

# *Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.*

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## *2010 Legislative Committee*

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Written Testimony  
Friday, March 12, 2010  
Government Administration and Elections Committee

### **Raised Senate Bill 423 AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONNECTICUT TOWN CLERKS CONCERNING DISCLOSURE AND ELECTIONS LAWS.**

Good morning Senator Slossberg, Representative Spallone and the distinguished members of the GAE Committee, my name is Antoinette Spinelli, and I am testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association (CTCA). I am the legislative vice-chair of the Town Clerk's Association and the Town Clerk of Waterbury. I am here today to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 423, CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TOWN CLERKS REGARDING DISCLOSURE AND ELECTIONS LAWS.

Our Association sincerely appreciates this committee raising **Senate Bill 423** for consideration. This important legislation addresses several issues. First, is to add certain town clerk records to the exemption of residential addresses of certain government employees as defined in section 1-217 of the General Statutes (part of the FOI Act). Dept of Motor Vehicle records are currently exempt as clearly stated in this section. Our request for further exemptions is very important as it will truly clarify this law that is quite misunderstood. Outside of certain vital statistic and veteran records, town clerk documents are a matter of public record. We are directed by other well-established state statutes to maintain these documents for identifying land ownership, for enforcement means or for consumer protection issues. This legislation would greatly assist in clarifying these points. Residential addresses are an integral part of the information necessary when compiling lists such as land records, trade name certificates, dog licenses, vital records, voter registry and enrollment lists. You can imagine the financial chaos that would occur if land ownership information were to be deemed confidential because of this FOI provision. Today, residential addresses of most people are readily available on the Internet. Although in past legislative sessions, we have supported the repeal of Section 1-217, we find it necessary, as long

as this section remains, to request certain town clerk records be exempt from address confidentiality. As many of the Town Clerk's documents are permanent and cannot be altered, we wish to elaborate that residential addresses could be confidential going forward if employees themselves took the initiative to keep that information confidential.

Second, in election law, we are **recommending** that current statutes be amended to allow municipal candidates the same courtesy as state candidates in deciding how their name will appear on the ballot. For example, if people refer to you as Wally Smith but your name appears on the voter list as Randolph Walter Smith; some voters may not put the two names together to the actual candidate. A few other technical changes are requested. These are: that explanatory text posters be mailed to the registrars of voters and that moderators appear before the registrar of voters for provisional ballot packets. These changes will bring the statutes in line with current practices that are already in place.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I would be pleased to take any questions that you may have at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Antoinette C. Spinelli, Waterbury Town Clerk  
Vice-Chair, CTCA Legislative Committee

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