

Testimony of Steve Bender
Before the Senate State Administration Committee
Senate Bill 148

Madam Chair, members of the committee, for the record my name is Steve Bender, Deputy Director of the Department of Administration. I would like to make a couple brief comments on the Background Checks for IT Professionals Act.

First, I want to emphasize to you the investments made by agencies to secure their crucial computer application systems from misuse through inappropriate access by program staff. Improved application security has been an area of strong focus in Legislative Audits in recent years and we've made very good progress.

What remains to be done is to address the trust we place in many of our IT staff to use their powerful capabilities properly. We must reduce the risk that they will abuse the trust we place in them. This act is an important way to reduce that risk.

Second, I want to be clear that this measure is not a "witch hunt" and does not target any particular group or agency. Section 2(1) of the bill assures that only serious past offenses, such as theft, embezzlement, tampering with a computer system, and breach of trust, are considered. This bill assures that all agencies approach this concern in a consistent manner.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I add my voice to that of the sponsor. I urge you to consider this bill and act favorably for its passage.

Thank you.