



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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Testimony of Attorney Ben Daigle, Assistant Legislative Liaison

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing - March 26, 2018

H.B. 5579: An Act Concerning the Restoration of a License

The Office of Chief Public Defender thanks the Committee for raising **H.B. 5579, An Act Concerning the Restoration of a License**, and would support **substitute language** reflective of this testimony. Our goal is to ensure that when an indigent person owns or has access to a vehicle and is required to install and maintain an ignition interlock device (IID) on such vehicle as a condition of the restoration of their license, the cost of doing so does not make such compliance prohibitive and thus extend the suspension beyond the intended term.

Subsequent to the submission of this proposed language as contained in **H.B. 5579**, we met with relevant state agencies and advocates to explore areas of agreement in pursuing the aforementioned goal. Thus, we encourage the Committee to replace the current language of this bill with JFS language that reflects the following:

An indigent person is eligible for installation and removal at no charge and reduced monthly leasing fees during the period the person is indigent. (a) A person applying for waiver of installation and removal fees and reduced monthly leasing fees must present to the ignition interlock device manufacturer or service provider proof that the person is indigent at the time of application. A valid participation card or a letter in original form from Connecticut's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), written on the agency's letterhead confirming participation in the governmental assistance program shall be acceptable forms of proof. (b) The reduced monthly leasing fee for indigent persons shall be fifty percent of the monthly leasing fee.

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While we continue to support steps to ensure that the license restoration process is accessible to people of limited means and still protects public safety, we want to move forward in as collaborative a manner as possible. Moreover, we understand the State's fiscal condition and want to ensure that this legislation does not further burden relevant state agencies.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Committee, relevant state agencies, and community stakeholders on this matter.