

CARA Felicity Eschuk

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, Members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Cara Eschuk and I would like to say that it is an honor and a privilege to have been nominated and to appear before this Committee.

I am so very grateful to Governor Rell for this tremendous opportunity.

Serving as a Superior Court Judge would be a challenging and exciting way to continue my career in public service. I hope that I can satisfy you that my nomination was appropriate and that I would make a good judge.

I live in Naugatuck with my husband Paul and our twenty year old son Michael who autistic. My daughter, Mary, has just graduated early from NYU and has decided to stay in New York for the time being while she gets a job and thinks about the LSAT. Needless to say I am immensely proud of both of them and very grateful to my husband, Paul, without whose love and support I would not be here.

I was born in Cyprus but my family returned to England when I was twelve. I obtained my LLB (Batchelor of Laws) in 1973 from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. After I graduated I joined a firm of Solicitors as an Articled Clerk and was hired when I qualified as a Solicitor in 1976. I handled family cases, real estate transactions, wills, estates, contractual disputes and criminal matters. I then became a Prosecuting Solicitor for the Gloucestershire Constabulary for a relatively short time before joining a private practice in Oxford. I became a partner in the Criminal Law Department. My firm did defense work - often for indigent clients entitled to Legal Aid - but also had a per diem contract to prosecute throughout the area so I was able to continue prosecuting as well. Since there was no plea bargaining in England I tried numerous small cases to verdict.

I believe that the experience of prosecuting and defending cases has been

invaluable throughout my career and will stand me in good stead if my nomination is confirmed.

My firm represented a number of U.S. Service personnel from the U.S. Air Force Base at Upper Heyford who were charged in the British jurisdiction.. We had a good relationship with the Judge Advocate's office and that was how I met my husband Paul, who is from Naugatuck who was then a Judge Advocate. I am his Service souvenir.

I arrived in the United States on July 5, 1984 and attended the University of Connecticut School of Law that Fall. While attending Law School I worked for Carmody and Torrance in Waterbury as a paralegal. I stayed with the firm after passing the Bar in 1986 and worked in several departments at Carmody and Torrance including real estate, trusts, civil litigation and Family Law.

In 1988 I joined the Waterbury State's Attorney's Office and soon specialized in the prosecution of child abuse and sexual assault cases. I would estimate that I have tried approximately 30 to 40 cases to a verdict. I have worked closely with victims' organizations and have been honored to receive several awards for my work from agencies which provide treatment to victims of abuse in the Greater Waterbury area. I am a long standing member of the Waterbury Child Abuse Interdisciplinary Team .

For a number of years I was the Chief State's Attorney's designee on the Governor's Task Force for Justice for Abused Children leaving only after my position as Supervisory Assistant State's Attorney in Waterbury Juvenile Court made it difficult for me to devote the necessary amount of time to the Task Force.

I have been on faculty at the National Advocacy College in South Carolina on several occasions teaching prosecutors from all around the country. I

have also set up trainings for my Division and the community in Connecticut on child abuse and sexual assault issues.

About three and a half years ago, I requested a transfer to the juvenile court with the hope that I could be instrumental in preventing juveniles entering the adult court system.

I have recently had the opportunity of attending meetings chaired by Judge Keller on raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction and juvenile competency.

I was actively involved in the Mayor's 'Blue Ribbon Commission on Truancy' in Waterbury in 2007 and have been working with others to set up a Juvenile Review Board in the City.

I am on the Board of Directors for The Waterbury Bar Association and have been responsible for seminars on criminal law issues for members of the Bar.

My extra-curricula activities include being past President of the Parents' Association of St Margaret's-McTernan (now Chase Collegiate) School and remaining active in the Association while our daughter was a student there.

I was also on the Board of Directors of Naugatuck Teen Theater for several years. I attend church at St George's Episcopal Church in Middlebury.

I believe that the experience I have outlined would serve me in good stead should my nomination be approved and enable me to serve in any sphere in which I could be useful.

I should be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.