



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SUPREME COURT

CHAMBERS OF
CHASE T. ROGERS
CHIEF JUSTICE

231 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106

**Testimony of Chase T. Rogers
Chief Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 26, 2010**

Senate Bill 486, An Act Concerning Supreme Court and Appellate Court Decisions

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this written testimony in opposition to **Senate Bill 486, *An Act Concerning Supreme Court and Appellate Court Decisions***.

This bill would require both the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court to render a decision in a case not later than one year after hearing oral argument. The bill is not necessary, as the vast majority of decisions are rendered within the time frame specified in the proposal. We recently asked the Judicial Branch's Information Technology Division to provide us with some statistics on this subject. The time between the dates of oral argument to the publication of each opinion was determined for all Supreme Court and Appellate Court cases, for a period of five years. The average number of days was then determined. As you will note, this information is based strictly on the raw data and there was no analysis of these statistics.

The average amount of time from the date of oral argument to the publication of the opinion for all Supreme Court appeals was 157 days. The average amount of time from the date of oral argument to the publication of the opinion for all Appellate Court appeals was 104 days. Clearly these statistics show that decisions are not languishing.

There are times, however, when decisions are delayed for very valid reasons. Placing an arbitrary time limit on the decisions will not improve our system. For those very few cases that take longer than average, the process insures that the justices and judges have the opportunity to provide the high quality of decisions that Connecticut citizens deserve and that litigants expect from the adjudicative process. In most instances, the cases that take longer are complex and frequently present novel questions of law. I should also note that the recent policy that the Supreme Court adopted to sit en banc for all of its appeals is consistent with giving each Supreme Court case the attention that it deserves.

I respectfully request that you reject this proposal.