

It is a great pleasure to appear before the Senate Communications and Technology Committee to provide testimony on Senate Bill 1147.

The collection of Social Security Numbers for Recreational Licenses has been a very contentious issue for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. We believe that recently this has hindered license sales particularly to our more senior hunters who have greater concern and less confidence in the security afforded by government systems.

We are all concerned with the privacy of important personal information and the Pennsylvania Game Commission has shared this concern for some time. We believe the movement from a paper license system that allowed multiple accesses to the Social new system the purchaser can enter their own number into the system and that precludes the number being viewed by any agent. This Social Security Number is only acquired one time when the individual enters the system for the first time. It then goes into a data base that does not reveal that number ever again to our agents. It is only used as part of a back end data analysis with other data fields. Previously the license holder had to provide the number each year.

In addition to this automated limitation of exposure of the Social Security Number, we have built a procedure for someone who does not wish to provide their number, we offer an alternative that complies with the requirement within SB 1147, in that the individual can sign a release that allows us to get an identifying number from PennDOT for those who hold a license or a personal identification card.

We believe that process satisfies the requirement for getting the Social Security Number for recreational licenses. This would be a transparent process for our data base reconciliation with the Department of Public Welfare. We would have the number in our data base whether it was provided by the individual or was provided by PennDOT. We would provide the matches to Public Welfare regardless of the source of the number.

We support SB 1147 because it basically codifies what we are currently doing. It would eliminate a step in the process as the license purchaser would know they are giving us permission to get the information, and it would not hinder our ability to provide the information to The Department of Public Welfare.

We believe Senate Bill 1147 enhances the security of important personal information and would certainly not hinder our license operations. We certainly support this legislation as a means to improve the process of fulfilling the social security number requirement for recreational licenses. I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.