



Legislative Testimony
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Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 575, An Act Concerning Accessibility of Information on Professional Bondsmen, Bail Enforcement Agents and Surety Bail Bond Agents

Senator Bradley, Representative Horn, Ranking Members Champagne and Green, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security 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 Senate Bill 575, An Act Concerning Accessibility of Information on Professional Bondsmen, Bail Enforcement Agents and Surety Bail Bond Agents.

Although the ACLU-CT has only been able to review concept language, rather than proposed bill language, we nonetheless urge this Committee to support this bill. The bail bond industry is largely unregulated in many parts of the country, while it professes to be “self-regulating,” it often fails to require real standards or accountability.¹ In Connecticut, professional bondsmen, bail bond agents, and bail enforcement agents have wide discretion to arrest a person utilizing a bail bond² and have the right to use reasonable physical force to effect that arrest.³ Bail bond companies are for-profit businesses who, along with the insurers that back them, make billions on the backs of low-income people and communities of color that have been ravaged by mass incarceration and overpolicing.⁴ Given their power – and profits – making information about them accessible is necessary (but not sufficient) to regulate the industry. For these reasons, the ACLU-CT supports Senate Bill 575 and urges this Committee to do the same.

¹ Jamiles Lartey, “ACLU challenges bail bonds system after bounty hunters charged with assault.” The Guardian, May 3, 2019, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/may/03/montana-bail-bondsmen-bounty-hunters-aclu-lawsuit>.

² See Conn. Gen. Stats. § 29-152k (2020).

³ See Conn. Gen. Stats. § 53a-22(f) (2020).

⁴ Udi Ofer, “We can’t end mass incarceration without ending money bail.” ACLU, Dec. 11, 2017, available at <https://www.aclu.org/blog/smarter-justice/we-can-t-end-mass-incarceration-without-ending-money-bail>.