

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5555 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT EXPANDING THE ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM OF THE

Title: SECRETARY OF THE STATE.

Vote Date: 3/23/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/18/2026

File No.: 556

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

There has been concern that individuals have been getting harassed and stalked using the real property records of municipalities. An individual is able to shield most of their public records if they are worried if those records could be used to violate their privacy. The only records that are public and could be able to be abused are the property records that municipalities hold. These protections would also be expanded to individuals who engage in offering reproductive health care services.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

Removes provisions on real property shielding, various definitions, references to “persons” accepting program participants’ addresses, and FOIA exemption for shielded real property records

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Secretary of State Stephanie Thomas](#): Secretary Thomas supports this bill. She expresses that this bill adds to and strengthens pre-existing protections of confidentiality for victims of domestic violence by expanding eligibility for participation in the existing Address Confidentiality Program as well as who must accept the substitute addresses. Secretary Thomas additionally explains that the requirements of this bill for the Secretary of State’s office to evaluate disclosure requests would necessitate new administrative processes and additional staffing to ensure effective implementation, due to this process intersecting with municipal land record systems. Secretary Thomas ends her testimony by welcoming the

opportunity to work with GAE and with municipal officials to ensure effective implementation of program expansion and facilitating increased number of participants.

[Paula Pearlman, Managing Director of Freedom of Information Commission](#): On behalf of the FOI, Ms. Pearlman issued a statement regarding unintended consequence resulting from the implementation of the bill. The commission states that the proposed requirements of town clerks to shield records from the public and the amendment of the FOI act to exempt any property records of program participants would be an impediment on the public's need for access to accurate tax and land records. Ms. Pearlman explains that these proposals would be difficult to implement and disrupt matters of landowners in planning and zoning, in addition to clerks being able to complete their duties under the law. The commission ends their statement by asking the committee to weigh the factors stated above, expressing willingness to meet with proponents of the bill to discuss in more detail.

[Natasha Pierre, State Victim Advocate, Office of the Victim Advocate](#): Ms. Pierre supports this bill. She first cites the existing protections that the ACP offers, explaining that the expansion of protections allowed with the proposed shielding of any real property records from public view would allow participants the opportunity of homeownership without any safety risks. She additionally supports the bill's strengthening of address protection, asserting that victims should not have to give up protections in order to receive services and state benefits or engage in any aspect of daily life.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Liza Andrews, Vice President of Government Relations for the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence \(CCADV\)](#): Ms. Andrews supports the passing of this bill. She explains in her testimony the importance of the ACP, citing that the CCADV's proposal is modeled after deed-shielding procedures in Maryland in Minnesota, going into detail about the mechanisms, legality, and feasibility of implementing these processes. Ms. Andrews furthers her example by stating that if the legislation passes and the numbers align with the direction of outcome in Minnesota, the Connecticut ACP may extend land record shielding to approximately 70 households statewide over an 11 year period. Ms. Andrews recognizes that the CCADV is asking procedural and administrative changes of multiple stakeholders, but does not believe that any of these changes are overly burdensome. She additionally testifies support for the portion of the bill that would expand the protections of the ACP to providers of reproductive and gender affirming healthcare, and ends her testimony by urging the committee to ensure that all program participants are held to the same requirements and that the Secretary of States office has the resources necessary to expand the program effectively.

Karen Connor, CEO of The Network, Linda Ciano, director of Project SAGE, Jennifer Ferrante on Behalf of the Center for Family Justice, Emily Granelli on behalf of the Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services, Isabella Gilmour on behalf of the Susan B. Anthony Project, and Zahiria Cooper on behalf of the Prudence Crandall Center [member organizations of the CCADV](#): Each of these representatives of their respective organizations submitted an identical testimony after explaining their role and the scope of their organization in terms of how it relates to the contents of the bill. This testimony, borrowing from part of Ms. Andrews' testimony, outlines the necessity of the ACP and what it does in providing legal substitute addresses on publicly available documents for its current 1,000+ participants, but expresses concern for the lapse that currently exists in which participant's real property

records are publicly available. Each member organization affirms that HB 5555 would allow participants to live an independent life without worrying for their safety by expanding protections of the shielding of real property records for program participants.

[Mary Lee Kiernan, President and CEO of YWCA Greenwich:](#) Ms. Kiernan supports this bill. She expresses the importance of relocation and anonymity for victims of domestic violence afforded by the ACP's protections of address substitution on public records. Ms. Kiernan goes on to explain that survivors who have achieved the stability needed to acquire their own deserve live without fear of their abusers finding them, and urges the passage of the bill in order to ensure that the ACP can better protect against this.

[Antoinette Spinelli, Legislative Co-chair, CT Town Clerks Association:](#) Ms. Spinelli expresses conditional support for the bill. While acknowledging efforts made to protect individuals who require the protections afforded by the ACP, she raises concern regarding the sections of the bill that require the shielding of property records, due to Connecticut's land record system being based on open public access and a clear chain of title. Ms. Spinelli goes on to ask for clarification regarding the submission of subsequent instruments as outlined in Section 7(e), as well as the potential liability that could be placed on town clerks for documents that may be recorded in the future for participants in the program. She ends her testimony by stating that the CTCA recommends a working group in order to balance the interests of all stakeholders in the scope of this bill.

[Liz Gustafson, State Director of Reproductive Equity Now:](#) Ms. Gustafson supports this bill, citing her organization's mission to advance reproductive health, rights, and justice, by working towards eliminating barriers to health care access and specifically abortion. She outlines and elaborates on 3 main reasonings for her support of the bill, these being the bills capacity to build on Connecticut's longstanding commitment to reproductive freedom, increased threats of intimidation and violence that providers are facing post the Dobbs v. Jackson case in the supreme court, and the bill offering a critical layer of confidentiality for providers. She continues these points into the conclusion of her testimony, urging the Connecticut General Assembly to pass HB 5555.

[Dr. Iyanna Liles, ACOG:](#) Dr. Liles supports this bill. She expresses that the protections afforded by the strengthening of the ACP will protect abortion and gender affirming care providers from harm, allowing her organization to fulfill its duty of providing the highest standard of care possible to their patients. She states specifically that she has been told by clinicians that this legislation would make them feel safer conducting the work that they do by allowing additional privacy in expanding the protections of the ACP to healthcare providers, and ends her testimony by affirming Connecticut's commitment to protecting the safety of providers in the state.

[Gretchen Raffa, Chief Policy and Advocacy Officer, Planned Parenthood:](#) Ms. Raffa Supports this bill. In her testimony, she outlines the importance of providing health care and abortion access to all indiscriminately. She expresses the urgency of passing legislation that bolsters protections for the provision of reproductive health care post the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which she states has only escalated a long-standing history of anti-abortion activism and violence in the country. Ms. Raffa goes onto cite examples attempted violence towards health care providers in Minnesota to demonstrate the necessity of legislation which protects the privacy of health care providers in the state of Connecticut. She ends her testimony by stating

that the passage of this bill would re-affirm the state's commitment to safety for health care providers while adding an necessary extra layer of legal protection.

[Jennifer Dayton, Co-head of Advocacy, League of Women Voters](#): Ms. Dayton supports the passage of this bill. She states that Connecticut has an advantage in providing healthcare, and upkeeping this reputation requires investing and protecting those who do the work of caring for patients. Ms. Dayton goes to additionally state her organization's support for shielding the personal information of those who seek gender affirming and reproductive health care, along with parents who wish to seek dependent's name seeking care.

[Dr. Cara Delaney, OBGYN](#): Dr. Delaney supports this bill. Her testimony outlines the importance of expanding the ACP to healthcare providers, specifically citing the statistic that since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the stalking of clinic staff in states that protect abortion rights has increased by 913%. She goes on to assert that states must protect health care providers in the absence of federal policy that does so, and finally strongly urges the passage of HB 5555 to ensure that she and her colleagues can provide the highest standard of care possible.

[Jess Zaccagnino, Counsel, ACLU CT](#): Ms. Zaccagnino supports this legislation. Affirming her organization's commitment to the protection of LGBTQ+ individuals under the law, she asserts the importance of adding an extra layer of confidentiality protection for those who provide gender affirming and reproductive care. Ms. Zaccagnino ends her testimony by listing other states who have implemented similar protections and strongly urges Connecticut to do the same.

[Felicia DeDominicis](#): Ms. DeDominicis supports this bill, asserting that the passage of this legislation is crucial to the accessibility of life saving care in Connecticut.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Jim Heckman, Connecticut REALTORS](#): Mr. Heckman expresses strong opposition to HB 5555, citing that the proposed bill would cause significant and immediate damage to the business of realtors across the state. Mr. Heckman goes to explain in six numbered subsections that as written, the bill would expose both consumers and practitioners to heightened risk of fraud and impose unfunded costs on municipalities, while not thoroughly protecting the aimed beneficiaries of the proposed bill. The testimony ends with an urge to the committee to reconsider legislation that does not compromise property record transparency or any of the unintended harms that are mentioned previously, and welcomes the chance to discuss solutions with proponents of the bill.

[Dr. Linda Dalessio](#): Dr. Alessio expresses opposition this bill, but her testimony does not reflect the contents of said legislation, as it only discusses protections against voter fraud.

[Joanne Giroux](#): Ms. Giroux expresses opposition for legislation regarding the quota of solar farms.

Reported by: Antonia Kambolis

Date: 4/10/26