



DATE: February 27, 2019  
TO: Government Administration and Elections Committee  
FROM: Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy  
RE: H.B. 6667 AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO STATE AGENCY DATA HELD BY STATE CONTRACTORS

Good morning Senator Flexer, Representative Fox, Senator Sampson, Representative France and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

My name is Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy at the Connecticut Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance). The Alliance is the statewide advocacy organization representing nonprofits, with a membership of more than 300 community organizations and associations. Nonprofits deliver essential services to more than half a million people each year and employ almost 14% of Connecticut's workforce.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify **in opposition to H.B. 6667** An Act Concerning Access to State Agency Data Held by State Contractors. **We are concerned this bill will unduly burden nonprofits** that contract with the state to provide human services to Connecticut's most vulnerable people. Community providers are partners with the State in serving people in need; they take care of the developmentally disabled, feed the hungry, provide behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, help prisoners transition into the community, and much more.

The bill as drafted would give the Auditors of Public Accounts access to any and all data retained by contractors, without regard to the complexity of that data's storage and the costs associated with producing such data. In addition, according to the testimony of the State Auditors, their concern stems not just from access to data but with regard to the format in which data is presented. **The costs associated with, for example, a nonprofit changing an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system to accommodate specific data-formatting requests of the State Auditors would be exorbitant.** A change request for an EHR could cost \$40,000 or more, funding which H.B. 6667 does not propose to appropriate.

Nonprofits that contract with the State are already subject to an incredible amount of data collection and reporting requirements and providers are already obligated to make expensive changes to their data systems to accommodate the data-systems of state agencies. Often, nonprofits are forced to do double the work to input data to state systems and maintain their own systems required to operate efficiently.

Years of state budget cuts have put substantial fiscal pressure on nonprofits; any funds used to comply with this bill would be taken directly from service provision. Being forced to resubmit data to yet another state agency in a different format than required by the contracting agency would add significantly to administrative burden and providers cannot afford to direct their staff away from direct service provision. **Without a mechanism by which to fund increased data requirements to the State Auditors or establish a uniform state data system that cuts across multiple state agencies and communicates with provider record systems, The Alliance cannot support this imposition on nonprofit contractors.** We urge the Committee to take no action on H.B. 6667. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.