



State of Connecticut  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Office of Public Hearings ~ 21 Grand Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Hartford, CT 06106

*Promoting Equality and Justice for all People*

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Office of Public Hearings  
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**

**February 20, 2008**

**Public Hearing before the Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections**

**Raised Bill No. 201: An Act Establishing a Demonstration Project for an Office of Administrative Hearings**

This bill would establish an Office of Administrative Hearings as an impartial office to oversee and conduct administrative hearings that are currently conducted by certain agencies. The bill would transfer the human rights referees to this agency. While the establishment of such an office is a policy decision for the determination of the legislature and the Governor, the human rights referees do not oppose their inclusion in such an agency.

The Commission's administrative hearings are conducted by human rights referees, who issue final decisions that are not subject to review and approval by the Commission. The human rights referees have developed an expertise in the area of discrimination law. The Commission and the public will not lose the benefit of the human rights referees' expertise because the bill would require the chief administrative law adjudicator to assign the Commission's discrimination cases to those administrative law adjudicators who have the expertise in the area of discrimination law. In addition, the chief administrative law adjudicator is required to develop and implement a program for continuing education in procedural due process and substantive law that will ensure the expertise of the present and future administrative law adjudicators. See Section 3 (a) (2) and 3 (a) (8).