

TESTIMONY
OF
THE HONORABLE DEBORAH M. PEARL
PROBATE JUDGE, **DISTRICT OF ESSEX**
TO
JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
PUBLIC HEARING

March 9, 2009

Senator MacDonald, Representative Lawlor and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Judge Deborah M. Pearl and I have been probate judge in the Essex Probate Court for 30 years.

Senate Joint Resolution No. 63 RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF ELIMINATE THE PROBATE COURTS

OPPOSE IN ITS ENTIRITY. Connecticut Probate Courts offer the citizens of the State of Connecticut personal attention to all matters relating to probate issues. These probate issues involve settling the estates of deceased person, jurisdiction over trusts, appointment of guardians for persons with mental retardation, appointment of conservators of the estate and person, appointment of guardians for minors, adoptions and many other matters involving critical personal problems for our citizens.

R.B. No. 1005 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ASSESSMENT OF CERTAIN PROPERTY IN THE CALCULATION OF PROBATE FEES.

OPPOSE Section 1.(b)(4) which said section allows a probate fee of .1 per cent to be charges against non-solely owned real estate. Non-solely owned real estate is already being charged a probate fee as part of Section 1. (b) (2). This .1 per cent additional charge should be eliminated from the probate billing statute.

SUPPORT Section 1.(b)(5) which essentially removes out of state property from the basis of determining probate billing.

Committee Bill No. 6027 AN ACT CONCERNING PROBATE COURT

REFORMS.

SUPPORT the bill with the following comments:

SUPPORT Section 2. with some reservation. I believe all these additional regulations would help professionalize the probate court system as a whole. My reservation comes with the enormous change these new regulations pose without some idea of what it will cost the system to implement. I agree with concept of the specific changes outlined in Section 2 (b) (1) but suggest this committee require the probate court administrator to provide a detailed plan costs associated with said implementation.

SUPPORT the CONCEPTS of Section 10, Section 11

SUPPORT with one change Section 13. Section 13 (2)(G)(c). Due to not only the complicated nature of the make up of the Probate Court Planning Committee membership as well as the task of acquiring and developing such diverse membership opinions the date of reporting (November 15, 2009) to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary is much to soon and can not possibly allow for full discussion and participation. Change the date of reporting from November 15, 2009 to June 15, 2010.

Governor's Bill No 6385 AN ACT CONCERNING REFORM OF THE PROBATE COURT SYSTEM.

OPPOSE IN ITS ENTIRITY

R.B. No. 6626 AN ACT TRANSFERRING JURISDICTION OF CONTESTED PROBATE MATTERS TO THE SUPERIOR COURT.

OPPOSE IN ITS ENTIRITY