



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

PAUL J. KNIERIM, JUDGE
Probate Court Administrator

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To: Senate Co-Chair Eric D. Coleman
House Co-Chair Gerald M. Fox, III
Senate Ranking Member John A. Kissel
House Ranking Member John W. Hetherington
Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Paul J. Knierim
Probate Court Administrator

Re: HB 6442, An Act Concerning the Appointment of Counsel and
Guardians Ad Litem in Child Protection Matters, and the
Appointment of Permanent Legal Guardians

Date: February 28, 2011

The Office of the Probate Court Administrator supports adoption of this bill.

The proposal is to establish an alternative to termination of parental rights. In the proper circumstances, permanent guardianship could benefit the child and the family by providing permanency without the trauma, expense and delay associated with contested proceedings for termination of parental rights. It would give courts the option of arranging a lasting placement – most often with another family member – while maintaining the child's familial ties with the biological parent.

As drafted, the legislation provides for permanent guardianship only in cases in the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. The option would be beneficial in probate proceedings as well, and we respectfully request that the statutes governing removal of parent as guardian and termination of parental rights in probate courts also be amended as part of this legislation.

With the addition of permanent guardianship provisions to the probate statutes, we urge your favorable action on this bill. We would be happy to assist in drafting the appropriate revisions to Title 45a.