

Testimony of Benjamin P. Lathrop, Mayor, City of Norwich
March 2007

Senate Bill 1030: ***AN ACT PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS SEEKING PARDONS.***

I am proud to stand before you as the elected Mayor of Norwich, Connecticut and to request your support of Senate Bill 1030, which would require the Board of Pardons and Paroles to contract for a program that provides technical assistance for persons desiring to go through the pardons process

The Norwich-based Connecticut Pardon Team, Inc. is the only non-profit organization providing information to persons desiring to go through the pardon process – and they have been doing an excellent job for nearly 3 years.

I am familiar with the Connecticut Pardon Team through their founder, Jacqueline Caron, who is also a Norwich Alderwoman. Her commitment to serving the people of Norwich in any capacity is what makes her involvement in this organization a natural fit. She is a tireless community advocate – continually giving of her time and her expertise to help those without the information or tools to help themselves.

Jackie's partner in the Connecticut Pardon Team is also very well known to me – Dianne Daniels served for 8 ½ years as the Director of Information Systems for the city of Norwich prior to her leaving us in 2005. Dianne is a strong public advocate and speaker on behalf of the team and their activities, and assists the team in conducting informational forums. Her motivational speaking style and straightforward manner inspires the attendees of the program's meetings to take charge of their lives and move forward.

The citizens of Norwich are very proud of the efforts and work that the Connecticut Pardon Team has put forth, and since the entire population of Norwich couldn't be here to speak on their behalf, I'm proud to represent Norwich at this public hearing.

The Connecticut Pardon Team's Pardon Assistance Program, if funded by Bill 1030, would help ex-offenders break the cycle of recidivism that currently plagues our criminal justice system by empowering them to complete and file their own pardon application.

The Connecticut Pardon Team gives ex-offenders hope for a normal life where they can break the grip that a conviction has on their lives. Hope that they can put their education, experience, time and skills to become even more valuable members of their community.

I am proud to claim Norwich as the home base for the Connecticut Pardon Team, and urge you to support Senate Bill 1030 so that even more people can be provided with the technical assistance, information and tools they need to help change their lives.

Thank you very much for your time,

Mayor Benjamin P. Lathrop
City of Norwich