



**The Shelter for Women
Hartford, CT**

Testimony Re: SB 340

AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SERVICE LICENSE ENDORSEMENTS,
ACTIVITY VEHICLES, AND THE DEFINITIONS OF "CARRIER" AND
"STUDENT TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE".

To repeal the term "activity vehicle" and to amend the definitions of
"carrier" and "student transportation vehicle". Requested by the
Department of Motor Vehicles.

To the Honorable Co-Chairs and Members of the Transportation
Committee

My name is Margaret W. Nareff, Executive Director of The Shelter for
Women, a 121-year old organization that provides residential treatment
for adolescent girls in two facilities, one in Hartford and one in
Manchester. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony to you
regarding public service license endorsements.

As co-chair of AEGIS for CT Nonprofits, I represent scores of private providers
across the state that care for children in state custody and who transport these
clients daily in small vans for activities, treatment and to access community
services. Let me say at the outset that not a single provider seeks changes that
will undermine the safety of the children in our care. Not only are we providing
care, but we are parents and grandparents ourselves, who join you in placing
the safety of all children in our state as the highest priority.

What we seek in supporting this bill will effect a change that can maintain
safety while saving precious financial resources and reducing bureaucratic
requirements. Staff members who drive our vehicles undergo rigorous
background and motor vehicle checks conducted by the Department of Children

and Families and the Department of Public Safety. Anyone who cannot clear these requirements will not drive our children.

The additional requirement of obtaining a public service license for staff members transporting clients has placed an undue financial burden on our programs. Specialized health screenings, fingerprinting and the license itself for each driver represents as much as \$160 per person, money that must be taken from other places in our already-limited budgets. At a time when state resources are fragile and our state funding frozen, every additional dollar directed to items like this detracts from client care.

We are not asking that you undermine the safety of children but that you support this change to permit programs like mine to continue to care for our clients and to maintain their safety through the appropriate channels we already have in place.

Thank you for your consideration.