

Co-Chairs, Sen. McDonald and Rep. Lawlor, and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Joseph P. Secola, Judge of Probate for the District of Brookfield and President of the Connecticut Probate Judges Association for Local Courts, Inc., an organization of over 30 probate judges, who are committed to preserve the local court features of our probate system.

I am submitting my testimony on Bill 1480, section 3, which changes the way the Probate Court Administrator is chosen, to add legislative approval. **First, we strongly object to the removal of the present statutory requirement that the Probate Court Administrator must be chosen from among the sitting probate judges.** We believe the experience of being a probate judge is an essential requirement of any Probate Court Administrator candidate. Frankly, many judges would not mind if the Probate Court Administrator was required to remain a sitting probate judge. All former Probate Court Administrators, except the current one, remained judges in their respective courts, while also being the Probate Court Administrator. When their term as the Probate Court Administrator ended, they continued with their respective courts.

Second, we support the addition of legislative approval to the process of selecting a Probate Court Administrator. **We also request that the Probate Assembly be officially involved in this process of selection.** If a probate judge is nominated or appointed without consulting the Probate Assembly, it could result in a Probate Court Administrator that does not have the confidence of his or her peers, which would have a deleterious effect on the probate court system. Thank you for your consideration.