

**TESTIMONY OF MOY OGILVIE IN SUPPORT OF CONTINUED FUNDING FOR  
THE CONNECTICUT FAIR HOUSING CENTER**

February 16, 2010

My name is Moy Ogilvie and I am an attorney at McCarter and English. I submit this testimony in support of continued funding for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center.

I had been familiar with the mission of the Connecticut Fair Housing Center, but it wasn't until my firm co-counseled a case with the Center that I fully appreciated the importance of the Center's work. The case we co-counseled with the Center's attorney involved a woman with a physical disability who requested an assigned parking space from the public housing authority that managed her apartment. She needed a parking space near to the entrance to her apartment because she has severe pulmonary disease which makes it difficult for her to walk distances. Without the assigned parking space, she never knew how far she would have to walk when she returned home.

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As the case developed, we discovered that the housing authority had denied our client's request based on an explicit discriminatory policy that did not recognize any tenants' rights to reasonable accommodations to the housing authority's policies. In the end, our joint representation not only resulted in our client receiving the accommodation she needed, but also changed a discriminatory policy that affected more than 500 housing units. The settlement required the defendant to review all prior requests denied under its old policy and contact those tenants.

McCarter provided substantial pro bono hours in representation in this case. The Connecticut Fair Housing Center leveraged its resources by partnering with our firm. Moreover, they leveraged this case about one tenant to change a policy that impacted hundreds of families, making more than 500 apartments more accessible to persons with disabilities.

BOSTON

The Center's work undisputedly provides great benefits to its clients. Its efforts to secure, train and work with pro bono counsel also bring tremendous resources to bear on behalf of citizens of Connecticut who have faced discrimination. As a result of the Center's efforts, volunteer lawyers contributed over \$2 million of legal services to the Center since the beginning of State funding. Without continued State funding, the Center's ability to leverage these types of resources will be severely limited.

HARTFORD

NEW YORK

NEWARK

I strongly encourage the Appropriations Committee to continue funding of \$227,500 for each year of the biennium for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center. It is a crucial and worthwhile investment which will help to discourage housing discrimination at a time when economic circumstances will compel unprecedented numbers of people to seek alternative housing.

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