

# Transportation Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-334

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM TO MAKE PREPARING FOR AND  
TAKING THE COMMERCIAL LEARNER PERMIT KNOWLEDGE TEST

**Title:** AVAILABLE FOR INCARCERATED PERSONS.

**Vote Date:** 3/24/2022

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/9/2022

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

[Rep. Michael A. Winkler, 56th Dist.](#)

[Rep. David Michel, 146th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Devin R. Carney, 23rd Dist.](#)

[Rep. Anthony L. Nolan, 39th Dist.](#)

[Rep. Geraldo C. Reyes, 75th Dist.](#)

[Sen. Heather S. Somers, 18th Dist.](#)

[Sen. Will Haskell, 26th Dist.](#)

### REASONS FOR BILL:

To supply personnel, resources, and technology to administer commercial driver's license tests to incarcerated persons who are not barred from gaining such a license and are reentering their communities within six months.

Substitute language clarifies the roles of the Commissioner of Correction and the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles regarding this bill. The Commissioner of Correction is now responsible for providing "space and technology" needed to complete the program.

Additionally, they are no longer required to partner with a nonprofit organization. The role of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles is now providing necessary personnel and other resources.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Connecticut Department of Correction:

- This testimony focuses on the DOC's efforts to develop vocational training programs for incarcerated people, and the challenges that may need to be addressed in developing CDL training programs in all facilities. DOC describes their current efforts

in creating a “vocational village,” which they have modeled after a similar program that had success in Michigan. The DOC also describes efforts to supply all inmates with tablets, and states that CDL training programs could be included in the tablets software as they are for educational purposes. The DOC pledges that they will work with the DMV and the OWS to make the proposal workable, but cite issues with staffing, security, and space capacity as hurdles in making this program successful.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

Bosworth, Wyatt - Assistant Counsel - CBIA

- This testimony focuses on the importance of trucking in fueling our economy and how the current lack of truckers is disturbing said economy. The testimony points out that last year there was a record deficit of 80,000 drivers. It also points out that 27% of formerly incarcerated people are unemployed, and that this population should be tapped into to solve the trucker deficit. Claims that the DOC is already preparing a program for a non-profit to provide CDL training. The testimony goes on to state confidence in Ameelio, a non-profit that provides vocational training to incarcerated people, and points out that the state would only be required to pay the full cost of the program should a student successfully obtain their CDL. In this program Ameelio assumes all upfront risk, benefitting the state. They go on to state the importance of the potential legislation and urge its adoption.

Scully, Joseph - President - Motor Transport Association of Connecticut:

- MTAC’s testimony focuses on the current trucker deficit and the importance of providing appropriate resources to state agencies in order to have success with this program. MTAC cites last year’s deficit of 80,000 truckers and claims this is because companies are unable to find qualified individuals to hire. MTAC addresses the cost associated with providing training to incarcerated people, and states that it is well worth it as an investment into the industry’s workforce. They draw attention to Section 3 of the bill, claiming that additional staffing for DMV will be necessary in order to shorten wait times associated with CDL testing.

Vallieres, Kelli-Marie - Chief Workforce Officer - Office of Workforce Strategy:

- The OWS states support for programs providing CDL training for incarcerated people, stating that expanding access to written tests is critical in allowing individuals to begin on-the-road training followed by transitions to employment. OWS draws attention to CareerConneCT, a program which focuses on supplying individuals with industry-recognized credentials (including CDL), and states that they would like to see this investment leveraged as a baseline to support the ideals and goals outlined in the bill. OWS finishes by stating willingness to work with DOC and legislators in order to ensure that the goals of the bill are prioritized when developing CareerConneCT programs.

Zaccagnino, Jess - Policy Counsel - ACLU Connecticut:

- The ACLU’s testimony focuses on the importance of providing formerly incarcerated people with opportunities to contribute to society. They state that Connecticut currently has over 550 barriers to civic participation written into its laws, many of which are related to employment. The ACLU points out that these barriers contribute to an

unemployment rate of 27% for formerly incarcerated people, 6.5 times the state average. This leads to a reduction of gross national product by between \$78 billion and \$87 billion. ACLU also states that Black and Latino populations are disproportionately affected by lack of employment following incarceration. ACLU claims strong support for the bill but asks that it be amended to include a process focused on individual rehabilitation for those who may be barred from obtaining a CDL.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None Submitted

**Reported by: Trenton Kapij**

**Date: 4/1/2022**