



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

*Testimony by Representative Themis Klarides
Before the Judiciary Committee
On House Bill 5532
February 25, 2008*

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Good afternoon Chairman McDonald, Chairman Lawlor, Representative O'Neill, Senator Kissel, and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Representative Themis Klarides, representing the 114th District. I am here today to speak on HB 5532.

This bill will provide that the hearing of family relations matters shall be private upon motion of a party or counsel for a minor child, and that the records and papers in such matters shall be confidential unless disclosure is determined by the court to be (1) in the public interest, or (2) required to prosecute or defend the matter. The Judicial Branch's Task Force examined and recommended how much access the public has to the courts consistent with the needs of the courts in discharging their core functions of adjudicating and managing cases regarding, among other matters, family related cases.

While the Task Force's mission was to allow greater transparency in court proceedings, it was also to protect confidential records where the need to know by the public had not been met. We must protect the records involving family matters from simple public disclosure. When a minor child is involved it is the responsibility of the state to make certain that they be protected from any divulgence of confidential material thus putting the child at risk.

Thank you for the hearing on HB 5532 and I wish to express my support of the bill and the committee's favorable action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Themis Klarides".

Rep. Themis Klarides