

Fairfield '08

A Partnership to end homelessness in Fairfield County

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February 25, 2010

Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: Bill H.B. No. 5148
AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR THE JUDICIAL BRANCH**

Dear Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

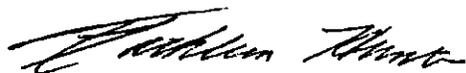
I am writing this letter in support of House Bill No. 5148 in support of funding for legal service.

In my prior professional experience of twenty-five years working in the City of Bridgeport in both capacities of Assistant Director of Social Services and Deputy Director of Housing, I found the legal assistance provided by Connecticut Legal Services to be absolutely essential for the low income population in Bridgeport. This agency does outstanding work, against great odds, as lawyers using the law to assist the most disenfranchised population meet basic needs of life. The two areas in particular in my experience with them included 1) Avoiding or escaping homelessness and securing decent safe and affordable housing; and 2) Avoiding or overcoming harmful discrimination based on race, ethnicity, disability or source of income.

Furthermore, the technical assistance CT Legal Services provides to social service agencies has been invaluable in building capacity of staff to better serve the clientele. I currently work for a not for profit agency in Bridgeport providing housing services under the new federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program. I had the opportunity to participate in a training session on eviction procedures provided by CT Legal Services and found it instrumental in the work I do.

In closing, I strongly urge the Judiciary Committee to support the funding for CT Legal Services whose legal assistance is so desperately needed particularly in light of the current economic climate. These times have generated unprecedented demands for economically and socially disadvantaged populations to have their basic needs met.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Hunter
Program Development Director
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