



**Connecticut
Sentencing
Commission**

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Honorable Joseph
M. Shortall, Chair

Undersecretary
Mike Lawlor, Vice Chair

Andrew J. Clark, Acting
Executive Director

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 6509

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION REGARDING THE
MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION.**

By Hon. Joseph M. Shortall
Chairman, Connecticut Sentencing Commission

Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, Senator Kissel,
Representative Rebimbas and members of the Judiciary Committee.

I am Joseph Shortall, the Chairman of the Connecticut Sentencing
Commission. I am here to testify on behalf of the Commission in support of
House Bill 6509, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION REGARDING THE MEMBERSHIP OF
THE COMMISSION.

The Connecticut Sentencing Commission was created by Public Act 10-129,
which was effective February 1, 2011. Its mission, as stated in the statute, is
as follows:

**"to review the existing criminal sentencing structure in the state and any
proposed changes thereto, including existing statutes, proposed criminal
justice legislation and existing and proposed sentencing policies and
practices and make recommendations to the Governor, the General
Assembly and appropriate criminal justice agencies."**

The commission consists of 23 members, including judges, prosecutors,
criminal defense counsel, the commissioners of the Departments of
Correction, Public Safety and Mental Health and Addiction Services, the
victim advocate, the executive director of the court support services division
of the Judicial Branch, a municipal police chief, the chairperson of the Board
of Pardons and Paroles, the undersecretary of the criminal justice policy and
planning division of the Office of Policy and Management and members of
the public appointed by the Governor and the leaders of the General
Assembly.

Public Act 10-129 identifies 13 tasks for the Commission in carrying out its
mission, including facilitation of the development of a state-wide sentencing
database, evaluation of existing and proposed statutes and programs,
identification of potential areas of sentencing disparity and providing training
regarding sentencing and related issues.

By amending Public Act 10-129 to add the chairs and ranking members of the Judiciary Committee to the Sentencing Commission's membership, the Commission believes it would benefit from their familiarity with the legislative process and their knowledge of the criminal justice system.

Passage of SB 6509, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION REGARDING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION, would assist the Commission's in carrying out its statutory mission.

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