

Testimony before the Judiciary Committee
March 19, 2010 by
Chiefs Douglas L. Dortenzio, President, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and members of the Judiciary, I speak on behalf of the state's police chiefs in support of **Raised Bill #5280: An Act Concerning the Statute of Limitations for Perjury.**

This bill modifies the existing perjury statute such that a prosecution for perjury will no longer be time barred when the falsehood relates to the commission of murder or any other serious offense for which there is no statute of limitations.

In recent years, and in conjunction with the work of groups such as Project Innocence, law enforcement agencies have utilized the recent advancements in forensic science to clear individuals wrongly imprisoned.

While wrongful imprisonment cases are thankfully few in number they are nonetheless tragic. Those wrongfully imprisoned can never recover the years lost and victims, and/or victim's families, find their anger has been misplaced and their emotional wounds reopened.

In some of these wrongful imprisonment cases the conviction hinged on the sworn statements and testimony of individuals professing intimate knowledge of crucial facts in the case. It is subsequent to the imprisonment, often by years, that the intentional falsehoods which contributed to the conviction are identified. By the time such falsities have been uncovered remedial prosecution has been barred by the existing statute of limitations, hence this proposed statutory amendment.

Perjury perverts our criminal justice system. It shakes our collective confidence in the propriety and effectiveness of our legal system. The law enforcement community supports this proposed legislation and respectfully requests your support as well.

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