



Legislative Testimony
765 Asylum Avenue, First Floor
Hartford, CT 06105
860-523-9146
www.acluct.org

**Written Testimony Supporting
House Bill 5203, An Act Concerning Electronic Proof of Automobile Insurance
Identification Cards**

Senator Kelly, Senator Larson, Representative Scanlon, and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

My name is Kaley Lentini, and I am legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 5203, An Act Concerning Electronic Proof of Automobile Insurance Identification Cards, with an amendment.

The ACLU-CT believes it is important for Connecticut to keep up with changing technology and to ensure that our laws are applied equally to all Connecticut residents. As one of only two states without a law in place allowing for electronic proof of automobile insurance identification cards, our state is an outlier. It is time for the legislature to bring Connecticut into the 21st century when it comes to this issue. In addition to aligning Connecticut with the rest of the country and the modern era when it comes to allowing electronic proof of insurance, this proposal could also improve equity and justice in our state. At present, police are more likely to penalize Black and brown motorists for not carrying paper proof of insurance.

It is important to keep in mind that failure to carry paper proof of insurance does not necessarily mean that a car is uninsured; it only means that a paper copy of that insurance proof is not in the car at the time of a traffic stop. Current Connecticut law, however, allows for two different penalties for not having proof of insurance. Under current law, police can penalize someone who fails to carry proof of automobile insurance with an infraction and a small fine or with a misdemeanor, which can have more serious consequences for that person's life. The ACLU-CT proposes an amendment to the bill to eliminate the misdemeanor charge, which anecdotal evidence shows police are using more often against on Black and brown drivers. We believe this would help to alleviate this unequal application of the charge, and this unequal treatment of the same motor vehicle violation under the law.

The ACLU-CT urges this committee to support this bill with an amendment to ensure the law is not disproportionately penalizing people of color in our state.