



Legislative Testimony
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Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 5011, An Act Concerning the Copying of Public Records under the Freedom of Information Act

Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco, and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

My name is Kelly McConney Moore, and I am the interim senior policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 5011, An Act Concerning the Copying of Public Records under the Freedom of Information Act.

As an organization that values government transparency and accessibility, the ACLU-CT supports people having access to records created by public agencies. House Bill 5011, which reduces the cost for many public agency records from 50 cents a page to 15 cents a page – a 70 percent reduction. We also support the provision to eliminate the \$20 fee for use of a handheld scanner for most records, although the bill would be strengthened by eliminating the fee for all records.

People have a right to access information retained by public agencies. Fees, especially excessive ones, provide barriers to that right. The remaining fees for hand-held scanning are illogical – allowing a member of the public to use their personal hand-held scanner, cell phone, or camera to copy public records does not cost the public agency, and it should not cost the public. The fees that are still charged under existing law are cost-prohibitive for some people, making them unable to access public records.

Accordingly, the ACLU-CT supports the provisions of House Bill 5011 which reduce or eliminate fees for accessing public records and encourages this Committee to strengthen the bill by eliminating all fees for hand-held scanning of documents.