

Judiciary Committee
Public Hearing: March 12, 2008

Testimony of Robert Farr - Chairman, Board of Pardons and Paroles

Re: Senate Bill 506 - An Act Concerning the Board of Pardons and Paroles

Good Afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 506 which would make the Board of Pardons and Paroles an independent agency no longer connected to the Department of Correction (DOC) for Administrative Purposes.

This move would eliminate the established support network that we have created with the DOC. It would also require the Board to add additional staff. We estimate that we would need a minimum of five new positions that would include a Director of Human Resources, Director of Fiscal Services, Director of Information Technology, Director of Security and an Administrative Assistant.

We believe that the resources necessary to fund these positions would be better directed towards positions relative to the agency's core functions. Additionally, if the intent of the bill is to fund these positions within the current proposed budget allocations, this would be extremely difficult to accomplish.

Lastly, I would like to state that we currently have an excellent relationship with the Department of Correction and utilize their business, human resources, information technology and security personnel staff to assist us with all these administrative support functions. It was only during the 2003 session that we were merged back into the department and in the 2004 session that our relationship was clarified as being for "Administrative Purposes Only." This proposed bill would only uproot the Board once again before the dust has even settled.

It is for these reasons that I oppose Senate Bill 506.