



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

March 30, 2007

To the Co-Chairs and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I offer my testimony in support of House Bill 5675, "*An Act Concerning the Duration of Psychiatric Evaluations.*" The current statute (Section 17a-502) allows for an initial confinement of a patient deemed a danger to himself or others for a period of 15 days, followed by a 15 day extension provided that the probate court process – the process by which a person can be committed – has been undertaken.

House Bill 5675 aims to extend this second period of confinement to 30 days. Currently, a person deemed a danger by a physician must be released from an institution at the end of this second 15-day period regardless of whether or not the probate process has been completed. Extending the time period of confinement allows more time for the probate process to run its course, and thus more time for a ruling on the commitment for an individual, to be passed down.

The worst case scenario is for the State to release a dangerous individual, one who ends up being committed by a probate court, back into the general population because current law does not allow sufficient time for the probate process to complete. I should also note that if the probate process completes without an order for commitment, then the individual subject to this extended confinement would be immediately released prior to the lapse of the 30 day temporary order.

This bill not only increases the safety of the general population, but would also curb recidivism rates for individuals who may harm themselves as well. I urge you to vote it out of committee.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.