

SB192 Proposed bill to Finalize Adoptions in Superior Court

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Urban and members of the Select Committee on Children.

I would like to raise some concerns about the bill, SB 192. As president of the CT Council on Adoption, a volunteer group of professionals and parents who monitor adoption practices in the state, I am aware of some issues that this bill may not have considered. Over the years that the Probate Courts have been finalizing the adoptions, the clerks of the Probate Courts have become very knowledgeable about the appropriate information that needs to be contained in an adoption file. Once the adoption is finalized, the files are stored separately from other Probate files. If the adoption involves a subsidy, that information must be completed and signed before the hearing in order to be eligible for IV-E funding reimbursement. The atmosphere of the Probate Court is more family oriented, and adoption is a happy, family event; there is a concern that those held in Superior Court may not allow as many family members to attend, and the atmosphere may be too formal.

If the goal here is to expedite adoptions, my concern is that it may not expedite the adoptions due to the overburdened cases now at the Superior Court level. Also, to train Superior Court staff in the details of adoption paperwork, etc. will require more time. The Probate Courts have done many trainings over the years to improve and expedite the system. The Probate Courts have been able to schedule adoptions with plenty of notice and input from the adoptive families; would the Superior Court be able to have any flexibility? If the TPR was contested, would there be safety issues in bringing the adoptive family and child back into the same court?

We are not opposed to this bill if the logistics of it have been fully considered. Many of the delays in adoptions come from DCF staff who are not well trained in adoption issues. That would need to be addressed as well.

The system, as it is, is not broken. Changing the court venue is not a simple solution to delays. Please evaluate carefully that this does not further complicate the process.



Carolyn Goodridge

CT Council on Adoption President