



DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES
State of Connecticut

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**Testimony of the Office of Chief Public Defender
Benedict R. Daigle, Assistant Public Defender**

**Committee on Judiciary – March 15, 2023
Raised H.B. 6875 – An Act Concerning the Issuance of a
State Identification Card or Motor Vehicle Operator’s License to a
Person Being Discharged from a Correctional Facility**

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) **supports** *Raised H.B. 6875 – An Act Concerning the Issuance of a State Identification Card or Motor Vehicle Operator’s License to a Person Being Discharged from a Correctional Facility (LCO 5508)*.

OCPD supports the meaningful move toward person-centered language. Such change is an appropriate and necessary part of the broader goal of ensuring that people who are incarcerated are viewed and treated with humanity, provided effective interventions and opportunities, and equipped with the necessary tools to move forward in positive ways upon returning to the community.¹

OCPD supports the operational provisions because the aforementioned “necessary tools” include not only knowledge and skills, but also tangible resources such as an identification card or motor vehicle operator’s license. People returning to the community can face daunting, illogical obstacles. The removal of such obstacles supports people’s success. And their success reduces recidivism, makes communities safer, and interrupts cycles of poverty. It’s better for everyone. **As such, any associated fees should be waived for people who are indigent.**

OCPD requests favorable action on this legislation. Thank you.

¹ For context on the topic of person-centered language: *The Language Project*, The Marshall Project, <https://www.themarshallproject.org/tag/the-language-project>; TaLisa J. Carter, *Person-First Language Is Not Enough*, Urban Institute, May 28, 2021, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/person-first-language-not-enough>.

Mission Statement of the Division of Public Defender Services

Striving to ensure justice and a fair and unbiased system, the Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services zealously promotes and protects the rights, liberty and dignity of all clients entrusted to us. We are committed to holistic representation that recognizes clients as individuals, fosters trust and prevents unnecessary and wrongful convictions.