



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION**

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**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller  
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing  
April 4, 2011**

**House Bill 6639, An Act Concerning Pretrial Diversionary Programs**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **House Bill 6629, *An Act Concerning Pretrial Diversionary Programs***. The Judicial Branch is concerned that sections 3 and 4 of the bill would require additional resources.

Section 3 would create a specialized diversionary program for veterans. This program would be very similar to the Supervised Diversionary Program for persons with psychiatric disabilities, which began operation on October 1, 2008. The FY 08-09 state budget provided funding for the program -- the Judicial Branch received approximately \$900,000.00 in three-quarter year funding to implement it. We anticipate that the new program would require comparable additional resources for the Judicial Branch. I would also point out that there is likely to be significant overlap between the new program and Supervised Diversionary Program, which does not exclude veterans.

Additional resources would also be required to implement section 4 of the bill, which would require that mediation in criminal cases be available in all twenty Geographical Area courts. Mediation in criminal cases is currently provided in five locations through contracts that the Judicial Branch has entered into with providers, at a total annual cost of \$560,000.00. While we view mediation as a valuable service that may result in future cost-avoidance, we cannot expand our current program without additional resources.

Thank you for your consideration.