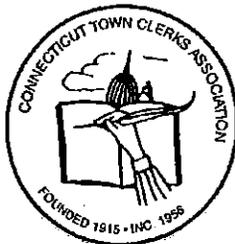


Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.

Committee Members

Antoinette Chick Spinelli –
Waterbury, CH
Essie Labrot, West Hartford,
V. CH
Jeff Barske, Thompson
George Buckbee, New Milford
Debra H. Denette, East Haddam
Michele Grande, Redding
Mary Stanton, Mansfield



Advisory Board Members

Joseph Camposeo, CTCA Pres.
Joyce Mascena, 1st V-Pres.
Patty Strauss, 2nd V-Pres.
Sandra Russo-Driska, Immed.
Past Pres.
John Bazzano, Hartford
Bernice Dixon, Vitals Comm. CH
Therese Pac, Technology
Comm.CH
Lobbyist: Michael Dugan

2011 Legislative Committee

Written Testimony Senate Bill 1234,

An Act Concerning Nondisclosure of Residential Addresses of Certain Public Officials and Employees Judiciary Committee – Public Hearing Friday, April 8, 2011

Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, Senator Kissel, Representative Hetherington and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Antoinette Chick Spinelli and I am the Chair of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association's Legislative Committee and the Town Clerk in Waterbury.

I am here this morning to testify in opposition of Senate Bill 1234 which would prohibit disclosure of residential addresses of certain public officials and employees. It is important to note that this matter is still pending in the appellate courts. The Superior Court affirmed that Sec. 1-217 as it is now written does not permit residential addresses be hidden from public records such as land records, grand lists, etc. (Commissioner Dept. of Public Safety et al v. Freedom of Information Commission et al 2009 Conn. Super. LEXIS 2872 Nov. 9, 2009). The original intent of this law was likely meant to apply to a requested list that asks for individuals by position or by the agency for whom an individual works.

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. Residential addresses are an integral part of the necessary information used to compile lists such as, but not limited to, land records, trade name certificates, dog licenses, vital records, and voter registry lists. There are various statutes designed to protect full disclosure of these records (CGS §7-24, 12-55, 12-139, 22-338 and 9-54, for example). Withholding addresses would destroy the integrity and purpose of these very important records.

If this bill were to pass it would affect **all** public records. Can you imagine the financial chaos that would occur if land ownership information were to be deemed confidential? How would we accomplish this when we cannot alter records? How would we redact this information? The software cost would be astronomical and where would the funding come from? How would we know who to look for in the hundreds of thousands of recordings sitting in our offices now open for public viewing? The Clerk would have no way of knowing

whether an individual involved in a transaction falls into one of these categories. How would we enforce this and who would be liable if the information did somehow get out?

Today, residential addresses of most people are readily available on the internet through a variety of websites. One would not have to search records in the town hall to get someone's address when the information is so easy to obtain. Town hall records are required by law to be kept accurate, complete and open to the public.

We understand the concerns that prompt this type of legislative action but we are obligated to make you aware of the consequences, the cost, and the near impossibility of enforcement should this law go into effect.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify, I would be glad to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Antoinette Chick Spinelli, Chair
CTCA Legislative Committee
Town Clerk, Waterbury