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March 21, 2012

Members of the Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Senate Bill # 8 – Increase in Compensation for Magistrates of Small Claims
and Criminal & Traffic Infractions

Dear Members,

As President of the Connecticut Magistrates Association and as a magistrate for over 10 years, I urge your support for this bill.

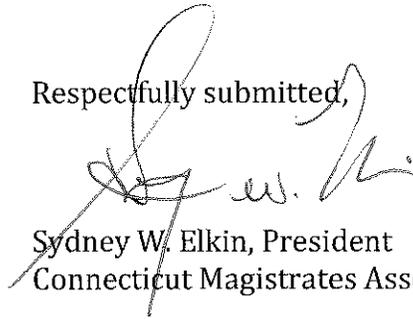
In **1983**, when the position of magistrate was created, the compensation was determined to be \$150 per day. It has been **30 years** and we have received no increase. We do not receive a mileage allowance, state benefits or reimbursement for parking. The jurisdictional limit of Small Claims has increased to \$5,000 and with it, an increase in the complexity of the cases. The filing fee for Small Claims has increased from \$35 to \$90.

For over 85% of the public that comes into our court system, *we are the face of the judicial system*. We oversee, review or hear approximately 150,000 matters in the course of a year.

We understand these are tough economic times. We are requesting an increase to \$300 per day, which is less than what inflation would have brought us to. Per the government calculator, \$150 is now worth about \$70.00. The additional cost to the State, I calculate to be \$112,500 (average sessions per week = 15; 50 weeks; multiplied by \$150).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. W. Elkin', written over the typed name below.

Sydney W. Elkin, President
Connecticut Magistrates Association