody if you are in my shoes, the first thing you worry about like I did when I was lying on that floor bleeding out wondering if I'm gonna live or die, what's gonna happen to my kids, what's gonna happen to my wife, is she going to be able to continue raising my boys without any problems, you know? And, now that I am fighting still for my life, I have that in the back of my mind. What if something happens to me? You know, what the city's offering is not enough for my wife and my kids. Had I not been injured, I'd be working my extra jobs and everything else, so that -- that's the prime thing is that I'm not asking for millions and this and that. I just want to make sure that we're taken care of, that my family's taken care of. I'm not declining, but I'm not the same as I was.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): I appreciate that, and one of the other things you mentioned in your testimony, ma'am, was about no fault, so the bill doesn't speak to no fault, and so in theory someone who accidentally shot themselves or drove off the

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roadway into a tree could be eligible for this program according to this bill. Would you be open to including a no-fault portion of the bill?

DEBBIE ROSELLE: I mean, you know -- I mean I would say if it's something that they didn't -- that it was just an accident and they didn't ask for it, so whatever I would need to add in there.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Understood. Thank you very much again --

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Sure.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): For coming here and sharing your story, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Morin, followed by Senator Osten.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Roselle and your family. You know, you said one thing, and I think it kind of needs to be clear that maybe you're not, you know, feeling you're the father or the dad that you should be. I would say I think you've done a pretty darn good job. You have a son that's a police officer serving the public, and you have two fine young guys that you know it's not easy to come and sit here and talk to a group of people that you don't know, so I think maybe you're not giving yourself enough credit. This is -- what I really is concerning to me is the language says to allow municipalities, so I mean I guess my question, and I don't know that you can answer it, but for the committee's discussion is why do we have to allow a municipality to -- to do the right thing, and I don't know if the Representative Sredzinski and I are on the same page and stuff, but the language,

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hearing what you said, absolutely kind of leaves you in the same position. If we just say, hey, you can do it --

MICHAEL ROSELLE: Yeah.

REP. MORIN (28TH): That means you're still going back, so I would look forward to having a discussion with my colleagues to maybe tighten this up a little bit, make it a little stronger, and maybe there is some reason that we have to be specific 'cause if -- it may not be the same as you fell down and you twisted your knee, right?

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Right.

REP. MORIN (28TH): But, this is -- this is a serious injury to no fault of your own, and I think it really needs to be addressed, so I know you probably can't answer --

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Well, you know, see here's the thing, so in doing my research I came across Mario Oliveira who is the one who told me about this Special Legislation, so this is -- Connecticut doesn't know anything about this, so this -- this is new, so I believe that I -- I think that we do have to work together to try to tighten it up. I -- I do believe that we shouldn't have now in retrospect in thinking about it happen to go back to the mayors and to go through all of this all over again is really repetitive. I think that we should just make a decision and make it a law, and these are -- this is a very unique situation -- what happened to Phil. This isn't something that happens on a daily basis. For example, in the state of -- in Massachusetts, there has been, I believe, 53 officers since 1943 that have received this Special Legislation, so this

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is a very rare situation. This isn't something that's gonna happen -- you know, we're not talking about thousands of officers here.

REP. MORIN (28TH): Because I think that's one of the things that one would normally say is how many would this affect? I mean this is the type of story that you hear about.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Right.

REP. MORIN (28TH): And, it's not -- I don't know that any of us have really heard about this a whole lot, so.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Right. Exactly.

REP. MORIN (28TH): So, Mr. Chairman, thanks for the indulgence, and to your family, stay strong.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Senator Osten.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I just want to talk to the two young men who are here today. I want to thank you very much. It's very hard to speak in public. You did a great job.

MICHAEL ROSELLE: Thank you.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): And, I really want to thank you --

RYAN ROSELLE: Thank you.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): For standing up for your family and your mom and your dad. I think it's important that people recognize what young -- what fine young men you -- your mom and dad have raised

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because you really spoke well, and I want to thank you for coming up and being so patient and sitting so kindly over there and quietly. I know that's hard, so I -- again, I want to just thank you very much for coming up today, and -- and being part of a family unit. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

MICHEAEL ROSELLE: Thank you.

RYAN ROSELLE: Thank you, and also, it kind of took -- it kind of took me a while to go up here, and to see that -- that I'm actually speaking, and I just wanted to tell my story to all of everybody who's here and to tell them what happened to my father.

MICHAEL ROSELLE: And, I also -- if you don't mind? I also hope that like this doesn't happen to any other family like how it happened to me 'cause I'm not gonna lie, it was like going through hell. I mean like -- like the whole, like you wouldn't think that if an officer went down like the whole police department would help out, just a family and officer, but not -- it's not like that. It's like when they got hurt, they were only there for like when he was in the hospital and when he came out, like two weeks, so yeah.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Paolillo.

REP. PAOLILLO (97TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the family also, thank you, and Phil, I just want to say obviously with your son's coming here and speaking on behalf of your family, but I also want to mention your third son who is patrol the streets in New Haven, who I've come to know over his time starting as a rookie, and you've raised a fine son there. He's caring and compassionate in our city

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and is a fine police officer, so you've done such a great job with your boys, and he's a great represent -- great representation of you and your family, so we've always looked forward to working with your son in the city, and thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): You know, it's not often I share some -- some of my history as being a retired police officer for 25 years, but I can't help but share this briefly in that I can certainly identify what -- what you went through. I was also involved in a -- a training issue where we were at the range and my partner literally right next to me while we were cleaning guns had an accidental discharge. I guess I was lucky in that it went against -- went through the wall and didn't hit me, so to that extent, I can appreciate what you're going through, but I can't imaging the pain and suffering piece of it. I -- I will assure you that I will do my best as Chairman of this committee to shepherd this bill through and do what we have to do so that what you're going through no one else will have to do that. I also want to thank your children who I believe are -- are very brave to come in front of this -- a committee -- this committee, to come up here today, and to -- to tell your story, and this is a day I'm sure you'll probably never forget, but remember one thing. The message that you gave this committee and the people who are at home watching tv I'm sure will not be lost on us ever, and today, what you did is -- I believe is you made a difference in the democratic process here at the Capitol -- here in the legislative office building, and I just want to thank you so much for your testimony.

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DEBBIE ROSELLE: Thank you.

MICHAEL ROSELLE: Thanks.

RYAN ROSELLE: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. You good, sir?

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): I actually spoke when I talked before, but again, I want to thank you. You received -- obviously, you received a phone call that no wife ever wants to receive, and you know, I think the second time I heard the story, the second time, you know, I choked up on it. There is a lot of recovery that's still gonna happen. I'm hoping that we can get this bill passed and we can help you guys to finally heal from this, so thank you for coming, again.

DEBBIE ROSELLE: Thank you.

RYAN ROSELLE: Thank you.

MICHAEL ROSELLE: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Next up is Chief Perez. Okay. No, actually, is Chief Perez here? No. How about Sarah Eagan? Sarah Eagan? Okay, great.

SARAH EAGAN: Good afternoon to the committee, Chairman Verrengia, distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Sarah Eagan, and I run the State's Office of the Child Advocate, and I am here to testify with regard to Bill seven -- with regard to -- I'm sorry. I don't have my hard copy in front of me for some reason, so I had to use my computer -- in regard to Bill 7332, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE WELFARE OF REPEAT

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JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND THEIR VICTIMS, and I have had the privilege of sitting here for the last few hours and listening to the debate and discussion about his very important bill, which is about how do we best hold our juvenile offenders accountable and improve public safety with regard to the crimes that they're committing, and I wanted to state from the outset for those who don't know the Office of the Child Advocate is an independent state agency charged with reviewing and investigating publicly funded systems that serve vulnerable children and publishing reports to the public, to you, and to other stakeholders recommending changes and reforms necessary to strengthen the safety net for highly vulnerable children, often children involved in the child welfare system, children with disabilities or special healthcare needs who are particularly dependent on state-funded services, and children in the juvenile justice system. It is consistent with that role that we're offering testimony today in opposition to this bill.

I did want to say at the outset that from the perspective of the office of the child advocate we are largely in agreement with most of what has been talked about today, and by that, I mean there is no question that there are juveniles in our communities who are engaging in activity that including car thefts but not just limited to that, that places themselves and others at high risk. I also agree with the question -- I think it came from you Chairman Verrengia about how do we fairly characterize theft whether it's committed by a juvenile or an adult of cars, right? Is it a property crime? Of course, it depends on what the charge is, right, but I understood I think what you

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meant by that -- is it a nonviolent property offense or is it also fairly characterized as a potentially very dangerous offense? I think it's both, right. There's no question a 15, 16, 17-year-old, anyone gets into a car and speeds off, particularly if it's a younger person who really doesn't have some of the adult constraints in their brain that -- that someone else might be thinking about -- poses no question a threat to themselves and a threat to others, and I -- I agree with what everyone has shared today, and I have a lot of respect and so much gratitude to the law enforcement personnel who came here today to share their perspective about what law enforcement looks like in their communities right now. The reason that I pose the bill -- that the Office of the Child Advocate opposes the bill is for a couple of reasons.

One, there is a dearth, a dramatic dearth of evidence and research to support the efficacy of transferring minors to the adult criminal justice system as creating a benefit for public safety. I understand the description of the problem today as grave, and I also would agree that there are juveniles in our current system that -- that my office is part of a circle of folks, including the public defender's office and others are working to try to say what are we going to do to help this kid, how are we going to keep this kid out of trouble, how are we going to help this kid's community that we're struggling with. There is no question about that too, but the -- but the methodology suggested by some of the proponents of the bill, even for some of the limited population of kids that they're talking about, and I respect that that point has been very clearly made, by transferring a minor to

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the adult criminal justice system, there's a few things that happen that I think are really important to understand. One goes to Representative Morin's question before about aren't there also adults that police officers see who get picked up and then very quickly are seen back out on the streets? I think the answer to that question is yes, right. [Bell]. That's not necessarily something that changes by transferring juveniles who are charged with this type of larceny to the adult criminal justice system.

Secondly, the adult criminal justice system is not equipped to even minimally meet the rehabilitative needs of juvenile offenders. The Office of the Child Advocate published just six weeks ago an investigative report that we were directed by the legislature to develop regarding conditions for incarcerated youth in the state of Connecticut, and we looked at that for kids who are incarcerated across agencies, so kids who were held by DCF at the time who is no longer in that business, kids held in the juvenile detention centers, and kids incarcerated in the adult criminal justice system. But, for purposes of today's meeting, the prevailing findings that we made and this is based on extensive record review, extensive interviews with youth and staff, youth specific records, is that the youth who are currently in the adult criminal justice system - - and we're talking about maybe -- [Bell] -- 100 or so a year who are incarcerated, those youth are receiving minimally, minimal to no services to meet their rehabilitative needs, and that's because it's an adult prison model, and it's not set up to effectively rehabilitate it -- rehabilitate juvenile offenders. Just for example, one of our findings

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was that in the course of their entire period of incarceration less than half or approximately half of the juvenile males that we looked at in the adult prison, which is Manson Correctional, about half participated in -- in either zero or one program during the period of their incarceration with an average duration of incarceration of 18 months. Of all the kids' who educational records we looked at at Manson, which is about -- which is about 20 youth, every single one of those youth was chronically absent from the school that's housed at Manson. Of the youth that we looked at in the point in time, which is about 55 boys at Manson, these are the 15, 16, and 17-year-olds who have been transferred from a mental health perspective, 4 out of the 55 were identified as needing and receiving weekly mental health treatment, which means that the vast majority of the boys there are receiving either nothing or next to nothing in terms of individual mental health treatment. And, I raise these -- we presented to the state legislature already, and -- about this, and the report is available on our website, but I raise this because while I agree that the description of the problem presented to your committee today is compelling, and I agree that more needs to be done. The whole juvenile is accountable for their behavior, to treat any underlying family issues and mental health issues that are driving such reckless and unsafe behavior that the -- the public policy measure proposed of expanding the -- the categories of youth who can be transferred to an adult system is not supported generally by any research whether it's commissioned by the Office of the Child Advocate or has been commissioned by the -- by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the

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United States Department of Justice. The very extensively researched area, and very little, if anything suggests that this is an effective method of deterrent juvenile crime. Now, that being said, and in the testimony from the Office of the Child Advocate, I appreciate Senator Champagne's question before. We do have links to all of those research that's cited from CDC, DOJ, and the few charitable trusts and the jurisdictions that they studies including New York, New Jersey, and other states.

With that being said, you know, our -- our recommendation would be and as the public defender's office talked about today, the juvenile justice system has been in a period of flux for a couple of years now. A) With the -- it used to be that DCF handled the deepest end juvenile offenders really through their system of incarceration at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and through juvenile parole, right. The legislature made a determination that for a variety of reasons the performance in that area was unsatisfactory and moved that part of the juvenile justice system to the judicial branch. That change is very recent. The judicial branch has only very recently been looking at how they're going to use detention and new regional secure centers to house this deeper end -- deeper end population of -- of our youth, some of whom we're talking about today. And, that work needs to continue to evolve and grow. I think we have to look at, in terms of solutions, how we are appropriating and supporting the work of the judicial branch so that they can meet the intensive needs for intervention and supervision for highest risk juvenile offenders or more chronic juvenile offenders, so maybe more moderate risks but

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persistent. And, I think we and the -- I don't speak for the branch -- but I think that they would agree that this body and the public has a right to know how those -- what are the dollars that are needed, how the dollars are going to be appropriated, and -- and hold the branch and ourselves accountable for outcomes. And, I think we can measure that over time, just like this committee is looking at juvenile crime statistics over time, and I appreciated the comments today that in general juvenile crime is down, just like all crime is in the state of Connecticut.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): I'm just going to ask you to wrap up. You're way over.

SARAH EAGAN: So, that's really the -- the -- I mean that's really the points that I wanted to make is that I think there are methods available to the legislator to hold juveniles and the branches of government that serve them accountable for ensuring that the methods of intervention are successful and effective. I just don't think that the method in this bill -- that there's demonstrated efficacy for that. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you for your testimony. So, if I heard you correctly, you -- you mentioned there was 55 juveniles that are incarcerated for needed mental or recognized having mental health issues or they need mental health care. So, how does -- how does a repeat offender, someone who's constantly let go and is back out on the street -- how is that better than having it transferred to an adult -- you know, an adult court? And, this isn't all about incarceration. Really, where I'd like to weigh in on it is the welfare of

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these kids but at least if -- if they're in the adult system it seems to me that they're gonna be controlled, and they're gonna get the help, and they're gonna -- it's gonna be recognized that they need or they have mental health issues versus a repeat offender who, you know, we talked about two convictions. You know, chances are there's probably been numerous contact with law enforcement, numerous instances by the time they actually get the conviction, so how does that help the juvenile offender -- the repeat offender? Again, this is very narrow in scope.

SARAH EAGAN: Correct. Thank you, Representative Verrengia. So, I just want to clarify when I mentioned the 55 boys -- let me clarify who I'm talking about. At any given time, most of the kids who get transferred to the adult system are boys, right, so at any given time, there's probably approximately 50 to 55 boys, 15, 16, and 17 incarcerated in the adult system, and I appreciate that the bill doesn't speak only to those who are incarcerated, so they're incarcerated and they're incarcerated at Manson, MYI in Cheshire. Probably two to five girls at any given time are incarcerated at York, so part of the point I was trying to make, and I know I was moving quickly, so forgive me if I misspoke is that the -- that those youth actually receive very little by way of mental health treatment, rehabilitative programming, and even education, unfortunately, particularly for youth of -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): I don't mean to cut you off, but is that more than a repeat offender who -- who's there is no consequence and who's back out on the

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street, if you will? Or is there a disconnect? I might --

SARAH EAGAN: So, if your question is are kids better off in the adult -- in an adult prison setting or better off not receiving sort of a consequence? What I would say to that is that neither is desirable, right. Putting kids into an adult prison system, and the kids who are transferred to and are incarcerated at Manson have committed serious felonies, no question, but to me the goal has to be that wherever children who are deemed to need intervention in a secure setting, it is imperative that any -- any policy that we make as a -- or you make as a body also ensure the kids who are in secure care actually receive the intervention we want them to have. Our finding has been that often, particularly for our deepest risk -- deepest offenders or highest risk offenders that that is not what's happening, and I wanted to make the committee mindful of those findings. However, your question about is it in a juvenile or communities best interest for a higher risk or more chronic juvenile to just, you know, got back and forth into the system without appropriate supervision, intervention, and accountability, absolutely not. You know, that is -- there was a question earlier in the committee that said, at what point is enough is enough? Well, to me, after the first serious incident enough is enough, right, and so to me that's where we have to look. Since we know and not just in Connecticut but really nationwide, the findings have been that adult criminal justice systems are ill-equipped, if not equipped at all, to meet the more complex rehabilitative needs of minors, and I think that that behooves us to look

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closely at our juvenile system say, where are we with some of these reforms, where are we now with what judicial's doing, and are --

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Is it --

SARAH EAGAN: We getting what we want from that.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Is it safe to say -- as I don't know -- that someone who's had you know however many convictions, 10, 20, that they've exhausted all those juvenile programs and -- and you know, whether it mental health issues, whatever the case may be. I mean from someone who doesn't know I'm thinking the population that we're trying to focus here is very narrow in scope. It's the real problem in violent youths, and that they've already been through the juvenile system, they've exhausted all the things that you have to offer. I mean at which point do we just say, okay, now we're gonna -- and don't get me wrong 'cause I'm not about incarceration. I'm actually more worried -- concerned about the welfare piece of this, but you know, if what you're saying is that if those who are incarcerated are subject to, you know, having to take part in these programs or get the attention that you know professionals recognize are mental health issues, and they're -- they're in a secured environment, I don't -- there's a disconnect here, like [Clearing throat] -- I'm not -- I know what the intention of the bill is, and I think that's why we're having this conversation today, but I'm not -- I don't -- I guess I don't want to put you on the spot, but --

SARAH EAGAN: No, no, no, and I think your question, Representative Verrengia is a good one in terms of

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are the kids -- when you look at the population of kids who are transferred, right; is it fair to say that a lot of them have been through the system already? Yes. Right? Not 100 percent but a lot of the kids or certain things that sort of, you know, life wise that are buying these kids a ticket into the adult system in addition to their conduct that they're displaying in the community, who look at the demographics of -- and again, I'll talk about the boys who are incarcerated in the adult system -- most, many, many, many of them have a history of abuse or neglect with the Department of Children and Families. Many have already had multiple contacts with the juvenile justice system. Sometimes, they're as young in age as 8, 9, 10 years old for things like truancy and other behaviors, so I think that your -- your characterization is not unfair in that sense, right, and DCF used to say that they got for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School sort of the kids who didn't make it through the -- the earlier programs, right, two, three, four tries, but I think what -- part of what we've been talking about as a juvenile -- in the juvenile justice policy settings over the last few years is what can we do better to improve our track record with higher risk juvenile offenders and more serious juvenile offenders, right. The legislature was for a variety of reasons dissatisfied with the work that DCF did with that population, which was relatively small part of the juvenile justice system, maybe at its peak you know a couple hundred kids a year went through the Connecticut Juvenile Training School, right, and so that has now slid over to the judicial branch, but they have had very little time to do some of the work, Chairman, that you are referencing, right,

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which is get better at identifying, assessing, coming up with a methodology for intensive supervision and intervention sometimes in a secure setting with this higher risk pool, right, and so to me some of the questions that have been raised today are fairly presented to that agency to tell us where you're at now that you've been granted the jurisdiction over the deepest end of the juvenile justice system, which are a lot of the kids that we're talking about here today. You know the persistent -- the serious juvenile offender, the persistent juvenile offender. Tell us where you are with your work in terms of what you think is going to be most effective, and then I think we have to hold the branch accountable for achieving the outcomes that we are hoping to achieve.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, then I just have one last question. As far as how long it takes juvenile cases to get adjudicated, do you think that's a factor in this discussion? It seems -- it seems to me that as adults it goes through the court system. The case will go through, it will be adjudicated. I certainly respect everyone's constitutional rights by all means, but -- but is there -- does it take longer from the time a juvenile's arrested, to the time there's an outcome?

SARAH EAGAN: I'm sorry. I did look over at Attorney Sue Hamilton for a moment from the public defender's office. I think that's a fair question. I don't know the answer to it. I don't have any reason to believe that there's a long period prior to adjudication in the juvenile system, however, but I'm happy to try to get an answer to that.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): That's okay. Fair enough. All right. Thank you for those answers, and you know, we -- we will continue this conversation, and I look forward to working with both sides as we move forward. Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon.

SARAH EAGAN: Good afternoon.

REP. VAIL (52ND): A lot of times you mention certain juveniles going into the adult system for incarceration. Where would they be housed?

SARAH EAGAN: So, boys are housed at NYI in Cheshire.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, what does MYI stand for?

SARAH EAGAN: Manson Correctional in Cheshire.

REP. VAIL (52ND): It's Manson Youth Institute.

SARAH EAGAN: Manson Youth Institute, so yeah.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay, so they're sent I think -- 'cause that's a little misleading, so the adult system is actually the Manson Youth Institution. They're not sent to Osborn, or?

SARAH EAGAN: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, then there's a special area for -- for young girls at York --

SARAH EAGAN: York.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Because that's the only female prison in the state, so there's not a specific prison dedicated to young --

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SARAH EAGAN: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Female but there is to young men. Do you know on average about how many incarcerated young men are in the Manson Youth Institution?

SARAH EAGAN: Yes, and thank you for clarifying, so at MYI, as you know, but others may not is 15 to 21, so if we're just talking about the 15, 16, and 17-year-olds at any given time, there's usually roughly 50-55 boys that are there. Most of the facility are young adults 18 to 21.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, so the -- the highest age someone 15, 16, or 17 would be [Coughing] -- excuse me -- are they -- are they housed separately from the 18, 19, 20, and 21-year-olds?

SARAH EAGAN: They are. There are two units there for the 15 and 16 -- 15, 16, and 17-year-olds.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And -- and is there any exposure that -- to them at all? Do they go to chow hall at the same time as the 18, 19, and 20 or are they separated?

SARAH EAGAN: They're generally site and sound restrictions required by federal law that for the most part keep youth separate from the adult.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Because there would be a risk for the state if a 15-year-old were to come in contact with like a 19-year-old, and they somehow got hurt or something like that.

SARAH EAGAN: Potentially.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay, and again, I have a unique perspective on this as I transported inmates all across the state when I worked for the Department of

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Corrections. I transferred adult male inmate, female inmate, and again, I worked at Manson -- I didn't work at Manson, but I did transport them quite frequently, and they were probably the most difficult of inmates to deal with, and you know, you can have all these scholars with their academic things, but I had real world experience and I dealt with them on a daily basis, and I noticed that they responded very well to discipline and accountability. It just took a little bit of time for that to happen and not in an abusive way, just you know in authoritarian way, and they responded to that instead of just let loosey goosey and do whatever you want. You know, with youth especially, sometimes you know they influence each other. You know, one misbehaves and they rest start to misbehave, but my experience is that they responded to that type of discipline. I had another question regarding that. So, if -- if someone were in this situation where they've had their second felony if this bill were to pass, they've already had two felonies, they went in front of an adult court judge, and they did want to keep them out of the public because they felt there was a danger to the public, and they -- and they couldn't pose bail, they would go to Manson Youth Institution, or is there any other place they could go?

SARAH EAGAN: Well, if they're a boy, they would go to Manson.

REP. VAIL (52ND): If they're a boy, yes, yes.

SARAH EAGAN: They'd go to Manson, yeah.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yes. And, there's no longer any detention centers?

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SARAH EAGAN: No, there are.

REP. VAIL (52ND): There are? And, where?

SARAH EAGAN: There are juvenile detention centers -
- Hartford and Bridgeport.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yes. And, where would those be
located?

SARAH EAGAN: Hartford and Bridgeport.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Hartford and Bridgeport. And,
how many youths are normally housed in those on
average?

SARAH EAGAN: That changes. I believe there are
about 80 youth detained in detentions.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Overall, between two?

SARAH EAGAN: Yes.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, what are the ages of youth
that can be detained at a detention center?

SARAH EAGAN: So, anything younger than -- younger
than 18.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, do they have programs
in the detention centers?

SARAH EAGAN: Yes, they do, sir.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, do they -- do they have
programs at Manson Youth Institution as well?

SARAH EAGAN: Yes.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, do they have separate --
obviously, they have separate programs for the 15,
16, and 17-year-olds?

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SARAH EAGAN: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Thanks for clarifying that. I appreciate it. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you. Not seeing any -- all right. I don't see any other questions.

SARAH EAGAN: Okay. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you very much. Next up is Ted Taylor. I'm sure you thought that you were number five on the list, and we'd be out of here early. [Laughter] [Laughing].

TED TAYLOR: This is much faster than the last time for all of us. [Laughter]. Chairman Verrengia, distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee and Security Committee, my name is Ted Taylor. I'm the president of Sportech Venues based in New Haven, and I thank you for the opportunity to testify today on proposed Senate Bill 7331, regarding sports wagering in the state. From Sportech's point of view, the bill considers many of the issues that we have raised during previous public hearings and during the many meetings that we have had with the committee of the legislators and the governor's office. It recognizes our long-standing relationship with the state, our existing businesses, the jobs we continue to create, and our successful management of legal betting in multiple off-track betting locations and via our online and mobile platforms. Most importantly, it supports our view that our 400 employees across the state can successfully support sports wagering quickly, safely, securely, and under the control of the existing state infrastructure in the form of DCP.

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There are a couple of points that I believe merit further thought as the bill progresses. Firstly, betting locations are required to go through a comprehensive approval process including local public hearings, which can take a great deal of time, before they are then authorized to begin wagering in any of the towns and cities in which we are -- in which we are situated. We assume this will continue for sports wagering in the retail environment. All Sportech employees, whether involved in gaming or not, have to be licensed by DCP. This is erroneous but vital to ensure that gaming is conducted in a safe and regulated environment. The policing of unlicensed and illegal betting operations will be imperative to protect revenues for licensees, and also tax receipts for the estate. We have considerable experience in the gaming world. My chairman secured his first sports betting license 35 years ago in the UK, and I've been engaged in the sector one way or another since 1998. We've therefore submitted further written testimony that I hope will contribute to the process. We believe the proposed bill rightfully recognizes Sportech as a long-term partner of the state, one that has created employment, and invested heavily over many years, in our case, partly in the expectation that one day our wagering license would be extended to cover sports wagering. Thank you for our time and consideration of my testimony. I'm happy to answer any question should there be any.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Are there any questions? Representative Barry.

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REP. BARRY (31ST): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for our testimony. If approved, how long would it take to get sports betting up and running?

TED TAYLOR: Okay. So, that's being put on the spot, but --

REP. BARRY (31ST): Okay. [Chuckled].

TED TAYLOR: My guess is I'm gonna say three months. I know that my boss would say two months, but I'm very cognizant of the need for firstly the ordering of very expensive equipment, but secondly, not everybody will realize just how complicated the testing process that DCP do is. It takes some time and this is something new, and it's considerably more complicated than what we do right now in terms of the way wagering is accounted for. It's not the same as a Lottery terminal. It's more complicated, so I'm gonna say three months, and we will have to work really hard to make that happen. Obviously, we would like to be up and live for the next NFL season, that's 2019, by the way.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions? Okay. I'm seeing none. Thank you very much.

TED TAYLOR: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Next up is Rich Pingel.

RICH PINGEL: Good afternoon, Chairman Verrengia, distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. My name is Rich Pingel. I'm the Chief Legal Office for Sportech PLC based here in Connecticut. I'm a Connecticut resident as well as an officer for the company, and I appear today in favor of raised Bill 7331, AN ACT AUTHORIZING SPORTS

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WAGERING IN THE STATE. Just byway of background and without repeating what was stated earlier, we are the exclusive licensee for the state's off-track betting system in the state of Connecticut. We have been for the past 25 years, and we're excited about the opportunity for sport wagering in Connecticut, and we're thankful to be named in Bill 7331 as an operator. For the last few years, we've consistently been advocating that the sport wagering opportunity should be extended to the state's existing licensed operators, and most recently, a few months back, that sentiment was echoed by former Chairman Brown, as well as Chairman Butler, and earlier today, we hear consensus with Greg Smith from the Lottery, so we commend the committee on finding that consensus and moving it forward in this bill. With that stated, there's still a lot of ground to cover as far as getting the bill to the final stage, and I've submitted written testimony as well as a markup of suggested edits and changes we would have in the committee's draft, more appropriately reviewed by the committee and its staff as appropriate, but I wanted to use this time just to cover off one point and actually following up on Representative Barry's question that's related as well is how soon can sports betting come to Connecticut? How soon can we get it launched and achieve the benefits of the additional tax revenues, consumer protections, etc., and so the one item I wanted to talk about in Bill 7331, is in Section 1b in which it sets forth a process -- a three-step process by which the tribal Compacts have to be amended, it has to go to the Department of the Interior for federal approvals, and then it needs to come back to the legislature for adoption, so that

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process in and of itself may push back that timeline a bit, and it's my testimony today that I'm not certain that it's necessary to have those conditions precedent attached to all of the operators of sports betting in the state. We certainly understand the unique relationship between the tribes and the state and the Compacts; however, the federal approval process does not attach to the off-tracking better network. It does not attach to the Lottery, so we ask that the committee consider that if the intention is to authorize sports wagering, tying it to -- [Bell] -- federal approvals could push it back further than it needs to be, so we ask that you do consider that. In addition, our other comments are set forth in our written testimony, so I'm happy to answer any questions on that, and of course, any questions the committee may have now. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, sir. Thank you for your testimony. In reviewing the language, there's an application fee of \$100,000 dollars, and that's something that Sportech would -- would pay for the opportunity to engage in this activity?

RICH PINGEL: Yes, it's a nonrefundable license fee of \$100,000 dollars for sports betting operator, and I believe the vendor as well.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. And, is it fair to say that there's no direction in the language before us as to what that money is to be used for? It's merely a payment?

RICH PINGEL: I could -- I could suppose the -- we're quite familiar with the licensing process in

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the state of Connecticut. As Ted Taylor had just mentioned, we're licenses by the Department of Consumer Protection, so they do pretty extensive review of application materials and then officers to make sure that the actual operation -- we see it in the pari-mutuel world, but our assumption is it would extend into sports wagering as well, so the application fee, I believe, would offset the cost of the department in conducting the application review.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, does your entity operate for sports betting in any other states presently?

RICH PINGEL: We do not operate in any other states. Our company in the U.S. alone turns over about \$3-billion dollars in handle of -- of wagers, and globally, it's about \$12-billion dollars. As sports betting comes online, we've been preparing for the opportunity, but we don't have any active deployments in the U.S. We had in Europe, but none currently.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Are you aware of what other states are charging their similarly situated vendors for a license fee?

RICH PINGEL: Yeah, it's all over the board. I mean we'll see it as high as \$10-million dollars in Pennsylvania and an exorbitant tax rate as well. I think what's been presented by the committee is -- is fair. It's -- it's what's supported by the market. The application fee is one component of what's contemplated in the bill, so that would be \$100,000 dollars, and again, that's nonrefundable. The other application -- or licensing fee that's set forth is \$250,000 dollars annually or a half million biannual fee.

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You had mentioned certain consumer protections that would go into place as a result of this legislation. If you could just expand on -- you know, 'cause currently it is illegal.

RICH PINGEL: Yes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, I just I'm interested to know what consumer protections would go into place?

RICH PINGEL: Yeah, absolutely. So, we know sports betting is happening now. I think we could all acknowledge that, and where it's most likely happening is in off-shore books -- sportsbooks that will accept accounts from Connecticut residents or residents from anywhere because they're not bound by any laws and they operate in degradation of any of the federal laws and state laws, so we refer to that as a black market. We estimate that in Connecticut alone there is about \$600-million dollars annually bet into the black market, so we know those wagers are happening. By legalizing or authorizing legal sports betting in the state, we hope to capture some of that black market, bring it in, and in doing so, the consumers that are placing sports wagers are now in a regulated market where they have protections of the DCP. Raised Bill 7331 has a plethora of consumer protections in there as far as what would be required on the platform as far as age verification, know your customer, problem gambling, funding, antimoney laundering.

So, all of the -- the components and pieces that we're doing currently in the state would extend over into sports wagering as well. As Mr. Brown -- or excuse me -- Greg Smith had -- had stated earlier

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we're the only operator currently in a state that is dealing with account wagering online. We have been doing so for a half decade, so we are very familiar with the online component of it, as well as the retail component. We operate the 16 venues currently in the state, and we've done so under the watch of the DCP very successfully, so we're proud of that record, and we're confident we can extend that into sports wagering as well.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, certainly, as you mentioned, off-shore illegal gambling of this ilk is going on presently. I don't expect that you would testify here today that legalizing it would stop that black market?

RICH PINGEL: Well, I don't think we're thinking that it's gonna be an even tradeoff whereby if you legalize it today that all of a sudden Connecticut's gonna see \$600-million dollars in handle. Sports betting is very competitive even amongst the different operators, so a lot of it has to do with pricing, and it all would come down to market share, so we do think that we would be able to capture some of that black market because candidly speaking that's the only option that's out there now. If the consumers who are using that were given a choice to say come into a legal regulated market, we believe they would. We believe there would be a good percentage that would come over, and then of course, you would also take benefit from the people who aren't willing currently to go to the black market to place a wager. They'd just say, you know, sports betting is illegal, I'm not going to do it. If it's legal now and all of a sudden it's -- it's overseen by the DCP and they know they're gonna get paid

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their money, they know that they're not going to get into a situation that they have no recourse for, I think that will pick up the market, and I think that's how the market will ultimately develop -- some from the black market, others organically grown in the state, and -- and we've actually seen it and have heard it from our customers in venue now that they'll be sitting in our venues, and drive down to New Jersey to place a wager -- a sports bet where they could just as easily try to do it through the black market or on a phone app, but I think there is an appetite for a legal regulated marketplace.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, I would think that it would also attract more people to the operation of sports betting in general once you're advertising on every billboard and every magazine and on tv and little things on the internet and all that stuff.

RICH PINGEL: Yeah, I absolutely agree. I think it would become known as a -- as a wagering option as an additional service; whereas, people know now that they can come to our venues to bet on horse racing or greyhound racing, Jai Alai, any of the pari-mutuel offerings that we could also offer sports betting, and there is -- we have seen and experienced quite an appetite from the public for that. Many of our venues we hear reports that people are coming in, and there is a bit of confusion in the market obviously with some of our neighboring states now authorizing it. People are looking for that product, and they're finding that it's not there yet in Connecticut, but they're looking for it, so we are losing a lot of that business, a lot of that handle to some of our neighboring states, so we think we will certainly

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capture that if they can do it here legally, and then the additional that will come from an after as the market develops.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, what about the data aspect? There has been talk about, you know, using official stats, using -- you know, the vendors using their own stats, having 6 different kinds of stats; what is your entity? And, I'm not sitting here negotiating, so I'm just trying to get information. What does Sportech intend to do as far as data and in compliance with what it appears the leagues are looking for?

RICH PINGEL: Yeah, absolutely. It's a -- it's a fair question, and last year, we were proud to announce a partnership with a company called Sport Radar, who was the actual company that many of the major professional leagues actually looked to for integrity monitoring of their events, and they also have the official data feeds from many of the leagues as well, so in conjunction with that partnership, we would have official league data coming through to us, and that would ensure obviously the reliability and accuracy of the results, which is just as important for us as an operator as it would be for a consumer to make sure that we're all on the same page as far as what the data is. What the leagues have been coming through asking for is this concept of an integrity fee, which we're happy to see that Bill 7331 has taken a different approach there. It hasn't slammed the door shut on the leagues, but it's very rightfully and artfully said. We have an interest in having our presence in the state. We think you have a value in the state, but it encourages them to work

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with the Department of Economic and Community Development to put together some sort of programs and Chairman Verrengia has raised it several times at the different hearings that he'd like to see some sort of events offered here, something that actually gives him more of a presence, and if == as my understanding of it is -- some sort of partnership or relationship was to be formed that it would be under that aspect that the leagues when then be entitled to a royalty or an integrity fee or whatever might be negotiated with the DECD, but this bill as it's set forth is, we believe, the right approach to it and that the data is -- is a separate aspect, the integrity fee is -- is something that we don't think they need to put into a legislative package that if there was to be some sort of arrangement it would either be commercial in nature or something with an agency like DECD.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You would agree with me that this is -- I can't think of another instance where government is authorizing wager on someone else's product -- third-party wager. Because Lottery, we issue the tickets. Poker you're sitting there at the table. Slot machine you're sitting there at the table, but here it's an activ8ty by a third party that we're -- we're allowing your entity to legally bet on. Can you think of another instance like that?

RICH PINGEL: Well, the similar study can be taken from Europe where there's a huge market bet on football or soccer, and a variety of different sports in the European markets, and there is no concept of an integrity fee. If anything, the adverse argument could be put forward that by all of

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a sudden allowing sports betting on their sports it's going to increase the interest. If you're putting a regulatory body at the end of that, overseeing all of the wagers being made, protecting against any sort of fraud or nefarious behavior, it's actually better for the leagues, better for the sports. It protects their sports more. It increased the viewership. I think they're winning already.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): But, you would agree with me that allowing the general public to be on let's say major league baseball more than likely increases the chance of nefarious activity?

RICH PINGEL: I'm not sure I do agree with you. I understand your point, but I think that the protections that are in place knowing what happens now, right, because there are wagers being placed on these sports right now in the black market but also in the legal markets worldwide and again our partner in that Sport Radar actually does a lot of the monitoring and -- and integrity work for the leagues, and there is no issue that's going there, so I'm more of the opinion that if you take something and put it in the light that it's better for everyone involved, the leagues included if there is more additional oversight. If there was no oversight and we pretended that sports betting wasn't happening, I think there is more risk in that scenario.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, I'm just -- because integrity of -- of the game is at the core at some level of my existence --

RICH PINGEL: [Laughing].

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, I just want to -- my concern --

RICH PINGEL: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Is, you know, we have the issue with performance-enhancing drugs. You know, pitcher last week was suspended for, I think, 80 games because he tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs, so now let's say last season that sports betting was legal in this state, I could make an allegation that there was cheating that went on because of that use of performance-enhancing drugs. My loss of thousands of dollars, who am I -- am I suing you, your business, who am I suing?

RICH PINGEL: I don't know what it would be without getting into the legal basis for the suit, but I'm not sure you would have a case to bring in that --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, the consumer would not be protected in that particular case?

RICH PINGEL: Well, the consumer in that case would be protected by the league, okay. What the consumer is betting on is the official league data, so what you're talking about is a player performing an act that is against the rules of say baseball, right, so it's not necessarily changing the outcome of the game, which is what they're betting on or the performance of the game. You're talking more about a compliance issue within the league that one of their player's is -- is on performance-enhancing drugs, which doesn't necessarily flow through to the operation of a wager. It has more to do with the compliance of the sport, and that's going to happen, that does happen now without even introducing sports wagering or integrity fees or anything. That's more

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an issue for the leagues to deal with that isn't tied to gambling.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Well, that's exactly my point. We are creating an issue perhaps for the leagues to deal with because if I filed that lawsuit, presently the court would say, well, you're engaging in illegal activity, so you know, you have unclean hands.

RICH PINGEL: Oh, sure. Yeah, of course, of course.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, you have no standing to bring this action.

RICH PINGEL: Right.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, when you open up this gate to even the conception of betting on a third party, I'm gonna want remedy, and I'll be answering the phone and filing lawsuits, and I just I don't know that we've really thought this thing through. I -- I -- I would be more comfortable with seeing how other states drew this up first, and -- and then --

RICH PINGEL: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You know, let's -- let's cross that bridge, but you know, hearing that, you know, because Massachusetts is doing it --

RICH PINGEL: But -- but in fairness and just to -- just to add to your point --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Sure.

RICH PINGEL: And, I understand completely what you're saying, but even if we were to acquiesce to the leagues and say let's pay them an integrity fee,

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there is no fund to set up to recompense you in the event that there was fraud or there was performance-enhancing drugs, or anything. There -- that was never contemplated in our concept, so to the extent you're expecting that if the leagues are somehow paid an integrity fee, that it's going to further protect you as a consumer, that was never contemplated.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Well, why not -- because we do do that with certain entities in the state. We have the Home Improvement Contractors Act Fund. If someone is defrauded by a home improvement contractor, you go to DCP, and you can apply for up to \$15,000 dollars so long as you get a judgement in the court that's uncollectable. We do the same thing with lawyers. Lawyers pay into the Client Securities Fund every year. That fund is for clients who are some downfall from an attorney, so certainly, that's -- that's a concept that's not foreign here. You know, I guess my -- my problem is betting on a third-party product.

RICH PINGEL: Yeah.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You know, I'd -- I'd feel a lot more comfortable if we allowed betting on the legislature. You know, Fishbein puts in \$250 bills, how many are gonna get a public hearing, how many are gonna get JF? Why don't we do that?

RICH PINGEL: [Laughing].

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): You know, which is something that we can control because we can't control this.

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RICH PINGEL: People in the room may find it interesting, but I don't think that's going to appeal to the greater public. [Laughing].

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Well, we would do it again, you know. Lobbyist would be unable to, you know, to bet, you know, and all that stuff, but let the general public -- you know, they read about us in the newspaper --

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): We could bet on the under or over, and how long this conversation's gonna go on. [Laughter].

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): [Laughing]. Perfect! I got \$20 bucks for ya. [Laughter]. But, anyway, I'm very, very concerned, and I thank you for your testimony and -- [Crosstalk].

RICH PINGEL: Yeah, thank you for the questions. Those were terrific, and might be something for the DCP to consider.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Are there any other questions? Okay. I'm seeing none. Thank you very much.

RICH PINGEL: Thank you very much.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): All right. I'm not sure if these two chiefs are still here. Chief John Gaffert [phonetic]. Chief Ed Stevens [phonetic]. Next up is George Henningsen.

GEORGE HENNINGSEN: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Excuse me, sir. If you could just hit that button again?

GEORGE HENNINGSEN: I'm sorry?

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Oh, there you go. Okay, great.

GEORGE HENNINGSSEN: Got it? My name's George Henningsen. I've been the Chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation Gaming Commission since 2004. Prior to that, I served the tribe as Foxwood Senior Vice-President of Operations, Senior Vice-President of Compliance, and when I first started in '91, I was the initial Executive Director of the Gaming Commission. For 13 years prior to that, I worked for the New Jersey Attorney General's Office and served as an Assistant Attorney General in both the divisions of Gaming Enforcement and Division of Criminal Justice. My counterpart, John Meskel [phonetic], I think has submitted written testimony. I know Avi Alroy is here from Mohegan to comment on other issues within the proposed Bill 7331, and I thought it prudent that given my attendance at your hearings two weeks ago that it seemed that there was still a divergence of at least opinion on the question of what constitutes a commercial casino game for purposes of both the MOU and more particularly the exclusivity agreement within the MOU. I'm gonna skip around so that I don't waste too much of my three minutes, but understandably those who feel that the sports betting is not included point to former Attorney General Jepsen's guidance to this committee last year in his testimony. When he was clear that sports betting was not a video facsimile he further advised, however, that whether it is a commercial casino game is an open question. That term is not defined in the MOUs or Compacts. My office does not thoroughly research whether sports wagering might constitute a commercial casino game for purposes of

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the MOUs, and I do not at this time have a high degree of certainty about how a court might resolve that question. Still others point to the fact that sport betting was illegal to the extent of it's precluded in all but four states by federal law, the Professional, Amateur, and Sports Betting Protection Act PASPA, so it couldn't have been encompassed within the meaning of a commercial casino game at the time the MOUs were entered. This analysis, unfortunately, ignores the fact that the only place in the U.S. where you could place legal sports bets was, long had been, and until the U.S. Supreme Court overturned PASPA this past May, the casinos in Nevada. This position also appears to be to varying degrees found on an assumption that the only casino games relevant to the consideration of are those that are currently familiar to us in Connecticut or more precisely those listed in our Compacts. While the MOUs could easily have covered the question of what casino games meant by referencing back to the authorized game language in the Compacts, they clearly did not. The intent was and is to cover all games, not just those currently -- [Bell] -- authorized to play at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun. Is that my gong?

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): You may proceed.

GEORGE HENNINGSSEN: [Laughing] I'll try and speed it up. Similarly, it's been suggested the advent of mobile gaming, sports, or otherwise, you would no longer have to go to a casino to place a bet, so therefore, the underlying game is no longer a casino game. Simply put it is our positions delivery system, mobile device, home computer, internet, mobile applications does not change the fact that

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the game being played is indeed a casino game. The central question is whether sports betting is a commercial casino game, and that does not mean it is a game found exclusively in a casino.

With respect to the use of mobile devices, I would again refer you back to Attorney General Jepsen's presentation last year. Our tribal concern ongoing is that the use of delivery systems mobile or otherwise can also implicate potential violations of the MOU exclusivity provisions -- [Bell] -- mainly when such use crosses into the unchartered territory what is a video facsimile of a game of chance, and is analysis of a bill proposing to allow the Connecticut Lottery Corporation to sell Lottery draw games. Attorney Jepsen described the risks as follows: "My office has previously warned the legislature about dangers associated with permitting CLC to offer online Lottery games. In particular, any law-authorizing CLC to offer games that might constitute video facsimiles of games of chance or commercial casino games, which could potentially breach the MOUs or end the Compact moratoria. The question of whether any particular game or platform for playing a particular game constitutes a video facsimile is a very complex and fact-specific inquiry." I'll skip over some of his other language 'cause I know you must have it from last year. I reference his guidance to underscore the potential slippery slope that exists when trying to reconcile our tribe's exclusive rights to operate both video facsimiles of games of chance or a commercial casino game with the ever-expanding universe of game offerings designed for either mobile or bricks and mortar applications. I will skip and refer back to the example of historical horse racing as a recent

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addition to the games that are offered through the horse racing act in some jurisdictions, not ours, and I'll also just briefly touch on what the definition of a video facsimile is. It means any mechanical or electrical or other device, contrivance, or machine which upon insertion of a coin, currency, token, or similar object, or upon payment of any consideration whatsoever is available to play or operate, the player operation of which is a facsimile of the game of chance and which may deliver or entitle the person playing or operating the machine to receive cash or tokens to be exchanged for cash or to receive any merchandise or thing of value whether the payoff is made automatically from the machine or in any manner whatsoever. I only point that out because all the various discussions that are occurring now turn on the very important question in my view of what is a violation of the MOU or more particularly the exclusivity agreement. I know that it's a complex question. I think the former Attorney's General -- I did not quote former Attorney General Blumenthal's opinion, but he found, when he had to answer that question as to Keno, that it was a close enough question and used the decision of whether or not it was a game prevalent in the casinos to help define whether it was a commercial casino game. In that case, he found that the risks outweighed the reward, and advised us to sit down and negotiate a deal, which we did, both tribes with the Connecticut Lottery Corporation to offer Keno. That kind of structure seems to be missing from the Bill that's 7331, currently before you today, but is included in SB-17, which was discussed two weeks ago. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Any questions.
Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
and thank you for being here today. In what
capacity are you here? As a representative of
Mashantucket?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: The Mashantucket Pequot Tribe.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay, very good. And is -
- is it your opinion that if the state of
Connecticut were to allow casino games off of the
tribal territories that they would be in violation
of MOU?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Correct.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Would that trigger, in
your opinion, the Mashantucket Pequot's and perhaps
even the Mohegans also ceasing the payment of this
flat revenue to the state of Connecticut?

GEORGE HENNINGSEN: Correct.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): What is your definition of
casino game?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: The casino game phrase that's
used in the MOU is not specifically defined within
either of the Compacts, so casino game is sort of as
both Attorney's General pointed out up in the air.
There's no definition, and the problem is until it
gets litigated there never will be a definition you
can point to, and the additional problem is every
Compact -- virtually every Compact is different from
tribe-to-tribe to state-to-state, so unless their
exclusivity language mirrors ours and says
commercial casino game, there's not going to be a

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dispute to look to, to find a litigated answer to that definition.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Understood. I was looking for your opinion, but as a lawyer, you might not want to answer, but I'll ask again. Do you have a definition of a casino game?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I don't have a specific definition. I think both Attorney's Generals -- Attorney's General tried to hit at it with the idea that a game is prevalent -- that's prevalent in a casino -- that was Attorney's General Blumenthal -- whether it's played in a casino or out of the casino, when we use the definitions internally under the Compact, we have the Compact to refer to. This document that is the MOUs and the exclusivity agreement do not refer back to the Compact for those definitions, so it's far more difficult and obviously, a murkier question.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): It definitely is murky. I'll give you that. For example, you guys have Lottery scratch-off tickets in your casinos, correct?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Correct.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Now that they've made Lottery as a casino game because we sell Lottery tickets throughout the entire state of Connecticut, and that doesn't violate the MOU. In your opinion, is sports wagering a casino game?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Yes, it is.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, why does it meet that definition even though you don't necessarily have a definition of casino game?

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GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Given the only thing we have to go on -- and don't forget this was a definition and an agreement that was struck in 1994. The casinos that had -- the only casinos that had sports betting or conversely the only place you could bet was in a casino in Nevada. There were three other states that were grandfathered in under PASPA eventually to also have parlay betting, but they could not have head-to-head betting. All the states were offered a one-year opportunity to pass sports betting legislation or more precisely to decriminalize it in their own states, and nobody took advantage of that.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Understood. I guess my biggest struggle with your viewpoint on this is because it seems to me that the tribes are trying to exploit the state of Connecticut when it comes to the MOU, and again, the tribes have been very good partners to the state. I don't disagree with that. They've been good partners. There's a lot of funding that had been given to towns and cities, but to not have a definition for a casino game but then say, well, sports wagering is casino games so we need exclusivity to that, just flies in the face of common sense to me. I understand that you have certain interests and needs, and I respect that, but I just wanted to kind of point that out to the committee, and I appreciate you taking the time to answer the questions, and thank you for being here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Fishbein.

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, sir. I'm just trying to figure out if the MOU addresses sports betting then under the MOU what is the compensation to the state as a result of the change in federal law? Is there an increase, is there a trigger or is it level funding based upon slot revenue and increased revenue for the tribes?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: The genesis of the MOU was a dispute over whether or not under our Compact negotiations with the state of Connecticut we asserted -- we the tribe asserted that we did have the right to video facsimiles of games of chance. The state of Connecticut said, no, you don't. That was put into moratorium language. I believe it's section 15 of the Compact that says we're gonna hold that whole question and advance and move forward with everything else that's in the Compact (i.e. - simple terms, all the table games and everything but slot machines, and let you open up), so we opened up. It was an outstanding question. We then sat down with a state-negotiated through the MOU and understanding pursuant to that language that was in the Compact that allowed further negotiations between the state and the tribe, and reached the agreement that's reflected in the MOU that defines it in terms of video facsimile of games of chance, which was the core question in the Compact, as well as all commercial casino games. To the Representative's question, the reason that it's not defined in there is because the state chose not to define it. The state -- the tribes were happy with the definition being general because we were getting a broader spectrum of coverage, if you will, with

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our exclusivity agreement than just a narrow issue of slot machines.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, just to -- because I didn't hear an answer to my question -- if I was in your seat looking to enforce the MOU, I would perhaps be taking the position that okay Connecticut now that sports betting is legal we have exclusivity, and if we choose to institute sports betting -- because it would discretionary -- any revenue that we receive is ours, and we don't pay you anymore money. Is that position that the tribes are -- any additional money?

GEOERGE HESSINGSEN: Well, it's actually more complicated than that because neither of the tribes have sports betting listed in their Compact specifically.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Agreed.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: And, I don't want to you know color any answers that legal departments would be giving.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Your taking a position that it is a casino game and therefore, falling under the MOU?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Exactly, but it's not listed specifically within approved games in the Compacts, so both of the Compacts would have to be amended to get to the point where your -- your question becomes relevant. I -- okay, are you going to allow us to amend our Compacts and if so, at what price or what cost? If those games are not being played in a video format, I would say they don't fall under the definition of a video facsimile. If it's just

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another casino game, it wouldn't be subject to 25 percent, but you know, everything is on the table because this is all new to both the state and the tribes.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Well, video facsimile, facsimile being the operative word. Facsimile would be a -- a recreation. That would be the event as opposed to -- so we have a slot machine, let's pull the handle, spin the wheels. I love those, right, and then we have the video facsimile of that where you push a button, and it makes believe, you know, it is all video. That's the video facsimile, so I don't even see how you get to when I'm betting between the Yankees and the Red Sox that that's possibly a video facsimile?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I'm not suggesting it is. I'm saying that it is clearly though a commercial casino game in our view.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): In your view.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Not a video facsimile, which is a distinction, I think, Attorney General Jepsen drew.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay, and then so in order to -- for the state of Connecticut to get dollar one from sports betting under this exclusivity, there would have to be a modification to the MOU?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: There would have to be a negotiation. I don't know whether there'd have to be a modification of the MOU.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay.

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GEORGE HESSINGSEN: We reached the Keno deal without any modification of the MOU.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Oh, understood, and I wasn't here, but -- since so many things are up in the air with regard to what the MOU means, what it extends to -- and I don't want you to give me privileged information -- but I just don't understand why somebody hasn't filed a declaratory ruling asking a court to determine these issues? We've been held in abeyance for five years now. I mean is there -- I mean -- and you don't have to answer that question because it may go into discussions that you've had with your client or whatever, but I just don't understand. So, let's just say -- 'cause last time we had this discussion I heard that if this legislature approves an open process that the tribes are taking the position they're not paying anything, the MOU is done, that's the position. What happens then? Is the state of Connecticut allowed to collect taxes -- income taxes, business taxes, licensing fees? If the MOU is gone, then are -- is the state of Connecticut able to do that?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Let me try and answer your question. I can't answer the question about what taxes you could possibly collect, but the -- I think dark scape picture that was painted by the Attorney General's position was that if we chose because we felt it was a violation of the exclusivity agreement to stop making our payments, then the Attorney General's position was that that would then kick in the removal of the moratoria because we weren't honoring our side of the moratorium through the MOU, so he further speculated or other pundits did that that would mean that the state could come in and

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shut down our slot operations. I don't know why anybody on this committee or in the state would want to get to that scenario, but that's how it would play out. One potential way it could possibly play out.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): So, you're saying it's possible that the state of Connecticut would get income from the business that the revenue that was generated if we didn't shut down, let's say that -- [Crosstalk].

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: If there were no violation of the MOU, we would continue paying 25 percent, roughly \$250-million dollars a year.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): No, I'm saying if we say we're opening up the process. The tribes say the MOU is done, we're not going to pay you under that agreement, does the state of Connecticut have the ability to say, well, okay, you're going to be treated like any other businesses operating in the state of Connecticut? We'll level the playing field and you know, United Technologies pays certain amount to the state of Connecticut in tax, you know Foxwoods, Mohegan, and the MMCT if they ever open they're going to pay the same amount of tax. There is no MOU. I mean is that a possible scenario here?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I'm not familiar enough with the business law to answer the tax question involved, but obviously, you would have to start off on the premise that you would be \$250-million dollars in the hole and I don't think any amount of corporate taxes are going to make that up.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Any other questions?
Senator Champagne.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): I guess my question is do we tax tribal lands or -- or any tribal lands in the United States?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Not to my knowledge, no.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): No. So, this agreement was to allow --

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Meaning the reservation.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): The reservation, yeah.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Correct.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): But, is the casino on the reservation's property?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Yes, it is.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): It is? Okay. You know, I'm going to stand with what I said before that I want to make sure that we secure the money we have already -- the \$271-million dollars or something like that.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Well, it's varied obviously, but --

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Obviously, it's somewhere around there.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: The ballpark estimate I think for this coming year was in the \$260-million-dollar range.

SENATOR CHAMPAGNE (35TH): Okay. I guess my opinion is before we do anything we should really make sure that we don't interfere with collecting that, and if

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a business wants to come in and sign a contract and say, hey, we're going to pay you \$270-million dollars every single year no matter what to allow us to run a casino, well, maybe I -- I might want to talk, but I don't see anybody doing that, and I haven't seen any numbers coming up that would even come close to that. The tribe's been there. they've -- they've worked with us well. Does that mean that every single thing that comes along you have exclusivity with? May not, but I guess one of the questions is should we sit at the table and negotiate and talk, and I think we should no matter what it is because the last thing I want to do is, you know, get rid of any income or possible -- or the income that we -- guaranteed income we have right now. I don't think the state of Connecticut's in a position to lose a couple hundred million dollars, and I don't think we're gonna be for some time, so I guess that's it. Thank you.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you. Do you consider an iPhone a video facsimile?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I'm sorry?

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Do you consider an iPhone a video facsimile?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Well, it's not per se a video facsimile. It can be used as one. Obviously, you can play all kinds of games on your phone, and if one of those games happen to be an off-shore slot machine game, that would be using your phone as a video facsimile, so if I would want to place a bet with it -- on it, would it -- open question, if it's just taking a bet, I'd go back to what I mentioned

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in my -- but I didn't read -- everybody has been very, very creative about how to get around things. In the case of historical horse racing, they've collected data on the horses in a race, the finishes of those horses, but hundreds of thousands of horse races in a computer and let you go and bet on those historical horse races by pressing a button. Now, in the jurisdictions where the horse racing act allows them to have that kind of -- not that format of betting but horse racing betting, they've allowed that because they're not allowed to have slot machines, so they don't call them slot machines.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): So, in the context of the conversation we're having today and what's in the bill, would you consider this a video facsimile?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: It can be used as one.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. And, in all honesty, I haven't read the Compacts in a while.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: [Laughing].

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): I'm probably -- I'm not as familiar I'm sure as -- as you are, but within those Compacts, if -- if there's a breach of those Compacts, whether we are talking about casinos and having an open competitive process or if we're going to go forward with -- with sports betting and the claim would -- your claim would be that it breaches the -- the exclusivity, you made it very clear in the previous testimony that the options that the tribes have, particularly not to make payments, correct?

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GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I was here for Chairman Butler's testimony, and I'm 100 percent sure that's what he said.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, are you familiar at all what the state's options are in those Compacts if there's a conflict or disagreement within those Compacts?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Well, there's a couple of different questions, and I hate to be technical with you, but the Compact is one document, 64 pages, single spaced, etc., etc. The MOU is a separate document, no more than about I'm going to say 6 or 7 pages. The MOU is what's generated the more than \$8-billion-dollars in revenue that we've paid the state through the 25 percent slot win payment. The Compact is very complex and I'm not aware of any suits brought for any reason under the Compact per se. I know we've had disagreements with former Attorney General Blumenthal over the initiation of our points system that almost went to litigation but got resolved. Similarly, questions were raised about whether or not our dealerless table games were in fact video facsimiles of a game of chance [Laughing]. It gets -- you can split some hairs.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): So, pick one whether it's the MOU or the Compacts. You -- you -- the tribes have indicated what they're options are in the event that there's a question with exclusivity or if in the opinion of the tribes that the state is in violation of an MOU or the Compacts, and that is who essentially cut off the payments and litigate. Is that fair to say in general?

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GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Hopefully, it wouldn't come to that, but that's one of the options, yes.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): And, you know what, let me practice my remarks. Where we're going with this conversation I couldn't agree with you more. I'm -- I'm not suggesting that this is a route that either one of us would want to go down -- the state or our tribal friends, but because it's been, you know, expressed by -- by the tribes on a number of occasions, they clearly expressed what their options are and what their intent would be in the event that in your opinion that the state would -- would be in violation of exclusivity, cut off the payments, and we would litigate it. My question is do you know what the state's options are in the event that were to occur?

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: I -- I can't say for sure, and they don't pay me enough to be your Attorney General [Laughing], but obviously, the options as expressed very hypothetically in the Attorney General's opinion from last year was that we would have to shut down or the state would have to force us to shut down our slot operations. That's a no win for you and a no win for us.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Right.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: So --

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Right. But -- but it's -- it's an option. Again, I'm not suggesting going down there, but you know what, I've listened to this conversation the last two -- you know, the last two hearings -- today and last week, and you've made your point very clear, and I get it, and I understand, and I don't begrudge you, but I think

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it's fair that people understand it's not like the state doesn't have any options. Again, I'm not suggesting we -- we'd want to go down that road. It's my hope and it always has been our hope that at the end of the day the stakeholders can get together and consummate a deal that's fair for everyone, but I just think it's important that people realize that there are options pursuant to those MOUs or Compacts that the state has, and we'll leave it at that. But, thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any other questions? Thank you.

GEORGE HESSINGSEN: Thank you for having me.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Aviram Alroy.

AVIRAM ALROY: Good afternoon. My name is Avi Alroy, and I would like to speak with regards to the proposed bill 7330 and 7331. I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to speak. I'm a resident of West Hartford, Connecticut, and I'm employed as Vice-President of Interactive Gaming and Mohegan Gaming and Entertainment since 2012, and with 15 years of experience in online and mobile gaming in the U.S. as well as other European countries.

With regards to bill 7330, we are in full support of conducting a study of online gambling within the state of Connecticut. We have full confidence that a third party study will show what we believe is true, that allowing online gambling within the state will reduce black market off-shore casino gambling and increase state revenues. Online gambling will also allow highly secured and increased gameplay visibility to players, which will allow them to see

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and quantify their playtime and allow them to self-exclude if they wish to.

Now, I'm going to speak with regards to bill 7331. We support moving forward with sports betting within the state of Connecticut with the two federally recognized tribes. Mohegan Gaming and Entertainment owns and operates casinos in multiple states and through those other managed operations we establish, acknowledge, and experience in generated revenues in those locations. We are operating online gambling in New Jersey since 2013, and online as well as bricks and mortar sports betting within the last seven months since the possible repeal. We are also gearing up for sports betting and online gambling in the state of Pennsylvania where we operate. We're highly confident that we can deliver the best in class and secured experience in Connecticut for players in the online space as much as we do in the bricks and mortar today not only with gaming but also with sports. The market in Connecticut is expected to generate more than \$100-million-dollars annually in gross gaming revenue for sports betting. We know for a fact that the market right now is not only existing in black market, but thriving in neighboring states. Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, and Mississippi passed bills and already operating today. More states are going to pass bills in the coming months. There's only an op site if we start spreading operating sooner rather than later. Furthermore, I'm confident that the state of Connecticut will benefit from sports betting as it will reduce black market and out-of-state's paid bets and increase state's revenue. The two Connecticut tribes that are currently operating casinos are best suited for the job because they

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have the required skillsets, expertise, and experience to maximize the state income potential as their data bases and appeal through entertainment and amenities attracts visitation from the entire Eastern region of the country and not just locally. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to speak today. If you have any questions, please.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for being here today, and I'll ask similar questions that I asked the previous testifier.

AVIRAM ALROY: Sure.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Is do you have a definition of casino game?

AVIRAM ALROY: So, unlike my previous colleague, I'm more of an operation rather than a legal person. I'm -- I'm not --

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): That's okay. I'm actually okay with that, so let's -- you know, if you have a definition that you're used to or you've heard in the trades? Feel free.

AVIRAM ALROY: I think it's -- it's a hard similitude to pinpoint and define. It's definitely something that we can write about. I mean just like out of my -- as I see it, you know, if you look at Vegas, what is the offering that Vegas is -- is doing? It's casino, it's table games, it's also sports betting.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. One of the websites that I was looking at said that casino games are

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made up of table games, electronic gaming machines, and random number games. Does -- do you support that extent of a definition?

AVIRAM ALROY: Excuse me. Can you repeat that?

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Sure. I'll repeat that. So, three -- basically three categories; table games, you know baccarat, blackjack; electronic gaming machines like slot machines, online poker, that kind of thing; and random number games such as you know the spin the wheel game or even roulette.

AVIRAM ALROY: So, I -- I think that's -- that's the right definition, but I would extend it to sports betting as well because that has a game of chance, right. You don't -- it's not 100 percent skill, but you don't know who's gonna win if it's the Red Sox or the Yankees, and I see that as a -- as a game of chance, as a casino game.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. So, you're not gonna define casino game, but you believe that sports betting is a casino game, correct?

AVIRAM ALROY: I agree, yes.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Any other questions? Okay. I'm seeing none. Thank you very much.

AVIRAM ALROY: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Joe Corbo.

JOE CORBO: Good afternoon, Chairman Verrengia. Good afternoon, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. My name is Joe Corbo. I'm from

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the Borgata Casino, Hotel, and Spa from Atlantic City, New Jersey, which is an MGM property. I'm the Vice-President and legal counsel there. A position I've held for about 17 years. I am here today to provide testimony on behalf of MGM Resorts International on House Bill 7331, specifically, and on the subject of sports wagering more comprehensively from a New Jersey perspective, which is the perspective that I understand. This committee a couple weeks ago heard testimony from my colleague, Scott Butera who provided you with an overview of MGMs longstanding expertise in sports wagering, the safeguards that are essential, and what works best in the marketplace for consumers and the state. I may cover some of that ground again, but as your session and the important work of this committee moves forward, we appreciate the opportunity to share our expertise with you, and I believe my experience in New Jersey may be of some value for you as well. As it's been said before and as your interest in this subject reflects, Connecticut has a tremendous opportunity in sports wagering as New Jersey has demonstrated property regulated sports wagering can create a solid revenue stream for the state of Connecticut, and move out of the shadows and into the light an industry that has always been there underground but in plain sight. We recognize that the proposed legislation you are considering is a work in progress with much of the detail yet to come. We hope to provide some insights that will help you develop some of that detail as it would apply to Connecticut. As many of you know, MGM is the largest and one of the oldest sportsbook -- sportsbook operators in the country. Historically, our sportsbooks in Nevada process

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nearly a billion dollars of wagers each year with those figures increasing rapidly. MGM has in place the sophisticated technology that provides cutting edge products, age verification, GEO location, and integrity monitoring. Our product is proven to move customers to the legal market and to drive revenues, and it is my understanding that this is precisely what Connecticut is looking to do. I also mentioned that MGM has established landmark partnerships with Major Leagues all across the sporting landscape including MLB, NBA, WNBA, and NHL, and MGM already has access to 31 plus million-member customer database.

We are also aware of what is happening around you and what is likely to happen. Sports wagering is already legal in Rhode Island and New Jersey, of course. Massachusetts is currently considering a sports betting proposal, and New York may take additional steps as well. Understandably, you are looking to move carefully but not too slowly to establish an effective oversight structure and a legal framework that will work for Connecticut and for your residents. The experience of New Jersey may be helpful in that regard. In New Jersey, with a highly competitive sports betting landscape, January set a new record with a betting handle of \$385-million dollars. Of that total, 79 percent was generated online. Trends are developing and with increasing clarity.

If there are key takeaways -- [Bell] -- from the New Jersey experience thus far that I can share with you, they are these: A competitive marketplace is the best environment for consumers and thereby provides the best result for the state and mobile

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wagering is where the action is and where it's going to be. I just have another maybe minute and a half, if that's okay? The short version of this -- competition is driving revenue and revenue is growing. As you contemplate how to best navigate this new landscape for the people of Connecticut and for your state's revenue stream, I believe those considerations move to the top of the list. I recognize and have heard today you have multiple players in Connecticut seeking a foothold on this new landscape, and you have challenges particular to Connecticut, but we believe those can be resolved in a way that can maximize revenue by bringing major players to the field, providing consumers with choices, and taking advantage of what a competitive marketplace can bring to Connecticut. In doing so, we believe there are a number of key components and effective sports wagering framework. Let me just highlight them. Customers must trust the product. There must be a robust regulatory and enforcement structure that will protect customers, protect the integrity of bets or wagers, and protect the reputation of the legalizing jurisdiction in the gaming industry. Integrity is paramount. A competitive market is best for consumers and the legalizing jurisdiction. Beyond New Jersey and the new markets in the United States, what has occurred in Europe that demonstrates this conclusively. Nine of the top European sports betting markets allow competition, and several that started out as monopolies now offer a competitive market. Their revenues are increasing as a result, and finally, the market economics have to work for both operators and the jurisdiction. Sports wagering is a low-margin business. I know you heard that at the

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hearing a couple of weeks ago, and a company has to have size, scale, and product offerings to effectively offer a sports wagering business that has the capacity to drive out black market operators. Thank you very much, and I look forward to your questions.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, you're here from MGM?

JOE CORBO: I am.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Representing them officially?

JOE CORBO: Yes.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, MGM is a reputable casino corporation, they've got experience in casino games?

JOE CORBO: Absolutely.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): So, do you have a definition of casino gaming?

JOE CORBO: I personally am here from a New Jersey perspective, and I -- in New Jersey the legislature defines sports betting as a casino game. That -- that's really all I can bring to the table here.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Gotcha, so New Jersey, sports betting itself is considered a casino game?

JOE CORBO: Yes.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Obviously, the -- the landscape's a little different, especially this

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casino -- I'm sorry. Does New Jersey have any tribal casinos?

JOE CORBO: It does not.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): It's all private casinos?

JOE CORBO: So, I understand it's a -- [Crosstalk].

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): No, it -- but I'm just -- I'm asking anyone who has any experience in the casino industry, you know, if there's a general definition out there. I've tried to find something online. It has not really worked out for me, except for Wikipedia --

JOE CORBO: [Laughing].

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): And, even that's a little bit unreliable, so I'm just trying to -- you know, that's why we're here at the public hearings.

JOE CORBO: Yeah.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): So, I appreciate you taking the time to be here today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

JOE CORBO: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, sir.

JOE CORBO: Hi, Representative. How are you?

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Oh, good -- very good. Tired, but good.

JOE CORBO: [Laughing] I know the feeling.

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REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): Take me down the road. This legislature approves sports betting, recognizing the MOU, and allows the tribes exclusivity for that activity; that does end up with MGM -- and potentially, it ends up with MGM bringing an Equal Protection lawsuit?

JOE CORBO: I would assume that's within the potential. I've got to be real candid with you, though. I was not brought here to speak about that. I was brought here to speak about the New Jersey experience, and -- and to talk about the policy considerations that you're wrestling with right now, so --

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH): And, this is part of what I'm wrestling with because, you know, I've been up here. This is my third year, and there's a lot of players. We're all playing chess. They're all playing chess, and we're the board quite frankly. So, the Equal Protection case brought by MGM ends up initially with a temporary injunction. No sports gaming until the case is determined. In the alternative, this legislature determines that all the players who want a piece of the apple can do sports betting. The tribes bring their own lawsuit, stop paying, temporary injunction, there's no sports betting. So, it would appear to me that the best thing that we should be doing for our taxpayers, for the process, for you guys, for everybody is passing a law that mandates the Attorney General brings a lawsuit to figure out all of these points because otherwise, I'm gonna be here another ten years from now having these same discussions. I absolutely -- well, if I'm around [Laughing]. I guarantee you. I just don't know why -- 'cause that's where we end

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up. We end up in a circle. We end up with no sports gaming no matter -- I'm sure New Jersey's great, but I don't know why we're doing this. I really -- and I hope that if the Attorney General's watching, that he directs somebody to do what I'm suggesting because we will never get an answer, but I thank you, sir, for your testimony.

JOE CORBO: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Any other questions? Just it's been a long day for me, so I -- who -- so the casinos are the only ones that can run sports betting now?

JOE CORBO: Yeah. Well, what happened in New Jersey, and there are two experiences in New Jersey that I think are very analogous to one another. One is online gaming, which is online casino, online slots, online poker. That law was passed, and we opened online gaming in 2014, and in that situation, there were sublicenses that were permitted, so while everything has to flow through the land-based casinos, there are -- I mean at this point in time I think there are probably over 20 different skins or sublicense that are out there competing with one another, which in our opinion is the way to go because that competition drives better product, drives innovation, drive choices for consumers, which in turn generates more tax revenue for the state. So, now, sports betting, which is relatively new of course, also permits sublicenses, and there are also non-Atlantic City casino interests that are running sportsbook. In fact, you just heard the gentleman from Mohegan Sun saying that they're in New Jersey offering sports betting, and they were in New Jersey offering online gaming, which is kind of

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interesting, so we think the more the better. The more competition the better. It's better for consumers. It's gonna drive more interest, more marketing dollars, different kinds of products. Some people like chocolate, some people like vanilla, which is ultimately going to be better for the state because it's gonna drive more revenues.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): But, for the consumer, how is it a better product? Like, here in Connecticut we're talking -- at least initially in the context of this bill, we're talking about tribal casinos, commercial casinos, OTBs, and the Lottery. If we were to expand that -- what you're saying if I'm hearing you correctly -- is the more the merrier, the better the competition, the better it is for the consumer, the better product. Give me -- I'm not sure what a better product is.

JOE CORBO: You know, and I watched online the hearing a few weeks ago, and I sort of sensed that that question is out there, and I guess as I thought about that because of the lack of familiarity that there is with online sports betting maybe think about it in some other online browsing that you do. If you go to a travel site, do you have a preference of Travelocity versus Expedia versus you know whatever the other providers are out there? You probably find one that's more to your liking that's your go-to travel place. If -- if you know you have online banking maybe you've had experience with a couple different banks and you like one over the other or financial services. Do you like E-Trade better than Charles Schwabb? So, they are not uniform and they're different. Just like, you know, you have different casinos if you come to Atlantic

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City or you go to the Las Vegas strip or even here. There are -- there are different offerings out there for different customer tastes, and the more tastes that you can appeal to the broader the market's gonna be, the broader the market is, the more goes into the state's coffers.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): So, and -- and I understand that, but in terms of sports betting, I mean you know you have winners and losers. You have all the in-game betting, you know. I get it. I mean it's expansive now because the mobile platform and the in-game betting, but for the consumer, if we were to expand that and give out more licenses for the mobile platform, is it fair to say that you'd get better odds? Like, if I'm -- if I'm a betting guy, at the end of the day, I want the best odds, I want to make as much money as I can regardless of where I go --

JOE CORBO: Right.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): For the most part.

JOE CORBO: I understand.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): So, is it fair to say that if -- if there's more operators, more than what we're talking about today that it's better for the consumer because they may get better odds, their chances of winning are better?

JOE CORBO: Potentially. Better odds. I don't know about better chances of winning, but potentially, you know, better odds. Just like land-based casinos they're a different pricing mechanisms when it comes to online gaming, so it's not just necessarily the odds. It could be, you know, what are the bonuses

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that you're providing? What are the discounts? So, just like in any other retain establishment, there are discount providers, there are luxury providers, and then there are those that are in-between. We have ads all over our TVs and radios and online right now. You know, folks that are giving out, you know, \$250 dollars for your first bet, and if whether you win or lose we're gonna give you that money back. Tons of promotional opportunities like that, so as many different companies as there are -- and I'm not saying there should be unlimited companies. In fact, Mr. Butera, I think, last week or two weeks ago said he thought five to seven was the sweet spot, but more and bigger better operators that have the public trust -- I'm not saying that the current operators here don't have that. I think that they absolutely should be included in the process, and listen, as someone who comes from New Jersey from a casino that invested, you know, \$2-billion dollars of capital investment and employs thousands of people and spends millions of dollars of goods and capital services, I understand when we speak to our legislature in New Jersey too, all other things being equal, we say, hey, you know, help us out here a little bit. Give us the inside track. I -- what we're suggesting to you here today is all things are not equal, that a more competitive environment is going to be better for the consumer, and it's gonna be better for the state; and therefore, we ask you to consider that.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you.
Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to dig into this odds thing a little bit.

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JOE CORBO: Okay. I think you did that at the last one, so.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I did, and -- and here's the thing. When -- how are you going to get better odds? I mean I -- I understand the rewards programs are different, and if there's a \$250-dollar sign-up bonus, you usually got to win a bunch of stuff to get that back and you got to make a bet equal or equivalent, all that stuff. You don't usually get that back right away. It's always been my experience that any type of thing like that there's always something in it for the house as well, but anyways, obviously, rewards can be different, but odds itself -- if I'm gonna bet \$50 dollars on a game, and I lose, I'm gonna have to pay \$55 dollars. Are you trying to say that someone could try to do \$54? 'Cause all the -- all the -- any place that someone may have made a bet or not -- out in Vegas you go to the different casinos, it's all the same. The point spread might be half a point different. The futures bets could be different. I don't know if that's what you're referring to, but I can't imagine there's going to be a whole heck of a lot of difference and there shouldn't be between one and another 'cause the standard bet is usually 10 percent of the bet.

JOE CORBO: Right.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Meaning you have to put that initial 10 percent in, and then you get that back plus the bet, correct?

JOE CORBO: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Which again comes out -- we talked about that last time --

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JOE CORBO: Yes.

REP. VAIL (52ND): A little less than 5 percent, right? Are you saying that that's gonna be different between -- do you anticipate that that would be different?

JOE CORBO: I'm saying it could be. It -- it could be different. I don't know if it will be or not, but certainly, there -- there's nothing that says you've got to charge a 10 percent VIG. It could be an 8 percent VIG.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Is that common, though? You know --

JOE CORBO: You know, I -- I --

REP. VAIL (52ND): In New Jersey, is it -- [Crosstalk].

JOE CORBO: Well, it -- it's so -- we're so new in New Jersey --

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay.

JOE CORBO: I think that we've pretty much stayed with the standard, but in Las Vegas, you know, the -- I don't know if there's different pricing or not, but I'm gonna take a look into that, and we'll -- we'll get back to you.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Well, I know again with future's bets, that could be different, but -- [Crosstalk].

JOE CORBO: Well, that's -- [Crosstalk]

REP. VAIL (52ND): If Peter's not gonna go off at 50:1 at -- at one -- at one casino and 5:2 at another.

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JOE CORBO: But the -- but the spread and the -- and the odds for future's bets, those are designed to get equal money on either side of the bet, because we're not looking to bet.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yes.

JOE CORBO: We're looking to take a rake, you know -
-

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yes.

JOE CORBO: Like you do in poker.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Yes.

JOE CORBO: You know, you never can perfectly achieve that equality, but that's what we're striving for, and that's how the lines --

REP. VAIL (52ND): You make it as close to 50:50 to make a bet as you can.

JOE CORBO: Yes.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, then because it costs a little bit more to make the bet, that's where you make your -- that's where you generate your money.

JOE CORBO: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, if all bets are equal, that's where you make the money.

JOE CORBO: That's true.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, so that's why I have a hard time understanding how the odds will be different. I thought things were pretty standard that way, so.

JOE CORBO: They could be. I'm -- I'm not saying they are, but that -- that is an element of

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competition. In fact, one thing that I've thought about, and I've never researched this, so now we're digging into the -- into the black market, right, and they have -- I mean I think -- I don't know, but I think that kind of vague is standard in that world as well, right. Well, they don't pay taxes, we do. In order for them to more effectively compete with us, I -- I wonder if at some point -- or maybe it's already happened for all I know -- they're going to drop their price.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I haven't heard from any of them yet, so --

JOE CORBO: [Laughing].

REP. VAIL (52ND): I'm -- I'm not sure how that's gonna go, so I'll keep you in the loop. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Anyone else? I'm seeing none. Thank you, sir.

JOE CORBO: Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Yep. Thank you. David Reynolds.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name's Deacon David Reynolds. I'm with the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference, and I'm here to address three bills today, 7331, 7290, and 7330. The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference is the Public Policy Office of the Catholic Bishops of Connecticut, and is opposed to HB-7331, AN ACT CONCERNING SPORTS WAGERING IN THE STATE, which seeks to legalize an additional venue for gambling within Connecticut. Similar in its opposition to expansion

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of casino gambling in Connecticut, the Conference believes that any expansion of gambling would not be in interest of the common good for the citizens of the state. The Catholic Bishops of Connecticut in unison with other religious leaders in our state, which I think you heard from Michele earlier this morning, urge the Public Safety and Security Committee to act for the common good of the people by rejecting 7331. The Conference believes the citizens in our state would be better served and legislators better informed by the passage of 7290, AN ACT CONCERNING STUDIES OF THE EFFECT OF LEGALIZED GAMBLING, and 7330, A STUDY OF ONLINE GAMBLING, and supports these two bills with critical modifications to each. Although the need for additional state revenue in our state is very clear, the social impact of gambling expansion must be thoroughly researched. In the state's quest for additional revenue, it must seriously consider what collateral damage may occur if this expansion occurs. The concerns over gambling addiction, which leads to debt, bankruptcy, broken families, and crime should far outweigh the perceived financial benefits to the state or to any business within our state boundaries.

The Conference recommends that HB-7290 and HB-7330 both be modified to clarify first that there is a required social impact statement, not just a report on gambling trends or potential legal issues or technology issues, and those type of issues, but actually on the social impact of the bill, and that research should be performed by an independent researcher or research firm that has no financial or business relationship with entities providing gambling services.

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Prior to the final determination of whether or not to allow internet gambling, sports wagering, or casino expansion, the legislature owes it to itself and the people of Connecticut to fully understand the potential negative impacts these activities may have on our communities. Legislators should not allow expansion of gambling venues to take place in Connecticut until these studies are completed. Without question, the state of Connecticut is facing a budget crisis; however, adopting a means to help address that issue, which appears to prey on vulnerable people and they expound societal problems is not the correct approach. The Conference again urges the Public Safety and Committee to reject 7331, and to support its recommendation -- modifying recommendations for 7290 and 7330. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you, sir.
Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening. Good afternoon still.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: [Laughing].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Welcome here. As you may have heard earlier, I'm a member of the catholic church. Is this a position that you know the hierarchy of the church takes on? It's not something that you pulled your -- your churchgoers on, is it?

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: We -- we did not pull the churchgoers, and we obviously know that there's members of our church that support gambling, and gambling -- I mean gambling is okay under our church

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teachings, and drinking and stuff. It's excess that's the problem.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: But, what we do hear and what the bishops do is they look at our social justice teachings, and -- and philosophies. I use the term common good in a statement. That means the government acting in a way that supports all people, so they evaluate it within the teachings of the church, and so they say, is this good, have we met our saturation point on gambling in the state of Connecticut? And, I think at this point they feel they have until they get further answers, and that's why I think they're pursuing this study before we move on. And, let's see what -- what the impact really has been, and I think earlier today's testimony we heard the (inaudible - 05:30:19) Study, which is questionable possibly because of who did it was back in 2008, so the bishops are asking, you know, at that point.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, the most important thing to you is that we do the studies, we make sure that it's somebody independent that does it, they come back with certain findings --

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Right.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, then we -- this would be your recommendation?

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Right.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, then we readdress the issue based on those findings from an independent --

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DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: I think that -- that's the recommendation here.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: And, a good example is if -- you know, if we go to you know open bidding on casinos or something like that, as that process goes on, possibly along with any of those other bills, these studies would progress too, so that when that final decision has to be made -- you know, do we build the casino, do we allow sports betting, whatever, we'll say, well, here's the cost. And, it may reveal other things too such as economics. You know, what is -- are we at market saturation on certain things, but we think more information has to be done.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I appreciate that, and if you could do me a favor and just make sure if for some reason if I vote for this that the arch bishop doesn't throw me out of the church?

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Oh, no, he won't.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. I'm just teasing.
[Laughing].

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: [Laughing].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Any other questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you, sir.

DEACON DAVID REYNOLDS: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Next up is Dan Spillane.

DAN SPILLANE: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I'm Dan Spillane with the National

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Basketball Association, Senior Vice-President and Assistant General Counsel for League Governance and Policy. I appreciate the opportunity to address Bill 7331. We've submitted written comments on the bill, and I won't spend time repeating what we submitted in writing, and I also was just here a couple of weeks ago, so you've heard me on these topics already, so I'll just a couple of brief points, and then open up to questions.

We continue to support the passage of legislation that would legalize betting on sports, on our sports -- and our sport in particular so long as it's subject to strict consumer protections that will protect our fans and make it safe for our fans to bet, and that will protect the integrity of our competitions, and our overall approach on sports betting in general and here in the state of Connecticut is to look for a partnership, a partnership among the state, the regulator, among the operators of sports gambling, and the sports leagues whose games are being bet on, and what we put forward is what we think is a sensible framework that would accomplish that in a lot of different ways, many of which are reflected in 7331, which we really appreciate and have really appreciated the committee's deliberate approach to these issues and listening and taking into account the feedback that we've given, and we've given some suggestions on things that we like to see added to the bill to continue to improve it. Some that I think are reasonably small such as on the issue of information sharing for monitoring purposes to have that information be shared with sports leagues along with the regulator and others that are bigger, and this goes back to the compensation piece that we've

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discussed in the last couple hearings I have appeared at, which just to remind you, not that you may need any reminding -- is that we're looking for a quarter percentage point of the amount that on our games every sports governing body would receive a quarter percentage point of the amount bet on it's games and recognition of the inputs that sports creates for sports betting, that it's the foundational products that goes into betting on sports, that takes into account the risks that sports takes on when there's betting on our games, and the cost that we incur in policing integrity when there's betting on our games, and we have to do more of that in this new world when there's more betting on our games. The amount that comes from the operators. It doesn't come from the state, and just the \$100-dollars gets bet, this is what we would get -- \$100 dollars are bet on NBA, we get a quarter, and the main beneficiaries of opening up sports betting are still going to be the operators of sports betting, is still going to be the state in collecting tens of millions of dollars of tax revenue, but again, we think that in order to have a fair framework that takes into account that we're the content creators and the ones who take on risks and also to motivate us to invest in making sports betting a success in Connecticut, giving sports leagues a seat at the table as well as a stake in the business outcome is something that would be sensible for everyone. So, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Great. Any questions. Just a comment. I know that we've talked about the idea of forming a partnership and in return creating some economic activity here in the state, having a

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greater presence of professional sports leagues. I look forward to continuing to have that conversation, and certainly, create a win/win. We didn't put specifics as far as you know what that would look like. That's something that would be referred to our Department of Economic Development and in negotiating that contract with the Major Leagues, but I think there's some opportunities. You know, particularly in our empty arenas or football fields or whatever -- whatever have you, and I know there are some other options that we had talked about, but it's something, and I look forward to continuing that conversation.

DAN SPILLANE: I look forward to that as well. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thanks. Okay. Anyone else? Okay. Thank you very much.

DAN SPILLANE: Thank you very much.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Next up is Drew Carlson.

DREW CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Drew Carlson. I'm from Global Partners. I'm here in opposition to Senate Bill 1015, AN ACT AUTHORIZING ONLINE LOTTERY AND DRAW GAMES IN THE STATE, so Global Partners are based in Waltham, Massachusetts. We're the leading distributor and marketer for a variety of energy products in the Northeast and mid Atlantic. The company also owns a number of gas stations and convenient stores in Connecticut, including our Alltown and XtraMart brands. At these locations, Global has a front row seat when it comes to observing a strong positive relationship that

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currently exists between the convenient store industry and the state's Lottery program.

Global is strongly opposed to Senate Bill 1015 for these reasons. In our view, the overall foot traffic in convenient stores would decrease significantly if online Lottery was adopted. Since convenient stores operate on very slim margins, the draw of Lottery tickets greatly influences the sale of these other items while customers are in the store. This is paramount to our profitability on average. Seventy percent of our revenue comes from convenient store sales while just 30 percent comes from gas sales. Furthermore, players are no longer had to enter a store to buy Lottery tickets, the sales tax generated from these other items would also be jeopardized. Another reason is the substantial risk for the greater good. Minors with access to debit or credit cards will have easy exposure to the dangers of gambling. In-store Lottery agents are specifically trained to ensure the proper age verification so that Lottery is played safely and security. Additional online Lottery will provide adults battling gambling addiction issues the opportunity to play the Lottery 24/7 from their phones instead of only when convenient stores are operating. It would be a shame to eliminate some of these current checks and balances to help mitigate gambling addiction issues. We urge the committee to oppose Senate Bill 1015, AN ACT AUTHORIZING SPORTS WAGERING AND ONLINE LOTTERY GAMES IN THE STATE. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Representative Vail.

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REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening. So, in -- in the stores, they want to move the Lottery -- the ball picking type of games out -- or not out because you'd still be able to sell those tickets in store, but you would lose some of your foot traffic to people that do that online.

DREW CARLSON: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Have you tried to crunch the numbers to figure out what type of affect that would be on you guys?

DREW CARLSON: I don't have the number specifically for global. I know that I'm pretty sure our industry group, SEMA, who I think you're going to hear from a little later might have some of those numbers specifically.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. And, again, so this wouldn't be for scratch tickets. They'd still come in for their scratch tickets.

DREW CARLSON: Correct.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, I mean that's something that -- to keep in consideration. I'd like to find out what type of money, you know, how much -- if someone did some research, as to how much that's gonna cost the local community source.

DREW CARLSON: That's definitely something we can do.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, I know you have to factor in the foot traffic and maybe they'd buy a coffee, maybe they'd get a candy bar or you know, a gallon of milk, whatever, that's -- you know, I get it, but

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I'd like to hear some hard numbers of you guys have any.

DREW CARLSON: Sure.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Anyone else?
Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Drew, for being here. The President of the Lottery was here earlier, and he said that there was no numbers that would show an impact -- [Clearing throat] -- on retail purchases. So, basically, my question was what impact would this have on convenient stores, gas stations, etc., and the answer was zero. There would be no decline whatsoever in retail operations, so obviously, with your testimony, do you have any numbers, any statistics, anything to refute from the President said?

DREW CARLSON: Yeah, so we do have one number that really stands out, and that's that 70 percent of our revenue comes from convenient store sales while just 30 percent comes from gas sales. Obviously, if, you know, people aren't going in to take in Lottery, it's going to drop down consistently, and if there's less foot traffic in the stores, you know, those numbers are definitely going to hurt, and you know, Global we have 51 company operated sites in Connecticut. We also supply about over 250 sites, and that's small business owners who a lot of times have small profit margins really, and they rely on these sales to -- you know, to make the -- take the checkbook.

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REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Well, I understand the answer. I appreciate it; however, the -- [Clearing throat] -- what I was getting at was other states have appointed iLottery, and from what he had said, and again, I haven't seen the numbers recently, but from what he's saying is those retailers did not see any drop-offs in retail sales, meaning that whoever were to purchase online Lottery tickets would do so in addition to whoever is buying them currently now. So, with your statement, do you have anything to support any data? Any reports that would show that with online Lottery sales it indicates a downfall or a decline in retail sales?

DREW CARLSON: Right, and I apologize. I actually don't have the hard data on that. I believe there will be some -- some folks testifying a little later that might have that for you guys.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Okay. Thank you.

DREW CARLSON: Sorry. Yeah, thank you.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): I look forward to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions. I'm seeing none. Thank you, sir.

DREW CARLSON: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Marianne Fichtel.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: I feel like I just won the Lottery. All right. Good afternoon, Representative Verrengia and the rest of the committee. My name is Marianne Fichtel, a resident of New Canaan. For much of the past year, I've had the good fortune to work with the tireless advocates at Connecticut

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Juvenile Justice Alliance, but I am here today on my own behalf speaking in strenuous opposition to HB-7332, AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE WELFARE OF REPEAT JUVENILE OFFENDERS AND THEIR VICTIMS. Unfortunately, too bad Senator Champagne is no longer here because he had requested some stats, and I have many. The Office of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention issued a report in 2010 that analyzed six large-scale studies on the efficacy of youth transfer as a deterrent. There was a strong consistency of findings across the six, which had different methodologies kind of strengthening that consistency showing a significantly higher rate for recidivism among juveniles transferred to adult court even if they only received a sentence of probation. Feeding into that is the fact that (inaudible - 05:43:05) youth in adult prison are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted in adult prison than juvenile prison often within the first 48 hours. They are 36 times -- 36 times more likely to commit suicide than juveniles that remain in the juvenile system. That plus the adult criminal record that they then incur means that upon release they have trouble obtaining jobs, education, financial aid, and they're barred from the opportunities that would come with and so therefore roughly are assessed to have a 34 percent greater chance of recidivism, so that pretty much undermines the public safety argument that -- that this law proposes.

I've also -- you know, several previous speakers have alleged that the Raise the Age legislation somehow triggered these car theft crimes, but that is a -- and pardon my Latin -- post hoc ergo propter hoc argument that is -- assumes a baseless

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causation. I offer an alternate theory with a little help from a July 2018 article from the Republican American, which I know is a very liberal brag, but we won't go there. So, in that article a state trooper is quoted as saying that a state of recent incidents had one common theme -- all the vehicles were unlocked. A second state trooper is quoted saying that in 20 thefts in the Litchfield area all the cars were left unlocked. The Cheshire Police Chief is quoted saying that in 89 of the reported local break-ins 87 vehicles were unlocked. He continued describing surveillance footage showing suspects approaching multiple cars, checking the handles, and if they pull the handle and door opens, they will go in and take stuff. [Bell]. If it's closed, they will walk away.

So, my point there is just to say to me that points to a trend, and frankly, that report and dozens like it represent, to me, a parenting crisis in Connecticut. Why aren't parents in Greenwich teaching their children to lock their cars? Why don't families in Westport and Simsbury and Fairfield recognize the values of the cars in their driveways and responsibly manage their property? I think that's such a terrible example.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Representative Vail.
Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening -- afternoon.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Hi.

REP. VAIL (52ND): I probably shouldn't say this on tv if this is on tv, but I don't lock my car.

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MARIANNE FICHTEL: Okay.

REP. VAIL (52ND): You know -- you know, a certain level of trust. That doesn't mean that someone has the right to come in and take it.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: No, but --

REP. VAIL (52ND): There's nothing else to say after that.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Well, there is -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): I mean it doesn't give someone a right to take my car because the car door is unlocked.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: I didn't say they had a right.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, that's just -- [Crosstalk].

MARIANNE FICHTEL: I didn't say they had a right.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. I'm not being argumentative. Just making a statement. Would you think that -- so you talked about kids that go to adult court.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Yep.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Would kids that are arrested for the first time, tend to go to adult court?

MARIANNE FICHTEL: What did the state prosecutor tell you on that?

REP. VAIL (52ND): Uh, no.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Okay. Well, if -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. So -- [Crosstalk].

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MARIANNE FICHTEL: They have committed a class A felony or something that -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. But -- so in general -- [Crosstalk].

MARIANNE FICHTEL: That gets them to adult court then they would, or at the discretion.

REP. VAIL (52ND): But, we weren't talking specifically about classes --

MARIANNE FICHTEL: I mean if you don't think that they're going often enough you can -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Hold on here.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Prosecutor.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Hold on.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): I'm gonna ask questions -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): Ma'am, hold on a second here. You guys. Hold on.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Sorry. Excuse me.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): He asked the question. You get the answer.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: I didn't hear the end of it.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Then, repeat the question.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Thank you. So, do -- do juveniles tend to go to adult court on their first offense based on your knowledge or any -- any of the testimony you've heard today.

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MARIANNE FICHTEL: Well, based on the fact that I think it's more rare for them to commit class A or the qualifying class B felonies, no, I wouldn't think so, and I wouldn't think it's appropriate. That's why we have a juvenile justice system so that they won't go to adult court.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. So --

MARIANNE FICHTEL: That's something that should be rarely -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, it's unlikely on the first arrest unless they did something -- a class A felony -- that they would be likely to go to adult court? Would you agree with me on that?

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Yeah, and I don't think they should.

REP. VAIL (52ND): And, so maybe on the second time they're not likely, maybe the third time they're not likely.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: For what kind of offense?

REP. VAIL (52ND): For, you know, obviously, we can talk about auto theft in the Waterbury area.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Sure.

REP. VAIL (52ND): They don't, and obviously, that's where this whole bill stems from, so by the time they go to adult court, these are probably people that already have a high level of recidivism to begin with, so I think using that statistic that says that youth going to adult court have a higher rate of recidivism --

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Yep.

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REP. VAIL (52ND): Is an apples-to-orange comparison because youths don't -- youths that aren't coming back for recidivism in youth court, they're coming out of the system. They said there were over 100 different youthful car thieves in the Waterbury area, but only six keep coming back. It means most of them are not coming back, maybe they learned their lesson the first time. So, to use that, by the time they go to an adult court -- this is somebody who's already violated over and over or they do something major, and I think people that do major crimes are more likely to recidivism to begin with.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Well, the research actually shows that -- that children are more likely to have the capacity to then learn. If you send them to the adult system where they receive less therapeutic care, which goes against the statutory goals of Connecticut's Juvenile Justice System, and I can read them to you if you want, but I don't need to. That not sending them to appropriate therapy -- an appropriately therapeutic lockup means that they will come out with more trauma, that they will be more likely to -- to reoffend because they can't get a job, they have no education, can't get a loan, and then they're deeper in the system, and now taxpayers are burdened with a reoffending and deeply more traumatized adult.

REP. VAIL (52ND): But, we heard testimony earlier that when -- when -- when talking about an adult prison system, they were talking about the Manson Youth Institution --

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Sure.

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REP. VAIL (52ND): As an adult. They don't go to Osborn Correctional Facility. They're not going to Northern. They're going to a place that 15, 16, and 17-year-olds are separated from the 18, 19, 20, and 21-year-olds, and they are offered a wide variety of programs. That's what the whole place is based on.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: If anybody here has not read -- Sarah Eagan who was here earlier today -- they have not read her report on the conditions of confinement, I suggest you do, but I warn you it is chilling. Because --

REP. VAIL (52ND): All right. Well, I read it, and I -- and I worked there, so I'm familiar with it.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: Okay. Well, I'm -- [Crosstalk].

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, all right.

MARIANNE FICHTEL: With kids and [Crosstalk]

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Okay. Thank you. Anyone else? I'm seeing no one. Thank you for your testimony. Theresa Blackwood [phonetic]. Robert Zuckerman.

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: I think it's safe to say good evening. [Clearing throat]. I've learned a great deal sitting here today. I've been here since early this morning, and I'm here to share how a gambling addiction nearly ruined my life. First, a brief background of who I am. I'm Rob Zuckerman. I'm 69 years old and grew up in Westport, Connecticut. I've been married for 46 years, and we have a 33-year-old son. I was a successful advertising photographer for over 30 years. My career ended in

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2008 largely as a result of the economic recession. A year later, my son almost died in a bicycle accident.

I've always been a recreational gambler -- poker with high school friends, a few nights in a casino while on a yearly golf trip, and occasional trip to Foxwoods or Mohegan Sun. I viewed this gambling as normal and recreational. However, during the stressful periods I've mentioned, I discovered online gambling. The first few weeks I won \$80,000 dollars and was withdrawing a weekly limit of \$5000 dollars. Over the next two years, I lost \$200,000 dollars. When I finally admitted I had a gambling problem, I entered Gambler's Anonymous and started receiving weekly counseling at Connecticut Renaissance. Fortunately, even though my wife was in shock and disbelief, she stayed with me. It took several years for me to deal with the shame, remorse, and anger this illness had caused me and my extended family. Since this horrible experience, I've become a statewide gambling peer counselor. At present, there are only five of us in the entire state. My message to those affected by this devastating illness is you don't have to continue to live like this. Only you can decide if you're a compulsive gambler. Until you truly want to stop, your life will be full of lies, pain, and confusion.

I'm currently attempting to get the message out to parents about the serious consequences of adolescent gambling. Kids are gaming at an ever-increasing rate. This multi-billion-dollar industry is preying on the still developing brains of our youth. By increasing access to online sports betting and additional casinos in our state, we will see added

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revenue at a great cost to our citizens young and old. As a recovered compulsive gambler, I applaud the serious consideration you are giving these issues. Thank you for this opportunity to share my experience.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you, sir. Are there any questions? Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks -- thanks for being here for so long, Mr. Zuckerman. How long have you been here waiting to testify?

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: I came in here at 10:30 this morning.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): God bless you. Thank you.

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: I drove from Fairfield like you. [Laughing].

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Yeah, and it can't be easy for you to share this story of -- of the experience that you went through and the loss that you went through, and thank goodness your family is still there to support you, but it can't be easy for you to be sharing this story.

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: Well, I have to tell you, Tony, the -- my family stuck with me and over a long time, I rebuilt the trust. Because of trust, I don't gamble, and I'm giving back, and I'm not proud of it, but it can happen to anybody. I'm a normal golfer, photographer, and it happened. And, with all that was spoken about today about the revenue and the questions about this gambling, that gambling, more casinos, the more we have access to sports betting, betting online, betting on your phone, and more casinos like in a city like

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Bridgeport right near me, it just makes it that much more available and people that might have an inclination to gamble will get hooked. There are 30,000 or 40,000 people in the state that have a gambling problem, and you multiply it x9, which is I'm hearing, you have almost a half-million people affected by this illness, and anyway, I appreciate all of you listening to me.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, we hear this all the time that -- and I -- I appreciate you prefacing in the beginning that you played some occasional poker, you -- you socially gamble. It was all well and good, but the trigger was the big win, and -- and can you share a little bit because I think it's important for -- for the committee and this legislature to understand the insidious attraction of -- of gambling addiction, how it could affect anyone, and I think you shared earlier is the fact you would always thought it would never happen to you.

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: No, I didn't even know about it basically, but we're all susceptible. The big win is nice, but you know, once I got back to even, you think a normal person would stop, but I couldn't because I'm a compulsive gambler. There's a difference between me and you, and there may be compulsive gamblers in this room, there may not be, but once you start down that road, you get kind of lost, and fortunately, for me, again, Gambler's Anonymous worked for me -- very supportive, and Renaissance -- Connecticut Renaissance -- you know, therapy for several years helped, and here I am now being an advisor.

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SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, in your role as an advisor, do you go out and you counsel and you share your story, do you find that there are so many others that struggle and -- and go through this recovery, but often do it in silence and in possible shame, and that we don't hear enough about that?

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: People don't do it on their own, Tony. Unless they're in GA or counseling and they've admitted that they are a compulsive gambler. There's a list like in AA. It's 20 questions they ask you. If you answer seven correctly, you're probably a compulsive gambler, but only you can decide that, and I get calls occasionally, I get references occasionally, and I listen. Sometimes people are off the wall, almost always they are -- they are depressed. They're lost and they're lying and they owe money and they don't see any way out, and when they're ready -- if they're ready, I'll take them to GA with me. It's kind of scary to go in initially, and one or two times, but in the first visit, they're realize everyone in that room has been through it. They've all had this horrible experience, and you know, some don't like to call it an illness. It is an illness, the same as any other illness, so you can -- you can, fortunately, there re tools out there to beat this illness.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, today, we are talking about sports and internet gambling and -- and you shared your experience, how you kind of grew into it. They don't exist in this state right now, so your addiction was incurring -- was occurring while you were looking at traditional --

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: Yeah, I was --

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SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Platforms of gambling. What would happen if sports gambling, internet gambling was made available to you? Because I know you're -- you're a big sportsman, big golfer -- what -- what would that have done for you if it was much more readily available through these platforms?

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: I can't bet on my golf anymore, Tony, but the -- obviously, the access, the availability will increase compulsive gamblers. I can't give you statistics. I know you're after statistics. Here's a relatively normal successful guy, fell victim to this, and it wasn't just the money. It's the action. It's not -- the dollars don't matter. We always say it's just zeros. Somebody loses \$5000 dollars, and they're a compulsive gambler. I've known people who have lost millions of dollars, and it's no big deal. It's just the action. It's not -- it's not necessarily the money, and you guys are talking about money and revenue, but you should also be aware of the danger it's gonna cause this state -- the people in the state.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): I think that's an important point when we look at revenue, but what did it cost you and -- and for your experience as a counselor, strictly as that? What have you seen in the losses of individuals that are going through addiction but also at the same time what the cost is to the state in being able to protect and -- and help those people going through? There is a significant cost to society, not only to the individual and their family, but also cost to society, which is ultimately born by the state, so perhaps, this -- this -- this perceived revenue from -- from gambling

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expansion may be a revenue neutral because of all the potential addiction services that will be on the backs of the state's pocketbook?

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: I've met a lot of people through the last ten years, and some have lost their families, some have gone to jail, and some stick with GA, some people don't like counseling. You know, it's all over the ballpark, but the bottom line is if we make this more accessible, there has to be an increase in compulsive gambling. It's not a question of is it maybe gonna happen, it's gonna happen, and I can -- I can attest to that. I can't give you numbers, but like you said, it's gonna be a balancing act.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, finally, thank you, Mr. Chair. I -- I hear and I heard your description, and in some ways, I can't help but parallel as the General Assembly as we explore gambling expansion, as we look at sports internet gambling. It's the -- it's the action. It's the opportunity for a quick get rich type of schematic. It is no different than the need for additional gambling because you're always gonna end up winning, and unfortunately, as you learn through your addiction, the House always wins and you're gonna lose; is that correct? Would that be a good comparable?

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: That is -- that is correct, and one last thing, I mentioned kids. The gaming that's going on with kids now from little kids three and four years old becomes binge gaming in their teens and in college, and their brains aren't developed until 25 or 30, somebody said 24. We are doing a disservice to our families and our kids if we

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promote these -- make these things more and more accessible.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you very much for coming down, and I appreciate your time, and I want to thank and appreciate the Chair for his indulgence on this. Thank you.

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN: Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you, sir. Christina Quaranta. She left. Bill Morgan.

BILL MORGAN: And, good evening. I would like to take a moment to say thank you for being here. I know how hard it is to be the last people on the list to talk, and I also know how hard it is to sit where you guys are sitting today and continue to be motivated to listen, so I'm gonna just start out by saying thank you, and thank you for hopefully keeping this discussion open and listening for a moment about my story.

To many of you, you might not recognize me, but to others, you'll recognize that I was the former Chief of Police here at the State Capitol, and in my personal and private life, I am a neighbor, a colleague, a friend, and what some of you might find interesting or discover as surprising is, I have an illness. And, the illness has a DMS-5 code of 312.31, and it's called an addiction to gambling. You notice I use the word addiction. It's also known as ICD-10, F63.0, or pathological gambling, so am I going to be defined by this medical problem? And, I chose not to be. I last bet November 14, 2015, and I've worked hard on my recovery and treatment and counseling [Crying], and I've tried to

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educate myself and to help others. I didn't know if I was going to come to speak today because there is a certain reality of personal stigma that goes with being identified as a problem gambler. People think you can't or don't have any willpower. Somebody in this room might be willing to say, oh, if I came to you and said I had cancer and my cancer was lung cancer and I'm gonna die anyways, would you light me up a cigarette, would you hand me a pack of cigarettes? Because I have a disease, but if I walked up to you and said, I have a disease called pathologic gambling, you want to give me \$20 bucks, I gotta go buy some scratch off tickets, you're not gonna. You're gonna say that man's crazy. Not only is he a pathological gambler, he's nuts. Well, there are people who get to be given a chance to learn from other people's mistakes, and in the criminal justice system, we talk about recidivism, we talk about these other things you were talking about today, and you use this time, so I chose to learn about gambling. I chose to learn about the mistakes and to try to better myself. I got trained by the Council on Problem Gambling and went through several of their education programs. I know that's my time, and thank you. But, will be for a few more minutes.

And, the first question is anyone in this room want to get a flesh-eating disease? See, you got about a one in a million chance to get a flesh-eating disease, and if you play Powerball tonight, you got 1 in 294-million changes of winning give or take. So, the question is you have 294 more chances to get a flesh-eating disease than win Powerball; are you buying the ticket? See, that's how you correlate things, so I went on and was taught and

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learned about being a recovery coach through CCAR. We have great resources in Connecticut. You really need to learn about them and support them, and then a few weeks ago I went further and became a Recovery Support Specialist from Recovery University through Advocacy Unlimited. All of those programs are supported through dollars spent and grants given by the legislature through gambling and Connecticut Problem Gambling. So, why do I need to have recovery? And, it's simple. I want to live, and -- and it can be that simple. I have been blessed because as an afflicted person tends to have problems with your family, and people tend to want to abandon you, but I've been blessed by having both my faith, my family, and my friends that have stood up and stood with me.

However, my illness doesn't have a pill to take, so if I was able to go take a pill to control my diabetes or get a weekly transfusion, then I would be healthier, but my health and wellness comes from my counseling, my membership and fraternal organizations, my activities in the community, my being involved in the recovery community. You heard a member talk about GA, and those are all areas that I attend and go to, and I also work within my own family and counselors with my wife, so that she can understand this disease. So, as I get to the point where it's most important to understand that I have recovery and it's fleeting. Why is it fleeting? Because I make a decision today to go across the street to the Shell station and buy a scratch off ticket, I don't have recovery anymore. I have to start again because I have to believe that I am not gonna buy that ticket today. I am fearful that many people don't recognize the desire of this. Yes,

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it's immediate access to the world, but it's also immediate disaster. Most of you in this room are the age that your parents had one phone. It was in their bedroom, and if it rang after 9 o'clock at night, certain people got cussed out. That's the way it was in my house, and now, you probably don't blink if your kids or your nieces or nephews are on this thing at 2 o'clock in the morning or you hear it buzzing. I'm gonna tell you if you pass internet gambling, you better also pass a law that says take these away and throw them in the trash because they're gonna cause you more problems.

All right, the good news is I talk too much off my screen and it died [Laughter], but I'm willing to at this point tell you to go to my testimony, and certainly, I'm sitting here to answer questions and I am willing to be honest with you about the disease. I will tell you the terminology I like to use is significant amount of money, and I also want to tell you that it's important to realize that if you do -- and I, unfortunately, expect it, there will be some new gambling, some new regulations coming forward that you need to make an honest commitment of a large percentage of that revenue -- any new revenue should go to programs for gambling prevention and recovery because without that you're not gonna have people in society here. The statistics are pretty daunting. One statistic I read was that about 25 percent of suicides have some relationship to gambling, and I can tell you that when you think you're worth more dead than alive, suicide becomes something you think about.

Finally, you also need to -- as a former police chief, I will also support the changes in the

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juvenile justice, so you know that. But, I'll take questions, any ones that you'd like to ask, I'm willing to discuss.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Senator Hwang.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Thank you. Welcome, Chief. When did you serve in the Capitol?

BILL MORGAN: I -- I retired -- no, I can't say I'm retired because people will think I'm a pig for being a state retiree. I'll say I -- I changed careers in 2006, and I went into education.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Okay. Well, thank you for your service.

BILL MORGAN: I started -- I started in 1985.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Well, thank you for your service. In fact, I saw you came earlier today, and the welcome from people throughout this building was -- was very engaging, so you -- you are obviously recognized, and thank you for your service on that.

BILL MORGAN: Thank you.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): As a law enforcement official and -- and a button-up type of individual, did you ever think that you would be a gambling addict?

BILL MORGAN: No, and -- and the problem is it's exactly where I was headed as a type A personality. See, the drive in my head, the buzz in my head to be successful, to be better than, to be smarter than outsmart, you know, the casino, I could figure out the cards, I could do the card counting, I could do these things is part of the drive that's in your brain for that adrenaline, and for the drugs that occur in your body when you are successful. I -- I

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-- my recovery coach training I met a gentleman who had been an airplane pilot, and -- and we discussed how the high stress environments are very prone to alcoholism and drug addiction, but if you look at what they've done in the airplane industry, they've created a very tightknit set of restrictions for alcoholism and pilots, and that type of formulated recovery format and the fact that you had a very good lucrative career, made people very successful. The problem is when you get into these dilemmas of addiction you don't always have people around you to support you, and the airline industry has done a good job with their alcohol programs, but I don't think Connecticut has completely accepted their contributing factor in some of the gambling issues.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): And, having served in this building, I think there is always the climber for additional revenue, additional revenue, but also from your experience of being somebody who suffered through the addiction, and you so eloquently put the incredible resources and support that you have from your faith and your family. They're all there, but if they didn't have those, would that responsibility indeed fall to the state in being able to help those by gambling addiction? And, as I asked earlier, with all of our talk about gambling and the gambling expansion and especially today about sports and internet gambling and you illustrated how important it is, this insidious machine that we carry all the time with us; do you think the possibility is we're chasing after that gold at the end of the rainbow that may not exist and all of this revenue chase may be revenue neutral?

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BILL MORGAN: To your point, I -- I'm gonna say one of the things that people who I first meet and they talk about oh, you don't gamble, and my thing is I don't play because I won't lose. I can't lose if I don't play. Now, the Lottery will tell you, you can't win if you don't play, but the reality is you lose. There's -- there's no positives when we look at the denigration of a society, and if we accepted gambling and devices and all these things are gonna be just a means to an end for revenue, at the end of that, you won't have either. You won't have the revenue, and you won't have the society that you want because you need to be aware of there's a cost. There is no free lunch in the world. Everything has a cost, and in this particular case, the cost is societal, families.

You know, I am blessed. I had a strong family. I had a great wife who stood up and said, no, that's not the person I married. You need to look at this problem, and you need to get help. I had a willingness to educate myself. I had a willingness to go out of my way to learn about it. I didn't decide, well, you know what, I'm worth more dead than alive, I'll be dead. You know? But, that's a real, real place many people are in, and you know, you heard about the 20 questions in the GA format, and I'll tell ya, read 'em, and think about how if you are doing seven of those questions, then you might have a problem with gambling. I had 19. The first time I read them and went through it -- 19, and I thought to myself, oh, my Lord. You know, how did that happen? Because it does happen and it doesn't mean that you're not diligent, and it doesn't mean that the disease is going to defy you. It just means that's where you are at that moment,

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and you have to take a stance to change that. It -- it's really poignant for me that as an individual with the law enforcement background and the impeccable reputation and discipline that is needed for law enforcement that you became addicted, and you were at the cusp, and -- and recognizing, as you just shared, that you were willing to lose practically everything due to gambling. Does that scare -- it scares me from a general public standpoint that a -- a respected law enforcement official, disciplined, focused, articulate presentation, knows what's what has become an addict to addiction -- an addict to gambling. That should scare that it could happen to anyone. But, it's happened to you. I'll take it a step further. In many instances, gambling is a codependent, co-addiction with alcoholism and drug use, and -- and so what's really scary to me is had I had shoulder surgery or got injured on the job and was given opioids, could I be another type of addict? And, my brain may have chosen that because it's not, you know, always about what you do. It's about the chemicals in your brain and what they're doing to get you motivated, to get you out of bed in the morning, to get you to have that electricity like your motivated like this is a cool thing to do, and then it takes over, and the dopamine wins and you lose, and so if we were gonna sit here and sell heroin and make a profit from selling heroin knowing we were going to injure a certain number of people who couldn't control their heroin addiction, would we be having this conversation? People would say, oh, my God, that's an addictive drug heroin; what are you doing? But, aren't we doing that?

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SENATOR HWANG (28TH): I'll just end with this, and the pervasiveness is evident in everything you do and everything in your life from this day forward. That's part of addiction recovery -- saying that. You know, we have in our -- in our testimonies here when it's a large mass of people waiting to go -- we have a lottery system on occasions. If you were forced to get an order to testify and you had to draw a lottery, would you be able to do that and what would happen if you drew the number one? What would that have done to your recovery and addiction? It's as simple as that, right?

BILL MORGAN: It is even -- that's an excellent, excellent analogy because I go to a dinner with the Knights of Columbus, and I don't participate in the raffles. I don't participate in the 50/50s. I don't participate in any of those chance moments, and -- and people who I know that go to AA -- and there's been times in the past where they've had, you know, raffles -- don't recognize the co-existence of gambling addiction and alcoholism, and so when that's pointed out to them, you'll find that most places won't have the raffles anymore. They won't have those lotteries, so you're right. If I had to go into a lottery system, I would have probably just waited because for me to have to take out that moment of that point in my recovery, it's not worth it for me to take a risk to lose my recovery to when I speak, so I'll speak last.

SENATOR HWANG (28TH): Again, thank you very much for your testimony and your service, and I want to thank the Chair for his indulgence again. Thank you very much, sir.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any other questions?

BILL MORGAN: Thank you for your time.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you very much, Bill. I appreciate your testimony. Next up is John LaDue, followed by Len Suzio.

JOHN LADUE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and committee. My name is John LaDue. I'm with Pride Stores. A family owned group of convenient stores based out of Western Massachusetts. We have three stores in Connecticut, two in Simsbury, one in Windsor Locks, and a new one that's presently being built in Hartford, and looking to expand more into the Connecticut area. So, I'm here -- after that, I'm here to speak in support of Bill 7331, concerning sports wagering in the state. If the purpose of offering sports betting in Connecticut is to generate funds for the state and to bring illegal sports betting into legal platforms, the Connecticut Lottery is probably the most logical choice. They already operate statewide gaming, and it would bring revenue into our locations.

It's important for us because seeing that Connecticut has probably one of the highest motor fuel tax, we lose a lot of customers north of the border to Massachusetts. If sports wagering was allowed with the Lottery, we'd probably attract more customers staying in the state and then bringing people from Massachusetts now into Connecticut, which would generate additional revenue. With the Lottery not having increase in commissions that they have paid since implementing it, this new offering, again, would offer more of appeal to a more diverse

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customer base and help us generate again additional revenue.

The other fact would be that our employees already play an important role in preventing underaged gambling with the Lottery, and they're already trained to identify and verify age of customers before they make a purchase, whether it be Lottery, tobacco, and in some of our stores, alcohol, so we think we could help with that as well. I thank you for taking your time and listening to me, and I'll answer any questions.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you. Any questions? I'm seeing none. Thank you very much. And, Len, it was a false alarm. Actually, I skipped five speakers ago, Chris Herb is up next if he's still here? And, I apologize, Len. Actually, I apologize to Chris. He was --

CHRIS HERB: You're saving the best for last.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Yes, yeah, and Chris, I apologize.

CHRIS HERB: No, that's fine. So, my name's Chris Herb. I'm the president of the Connecticut Energy Markers Association. Our members own about a thousand convenient stores that sell gasoline throughout Connecticut. We're here today in favor of House Bill 7331, and we are opposed to Bill 1015. So, for several decades Connecticut has had the highest gas tax in New England, putting convenient stores that we represent at a considerable disadvantage when competing against other retailers along our state's borders. House Bill 7331 has the potential to level the playing field by providing us with the ability to offer sports wagering at our

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Lottery terminals. Connecticut Lottery has demonstrated growth and innovation over the years, and as their largest partners were confident that there's no better choice to administer sports wagering than they are. Convenient stores in Connecticut where gasoline is sold is unable to sell beer unlike in some of the other states placing us at further disadvantages. My point is, is that in other states that have had tax advantages of over 20 cents per gallon in other states where beer and gasoline is sold, we continue to lose consumers that are commuting back into Connecticut, stopping in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York. This bill and having Connecticut Lottery have the ability to offer sports wagering, puts us back into the game. It allows us to attract our customers back to our stores, and along with that, will come sales tax revenue, petroleum gross earning tax revenue, gasoline excise tax revenue, cigarette tax revenue. We've lost these customers.

We have seen an appreciable decline in the number of retailers along Connecticut state borders. This helps level the playing field. Like I said, Connecticut Lottery has been a tremendous ally, and we're here to support this bill so that they have that. I'm -- like I said -- with that being said, our tremendous partners also want to go online, and I know that there were some questions. I did submit written testimony on 1015, but I'll just answer the questions. I know that you said earlier testimony said that there has been no demonstration that there's a reduction in sales in these stores. The states that have had this are still relatively early in the evolution of it, so I would make the argument that we have not seen enough experience to

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demonstrate that. I would also say that logically speaking that we think we'd like to see more of an experience than other states where this exists to take -- to have a further erosion of the foot traffic in our stores could be potentially detrimental. The current state energy policy wants to move 3-million vehicles to electricity. That ends the 1400 convenient stores that sell gasoline in Connecticut. We have to find other ways to have these revenue streams, and that's why we support the sports wagering bill, but we're opposed to moving the online -- the draw games to online. I tried to summarize since we were -- it's getting late.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Very good. Representative Sredzinski.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and you kind of preempted my question because I -- you've been here since -- you know, for the last eight hours, and you probably knew it was coming. But, do you have any data specific or do you agree with the Presidents assessment with the data but also disagree with the fact that we haven't seen enough information, we haven't seen enough time pass? And, what I mean by that is obviously if someone is used to going to a gas station or convenient store to buy Lottery tickets and the option comes up for online purchase, they might not immediately the next day switch over and stop going to the gas station. Old habits die hard, and it may be something that takes a little while to transition over to. So, if you'd just give me a little bit more information on that and if you have any data, that would be very helpful.

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CHRIS HERB: Well, I agree with the latter. We think that Connecticut Lottery provided accurate testimony, and that it is more -- there has not been enough experience for us to determine the long-term effects of moving draw games to an online platform, so that -- but we do have in our testimony we outlined five strategies, which we think could help curb the impact that online Lottery would have long-term and also help with age verification and protecting against underage gambling because we are real live people, and we know when a 14-year-old comes in to try to cash a ticket or to buy a ticket, so I think that those -- like I said, I won't go line-by-line, but all five of those points are in our written testimony that I submitted.

REP. SREDZINSKI (112TH): Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHRIS HERB: So, I -- I can try to track down whatever data is available, but we're not in disagreement with Connecticut Lottery. We just don't think there -- there's enough experience to have accurate data to predict.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Fair enough. Representative Vail.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening. I can certainly attest to how gas prices are higher on the border in Connecticut than they are in Massachusetts. The logic -- I mean I don't see how if we went online that logically speaking you wouldn't lose some foot traffic for people not coming in the store. I mean it's a matter of how much are you going to lose, and I'm curious to get that information when those results first come in,

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but also, do you think would you be able to offset that with the addition of sports wagering and then some?

CHRIS HERB: Correct. Yeah, that -- and that I was wondering if someone was going to point out how we could be at one place on one bill and a different place on another one, and we do think that this has the potential to mitigate a move to online. It doesn't mean that we support it 'cause we're more in the -- in regards to 1015, we are asking to do no harm. You know, don't make a move until we know that for instance Georgia has the most mature online Lottery game. We want to see maybe a few more years down the road how that pans out, so we're asking you to don't make a move now that we'd have to reverse later 'cause I don't think that would ever happen, so -- so as you heard in previous testimony, between 70 and 80 percent of our profits come from in-store sales. Gasoline in some cases is a loss leader or it's close to break even, so anything that -- that even curbs foot traffic in those stores slightly could have quite a detrimental effect to our ultimate profitability, and like I said, if you take into consideration the energy policy that the state has adopted by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and we move 3-million vehicles to electricity, you don't need us for what our primary -- what we are primarily composed for -- to sell gasoline.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So, if your sales are 70 percent in-store and 30 percent gasoline, where does the Lottery fit into that? What percentage -- are they a percentage of the 70 percent?

CHRIS HERB: Correct. Yes, they --

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REP. VAIL (52ND): And, what percentage do they represent? The Lottery games.

CHRIS HERB: I don't know that. I'll get back to you with that number. I --

REP. VAIL (52ND): That would be -- that would be good to know. Are you opposed to the -- you know, obviously, the Lotto wants to be part of the sports wagering, off-track betting, wants to be part of the sports wagering. The casinos want to be part of it. Are you -- are you in opposition to everyone getting a piece of the action?

CHRIS HERB: You know, we only do business with Connecticut Lottery. We're their partners, so when we saw that we were a part of this bill, we wanted to come in support of that. I think that's a better question for Connecticut Lottery.

REP. VAIL (52ND): So --

CHRIS HERB: You know, we've never been afraid of competing with lots of different people, so I would say that question is probably better placed with them, but at the end of the day, we just want to be able to attract those customers that we have been losing for decades because of the gasoline tax policy of the state, and the other -- the other things that I've mentioned like the ability to sell beer in other states at the gas stations but not in Connecticut.

REP. VAIL (52ND): Okay. Thank you.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you, and thank you for your testimony. Senator Suzio, welcome my friend.

LEN SUZIO: Good evening, Mr. Chair --

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Thank you for your patience.

LEN SUZIO: And all members of the committee. I'm here to testify regarding in support of Bill 7332, and I waited all day because I had a lot of experience with this last year as a co-chair of the Children's Committee where we passed a bill related to the problems created by the juvenile justice laws changes, so I did a lot of research on it, and probably we were in communication with at least 30 local law enforcement agencies in Connecticut, plus the Chief State's Attorney's Office, and -- and every single case without exception they all acknowledged there was a dramatic increase in auto theft by juveniles, and they all attributed it to the change in -- in the juvenile justice laws.

And, I just want to share with you the official statistics, by the way, show from 2012 through 2017 there was almost a tripling of the reported motor vehicle thefts by juveniles under the age of 18. But, among other things in my communications with the local law enforcement officials, I spoke with a law enforcement officer, Mark Walusiak, who was the Deputy Chief of Police in Meriden and the Chief of Operations, and he -- he explained to me in a lengthy memo a lot of the problems being faced by law enforcement officials in light of the changes in the juvenile justice laws, and one thing he did was he talked about the increased difficulty in allowing police to bring a juvenile to a detention facility, and he cited and quoted from the Connecticut Law Enforcement Officer's Field Manual. The reasons that you cannot use to bring a kid to a detention facility, and I'm gonna read this to you. It's only about two sentences or three sentences. These are

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reasons that used to be valid. They are no longer valid. "Reason to believe the child will run away prior to the court hearing or that the child may commit other offenses injurious to the child. Or leaving the child at home or possessing a risk to the child due to the serious and dangerous nature of the offenses he or she is alleged to have committed. Or because a child has violated one or more of the conditions of their release, unless the violation is in the commission of a new crime, are no longer reasons to place child in detentions." This is from the official law enforcement officer's field manual. And, again, you can clearly see that some of these conditions you would think would be in the best interest of the juvenile to protect them from themselves, but they are no longer acceptable. There were two changes in the law that affected this. One was the -- you know, Raise the Age, and the other was they took away the discretion of the judges in juvenile matters. They made it mandatory that you had -- had to be both in the best interest of the child as well as the protection of the community, and the bill that we got through committee last year, which I believe actually passed out of Kids Committee unanimously, and I think it wound up in Judiciary where it didn't get a vote, unfortunately, but what we do is we decided to tackle it in the simplest way possible. What we did in our bill was we just said let's give judges more discretion on a case-by-case basis. They can determine whether the facts and circumstances in a particular juvenile matter warrant that -- that child to be put in detention center and whether it should be remanded to the adult court given the circumstances again.

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I think it's in the best interest of everybody, the child and the community to give the judges back the discretion they once had so they can look at it and say every case is unique, every case is different, and they can handle it according to what they think is best for the protection of the community and for the protection of the child that's in front of them in that particular moment, and I would encourage you as the bill proceeds through the committee, you might take that into consideration, giving increased flexibility I think to the judges would be much more favorably received, and it's probably a lot more appropriate than just some kind of hard and fast rule, and again, I have a lot of data that I went through, but I'm not gonna -- it's the end of the day, it's a long day, everybody's just dragging right now, and so -- but I'm waiting for -- I know Representative Moran -- Morin is going to ask me a tough question. He's been waiting all day.
[Laughing].

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): I was wondering why he was hanging around.

LEN SUZIO: [Laughing] That's why he hung around.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Did you have a question?

REP. MORIN (28TH): No.

LEN SUZIO: [Laughing].

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): No? Okay. Fair enough. Any on this side? No? My gosh. You're getting off --

LEN SUZIO: See, this is the advantage of being the last person. Nobody -- everybody's too tired to ask questions. [Laughing].

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Well, I thank you for your testimony, and -- and your passion in this issue, and I hope at the end of the day we -- we can come to an agreement in something that's worthwhile, recognizing arguments on both sides, but in particular, some of the challenges that are communities are seeing.

LEN SUZIO: If I may just say that in my community in Meriden a few years ago one of these juveniles was killed driving a car in a crazy way that he had stolen, and I do think it's really in the best interest of the juvenile's themselves because they don't have the judgement that a mature person would have, and the thrill -- people were talking about, well, what's the reason, why would they do this? Well, I think for especially young males it's kind of the thrill of the whole thing, and the good thing is you know if you get caught there's no real consequence, so you're just gonna -- it's catch and release is really what's going on and in the law enforcement community it's incredibly widespread universal frustration with the situation as it is, and if anybody knows better, I think it's the men and women who are on the frontline who deal with this every day, and I hope that the committee and the legislature would give that -- their perspective. It's due, and recognize that something's gotta be done. The status quo is no longer acceptable.

REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Fair enough. Thank you very much.

LEN SUZIO: Thank you very much.

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

11:00 a.m.

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REP. VERRENGIA (20TH): Is there anyone here who has not signed up that would like to speak? I'm seeing none. The hearing is adjourned.