



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

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**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller
Judiciary Committee
March 16, 2009**

House Bill 6384, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, on *House Bill 6384, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders*. The Judicial Branch has concerns with this bill that we hope can be addressed if it moves forward.

This bill would re-structure the Sex Offender Registry into a 3- tier system that is based on offense, rather than level of risk, and would also provide for longer registration periods. It would require significant enhancements to the Registry - requiring additional information about the offender to be included and making the Registry more easily searchable. It would replace the Risk Assessment Board with a Sex Offender Registry Policy Advisory Committee that has an expanded membership and role. It would also expand the exception for public registration for persons under 18 who are no more than four years older than their victims at the time of the offense. It would add a requirement that certain juvenile offenders register as sex offenders, thereby requiring offenders as young as 14 to register. And, most significantly for the Branch, it would impose a significant additional workload on our probation staff.

In regards to specific sections of the bill, the Judicial Branch would note:

- Subsection (b) of section 7 would require any registrant who is on probation or parole to provide the Commissioner of Public Safety with the name, office location and telephone number of his or her probation or parole officer.

Although it is not specifically addressed by the language, it appears that this

information would go on the Sex Offender Registry and thereby be available to the public. There is no doubt that this will result in increased calls to the probation officers, as well as an increase in the investigations into claims of noncompliance that the probation officer will need to perform.

- Subsection (f) would require that all registrants appear periodically in person at a prescribed office of the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division. The purpose of this reporting is to have an updated photograph taken and to update and verify their registration information. This includes all registrants, not just those who are under probation supervision. Tier I registrants must report annually, Tier II registrants must report every six months, and Tier III registrants must appear every 90 days. Transients must report every 15 days. This will add a significant burden to our probation offices and they will need additional staff to handle this responsibility.
- We would suggest that the Chief Court Administrator or a designee be added to the membership of the newly created Sex Offender Registry Policy Advisory Board. The issues that this Board will deal with go beyond the purview of the Court Support Services Division.
- The restriction on dissemination of a registrant's social security number that is contained in section 12 may not be workable for the Judicial Branch. That information is provided by the police at arrest, is in the file and is currently publicly available for all arrested persons, including sex offenders.

As I stated previously, I would hope that these issues can be addressed by the Committee in the event that you choose to act favorably on this bill. The Judicial Branch would be happy to discuss our concerns with the proponents to find alternative language that will alleviate our concerns but also accomplish the bill's purposes. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.