

3/26/2010

Honorable Senators and Representatives,

My name is George Poirier. I am a student at the University Of Connecticut School Of Social Work in West Hartford, and I'm a resident of the town of Manchester. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee today to testify on Bill # 5541, "An Act Concerning Juror Service and Selection."

I would like to say that I am completely in favor of the petitioned changes in this bill specifically addressing the request to permit non citizens, full-time students and small business owners to be excluded from the juror summoning process and request that you consider supporting these changes as well.

I thoroughly believe that the full participation of citizens in the jury system is very important, but I also strongly believe that non citizens should be exempt from juror summons because I feel citizenship should be a prerequisite to achieve the right to participate in this civic responsibility. Additionally I also believe that full time students should be exempt from the selection process. I say this before you from a student perspective and especially because I am a student who has been summoned on several occasions to serve. In my own personal experience going to the trouble of requesting deferment though not difficult, can be a nuisance. In many cases college students do not attend colleges and universities in their registered town or state. Supporting this bill would lessen the amount of energy put in by the state arranging deferments for small business owners as well. Often times these individuals cannot afford to take time away from their business's due to limited staffing or the fact they work for themselves. The changes in this bill are meant to reduce the amount of administrative time used chasing individuals who will only request to defer anyway. If non citizens, fully enrolled students registered at accredited public or private institutions, and small business owners were to be excluded in this bill a greater focus can be pressed upon those who can in fact serve juror duty without difficulty.

I implore you ladies and gentleman to consider supporting this bill exempting said individuals from the jury selection process. This solution would address the issue of finding jurors by reducing the wasted time invested in the current process to only the population that is fully able to commit to the service without conflict. Additionally the benefits of endorsing such a bill would better serve the state as a great deal of time and money can be saved as well as human man hours used without the change. The civic duty of juror services is undeniably important and necessary. The process of juror selection is challenging. It would be much easier to know you were selecting from an available and willing participant pool of citizens. The time and energy saved could be remarkable. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you all today. It is my hope that you recognize the importance that this decision. To this end, I would ask you to favorably support the changes in this bill.