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R.B. 453, An Act Concerning Certificates of Relief From Barriers Resulting From Conviction of a Crime

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports *R.B. 453, An Act Concerning Certificates of Relief From Barriers Resulting From Conviction of a Crime*. This Office is a member of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission and supported this proposal throughout the discussions pertaining to it. The Raised Bill changes the name of what is currently referred to as a "provisional pardon", and expedites the process for applying for such a Certificate from the Board of Pardons and Parole. The bill also permits the court, in its discretion, to issue such a Certificate to a defendant either at sentencing or during probation. The defendant, who may be eligible, must either be sentenced to a sentence which does not include incarceration right away, or a sentence of incarceration of less than two years. The Raised Bill contains the criteria that must be established to the satisfaction of the court prior to the issuance of a Certificate. Passage of this bill is an important step forward as it would assist a person convicted of an offense to obtain housing and employment. For these reasons, this Office supports passage of this proposed legislation.