

**Written Testimony of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz  
Government Administration & Elections Committee  
February 21, 2007**

Good Afternoon Chairman Caruso, Chairwoman Slossberg and members of the GAE Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony today regarding an important bill on your public hearing agenda.

I strongly support **S.B. # 41 AN ACT CONCERNING CLEAN CONTRACTING STANDARDS.**

First, I want to commend this Committee for consistently pursuing contract reform and I commend Sen. Don DeFronzo for all of his hard work on this issue as well. Our state has been through some very difficult times over the past several years when it comes to the awarding of state contracts. It seems that questionable contracting practices have damaged our credibility in the eyes of the public. Unfortunately, the actions of a select few have undermined the public's confidence in our system of awarding state contracts. The public trusts and demands that we conduct business at a high ethical level. We have weakened our democracy if we lose that public trust. It is our duty as elected officials to restore confidence in government. The establishment of the State Contracting Standards Board to review state contracts and to formulate uniform procedures goes a long way toward restoring that trust. Today, we are here to take a positive step forward for Connecticut.

As the Secretary of the State and as the former House Co-chair of this Committee, I am a longtime supporter of initiatives that institute substantial reforms involving the state's contracting process. I am pleased that this Committee has not given up on this important fight despite some opposition. As you begin to debate this issue, I join you as another voice of support for this important government reform.

In addition, I am a strong supporter of making all public documents easily available to the public. However, Section 14 of this bill makes the Secretary of the State's Office the repository for various contracting documents. This particular provision may result in a fiscal note to our office in order to meet all of the requirements found in this section. It may be more efficient and beneficial to the public to file these various contracting documents with the State Contracting Standards Board itself but I would be happy to work with the Committee on these or any other filing provisions.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I wish you luck as you pursue this much needed government reform. As always, I am available to work with this Committee on this very important issue.