



Connecticut **Business & Industry** Association

Testimony Of
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Connecticut Business & Industry Association
Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut
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Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Kevin Hennessy. I am a staff attorney for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (hereinafter "CBIA"). CBIA represents approximately 10,000 member companies in virtually every industry. They range from large, global corporations to small, family owned businesses. The vast majority of our member companies have fewer than 50 employees.

Thank you for the opportunity to address two bills:

- 1) **HB-5920**, AAC *Small Claims Housing Matters*; and
- 2) **HB 5935**, AAC *The Disclosure Of Police And Other Public Records and The Tolling of Time Periods for Bringing a Civil Action while Police Investigations Are Pending*

Small Claims Housing Matters

CBIA supports **HB-5920**, AAC *Small Claims Housing Matters*. This bill is good public policy for two reasons:

- 1) It will remove all housing matters from Small Claims Court and place them in the court with the expertise to adjudicate them – the Housing Court; and
- 2) It will expedite the small claims process by alleviating some of the backlog currently experienced in Small Claims Court.

Small Claims Court was designed as an alternative to the traditional judicial system. It was created for individuals and businesses to benefit from the judicial process without having to spend an excessive amount of money on attorney's fees and without having to dedicate endless amounts of time to their cases.

Unfortunately, since the centralized Small Claims Center was adopted in 2006, Small Claims Court has been an inefficient venue for matters to be resolved in a timely manner.

HB-5920 should alleviate some of the backlog currently experienced in Small Claims Court by reducing the current caseload.

Because **HB-5920** has dual benefits, CBIA urges you to approve it.

Extending the Amount of Time to File a Civil Claim

CBIA opposes **HB-5935**, AAC *The Disclosure Of Police And Other Public Records and The Tolling of Time Periods for Bringing a Civil Action while Police Investigations Are Pending*.

Statutes of limitations were designed to provide a finite period of time in which a person can assert their legal claims. Moreover, they afford protection to defendants from facing extended or limitless time periods of potential litigation.

Extending the amount of time a person has to file a civil claim is unnecessary. If the rules are altered now for cases where police investigations are pending, which legal claims or which group of citizens will be offered extensions next?

Currently, the general formula for filing a civil claim is fairly simple. If you are injured due to someone else's negligence, you have two years from the date of the injury, *or reasonable discovery of the injury*, to recover damages. Rather than changing the current system for the benefit of a few, the Judiciary Committee and the General Assembly should reject such a change and retain the equitable system that we already have.

For the aforementioned reasons, CBIA urges you to reject **HB-5935**.