



Testimony on Senate Bill 879

Submitted by Isabel Blank, External Affairs Manager

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Good afternoon distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. My name is Isabel Blank. I am Manager, External Affairs at the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, and I am writing to testify in support of **Senate Bill 879: An Act Concerning Transparency for Quasi-Public Agencies**. For questions or follow up, please contact me at isabel@yankeeinstitute.org.

We thank Governor Lamont and this committee for the bill before you today.

The central premise of representative government is that the branches of government do their work on behalf of the citizens of the state, while the employees of the government do their work on behalf of the people's representatives – and still, ultimately, the people of the state.

In order to be both good and knowledgeable electors and free members of a free state, the people must know essentially everything official about the acts of its representatives and those who work for them. Increased government transparency is vital because it empowers citizens and taxpayers to know how and where their money is being spent and gives them the opportunity to weigh in on important conversations.

Quasi-public agencies were created to be more flexible and independent than state agencies in their function and this independence is beneficial in certain circumstances. Because these agencies still use public funds and function in a quasi-public capacity, however, their expenditures on wages and benefits should be disclosed to the public, as this bill requires.

We urge you to support this bill.