



State of Connecticut

## DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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**Testimony of Deborah Del Prete Sullivan,  
Legal Counsel/Executive Assistant Public Defender  
Office of Chief Public Defender**

*Raised Bill No. 5525*  
*An Act Concerning Pardons*  
**Judiciary Committee Public Hearing**  
**March 19, 2010**

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of *Raised Bill No. 5525, An Act Concerning Pardons*. The bill sets time periods within which a provisional pardon would become an absolute pardon by operation of law as long as the person is not convicted of an offense during the time period. The bill also requires that once a person receives a provisional pardon that the clerk seals the criminal records pertaining to that case.

In addition, this legislation may greatly assist our veterans. There are many veterans that this office has met or counseled during StandDown who are unable to find employment due to having been convicted of an offense years ago. Having a provisional pardon automatically become an absolute pardon will benefit those veterans who may have problems caused by PTSD and/or multiple deployments.

A conviction can impact upon a person's life in many ways forever. Unintended consequences that result from a conviction include difficulty in gaining employment, housing and educational loans. For younger people especially, mistakes in judgment can be costly and impact their lives forever. Requiring that a certain period of time pass by before attainment of an absolute pardon can act as an incentive for persons who have obtained a provisional pardon to maintain an offense free life as they reintegrate in to the community. This office supports this legislation.