

February 29, 2012

ATTENTION: KATE SHEA, COMMITTEE CLERK  
Please accept this letter in lieu of live testimony.

Subject: GOVERNOR'S H.B. NO. 5027. An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning the Elimination, Consolidation and Modification of Various Boards and Commissions.

Chairman Slossberg, Chairman Morin, and all members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

My name is Les Seligson. I am the immediate past President of the Connecticut Court Reporters Association. I served as president for five years. I am also an Orange resident and it just so happens that, Sen. Slossberg, you are the chair of the Government Administration and Elections Committee.

I am writing to you, as I did in 2009, not only on my behalf, but of the hundreds of licensed reporters in our State who have the duty and responsibility of making the official record of hearings, depositions, et cetera, in court cases. I oppose the termination or elimination of the State Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters established under section 20-651 of the Connecticut General Statutes for some of the following reasons: I have appeared before the BOE (Board of Examiners) a number of times in my presidency concerning crucial issues. Most of these issues were resolved through the advice of the BOE who plays a vital role in our existence today. It is a very active board.

The BOE plays an essential role under the present law overseeing our profession. It administers the licensure exam at different times of the year. In order to be licensed, a reporter must first undergo rigorous training, pass the state test, take continuing education in order to maintain that license. It is expensive to go through continuing education to maintain your license. The BOE holds hearings on complaints from the public and shorthand reporters. The Board keeps out of state unlicensed interlopers from taking away Connecticut jobs and was very supportive in CCRA's legislation of now having a license statute that finally has a provision for financial penalties under its disciplinary provisions.

In 2010 there was an outside court reporting firm from New York, unlicensed in the State of Connecticut. The BOE investigated and fined the New York firm. Obviously, if someone from out of state comes into Connecticut, they do not pay State Sales Tax to Connecticut aside from taking jobs away from us. In this economy it's all about jobs, jobs, jobs. Additionally, I believe that this board is self-sustaining, in that through the licensure renewals alone of some \$50,000 every three years it pays for itself. They are an all-volunteer board. I assume the governor does not know the intricate and important work that this board plays in our daily lives; he can't, he's too busy. I would appreciate it if there is a way to follow this proposal by the Governor so, if needed, we can appear in person.

Cordially,  
Les Seligson