



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 22, 2010**

**Governor's Bill 33, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual
Offenders**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, on Governor's Bill 33, *An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders*. The Judicial Branch has concerns about the impact this bill would have on the Judicial Branch, which are set out in more detail below.

This bill would re-structure the Sex Offender Registry into a 3- tier system based on offense, expand the scope of individuals to include juvenile offenders, and provide for longer registration periods. Specifically regarding the Judicial Branch, it would impose additional responsibilities on our Court Support Services and Superior Court Operations divisions which are problematic and cannot be absorbed within current resources.

- The revised definition of "release into the community" includes a release "on ... a subsequent offense not requiring registration". If the court is responsible for determining whether every person being released from court into the community has a prior conviction requiring registration, this would constitute a very significant burden. We would respectfully suggest that the language be amended to specifically require that the prosecutor inform the court whether each person being released has a prior conviction requiring registration. They already check each defendant's prior record and status and thus would have that information. As the language currently stands, it is not workable.
- Sections (f) and (g) of section 2 (lines 696 - 729) set up a new verification process for persons on the sex offender registry. The process would require all registrants -- not just

those under probation supervision – to appear periodically, in person, at a prescribed office of the Judicial Branch’s Court Support Services Division. The Court Support Services Division must verify their registration information and take a new photograph of the registrant for the Sex Offender Registry website. Tier I registrants must report annually, Tier II registrants must report every six months, Tier III registrants must appear every 90 days, and transients must report every 15 days. In addition, the Court Support Services Division must report any person who fails to show up when instructed to the Department of Public Safety. This new process will add a significant burden on our probation offices.

- The requirement in section 10(b) that the court order immediate registration if a person being released into the community by the court refuses to sign the form acknowledging that such person understood the requirements of registration is problematic. The bill would require that the court order immediate registration of such person and contact the Department of Public Safety to complete such registration. However, the court has no authority to detain the person while waiting for DPS to arrive – the person could just leave.
- Regarding the newly created Sex Offender Registry Policy Advisory Board (section 13), we would respectfully suggest that the Chief Court Administrator or a designee be added to the membership. The issues that this Board will deal with go well beyond the purview of the Court Support Services Division, which is given representation under the current language of the bill.
- The prohibitions in section 12 on disclosing certain information about a registrant are inconsistent with the presumption that court files are open to the public. In particular, the restriction on dissemination of a registrant’s social security number may not be workable. That information is provided by the police at arrest, is in the file and is currently publicly available for all arrested persons, including sex offenders.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.