

To: Sen. Andrew J. McDonald, Rep. Michael P. Lawlor, Co-Chairs, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary.

From: Constance J. Vogell, Judge of Probate District of Westbrook

Please consider my comments with respect to the following bills you are considering today:

Sec. 3(a): I believe it is critical that the Probate Court Administrator be selected from among the judges of the several courts of probate. As the proposed statute is written, there is no requirement that the person selected be a judge of probate. One who does not have any experience in this area will be severely limited in terms of insight into the probate system, establishment of reasonable goals, and viewpoint.

I support the General Assembly's involvement in the selection process as well as having the Probate Court Administrator serve coterminous with the term of the Chief Justice. Further, I would like to see a reasonable mechanism in place to review the actions of the Probate Court Administrator if a number of probate judges feel that the office has become political and is not functioning fairly and efficiently.