



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

231 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 757-2270 Fax (860) 757-2215

**Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 20, 2008**

**Senate Bill 704, An Act Concerning The Release, Sale And Accuracy
Of Conviction Information**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch in support of *Senate Bill 704, An Act Concerning the Release, Sale, and Accuracy of Conviction Information*. This bill represents the joint effort of the Judicial Branch, legal service providers, and consumer reporting agencies to develop language that best protects individuals whose criminal records have been erased.

Last year, in an effort to assist prospective employees who have been denied employment because a background check has uncovered a criminal conviction – even in instances where the conviction has been legally erased – the General Assembly passed legislation requiring consumer reporting agencies to verify the accuracy of its information as of the date the consumer report is issued. For a variety of reasons, consumer reporting agencies found the language unworkable.

This past fall and winter, the concerned parties met diligently and in good faith to address the legislature's underlying concern. Workable language was drafted and agreed upon. This bill represents our efforts.

This bill permits the Judicial Branch to disclose information that generally cannot be disclosed – information related to an erased matter – to consumer reporting agencies and other entities that purchase records from the Branch. Information provided is most likely to come in the form of docket numbers.

In turn, affected agencies and entities will be required to purchase this information and permanently delete records of erased matters. The parties agree that the mechanism designed will suit the needs of all concerned, and best protect prospective employees from inaccurate and unlawful disclosure of their erased criminal record.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.