



State of Connecticut  
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Central Office

21 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106 • (860) 541-3400 • Fax (860) 246-5419

www.state.ct.us/chro

Toll Free in Connecticut (800) 477-5737

TDD (860) 541-3459

CHRO

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"Equality and Justice"

**Testimony of Raymond P. Pech  
Executive Director  
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**

**February 15, 2007**

**Senate Bill 1048, an Act Concerning the Investigation of an Internal Discrimination  
Complaint against the Executive Head of a State Agency or a Member of a State  
Board or Commission**

The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) supports this bill.

Section 46a-68(b)(4) of the general statutes requires that an agency's affirmative action officer investigate all internal complaints of discrimination made against the agency. Section 46a-68(b)(1) of that same statute requires that the agency's affirmative action officer report directly to the executive head of the agency. In those instances where an internal complaint of discrimination is filed against the executive head of the agency, or, where applicable, a member of a commission or board that oversees an agency, the interaction of these two provisions results in the appearance of a conflict, if not an actual conflict. The purpose of this bill is to remove any conflict, or appearance thereof, that might arise from the current statutory provisions.

This bill provides that, when an internal complaint of discrimination is filed against the executive head of an agency, or a member of a commission or board that oversees an agency, DAS would investigate that complaint. Conversely, should such a complaint be filed against the executive head of the DAS, the CHRO would investigate that complaint. The same assignment of responsibility for the conducting of an investigation would apply in those cases where the executive head of an agency, or a member of a board or commission that oversees an agency, files a complaint against an employee of the agency. The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) has worked with CHRO on this issue and is in full support of Senate Bill 1048.

CHRO respectfully recommends Senate Bill 1048 be amended so that the provisions of the bill would apply to any such complaints pending upon the bill's effective date. CHRO suggests in line 23, after "member" that "or if any such complaints are pending on the effective date of this act," be inserted. We also recommend in line 29, after "or" that "of the" be inserted to make it clear that the findings of any investigation arising out of a complaint against a board or commission member be reported to the appointing authority of that member. As currently written, the language could be interpreted to mean that the findings are to be reported to the board or commission member. CHRO also recommends that the bill become effective upon passage.

CHRO appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of this bill and urges the Committee's favorable report on the bill.