



American Association of Law Libraries

MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1906

**Testimony to the Joint Committee on Judiciary
February 26, 2010**

Good morning, Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, Senator Kissel, Representative O'Neill and members of the Judiciary Committee.

I am Camilla Tubbs, a law librarian in New Haven and the Chair of the Government Relations Committee for the American Association of Law Libraries, which is a nonprofit educational organization with over 5000 members nationwide. I wish to testify, on behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries, in support of House Bill 5148: *An Act Concerning Funding for the Judicial Branch*. I echo the remarks of Mr. Stock and the members of our local chapter, the Southern New England Law Library Association.

Not only would this bill allow the Judiciary to transmit its annual budget requests directly to the Connecticut General Assembly, it would restore funding to courthouse law libraries in Bridgeport, Milford, Norwich, Litchfield, and Hartford, which will otherwise be closed by April 1 or July 1 of this year.

AALL strongly believes that it is essential for these public law libraries to remain open. The closure of these courthouse libraries will prevent attorneys, judges and members of the public from accessing up-to-date legal materials. As Judge Quinn noted in her statement, made at the February 9th Appropriations Committee Meeting, up-to-date legal research tools, in both electronic and printed form, are critically necessary for judges in their decision-making process.

Further, these materials keep the public informed and help pro se litigants to defend themselves in court, for as we know, ignorance of the law does not excuse.

To demonstrate the public's opposition to the announced library closures in Bridgeport, Milford, Norwich, Litchfield, and Hartford, I would like to submit to you now, for the hearing record, these five petitions. They were posted online last month by our two organizations and have been signed by approximately 1140 Connecticut residents who want these courthouse libraries to remain open.

We urge your support for H.R. 5148, and ask that you move this important bill expeditiously through the legislative process to prevent the imminent closure of these public law libraries. Thank you very much for your consideration and for allowing me to speak with you today.