State of Connecticut

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Testimony of
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Office of Chief Public Defender

Raised Bill No. 983
An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission Regarding Unclassified Felonies

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 11, 2013

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports ***Raised Bill No. 983, An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission Regarding Unclassified Felonies.*** The Connecticut Sentencing Commission created a working group to review and classify 258 felonies that are not classified under the statutes currently. Current felony classifications range from class A to class D felonies punishable by incarceration that ranges up to life without the possibility of release and fines that range up to $3,500. Pursuant to this proposal certain unclassified felonies would be classified as C and D felonies. A new class E felony would also be created and would be punishable by up to 3 years in prison, a fine up to $3,500 or both. Thirteen unclassified felonies are recommended to be placed within this new classification.

The working group consisted of Attorney Robert Farr, Executive Assistant Brian Austin of the Division of Criminal Justice and myself on behalf of the Office of Chief Public Defender. With the assistance of Attorney Louise Nadeau of LCO, Attorney Chris Reinhart of OLR and Jason DePatie, policy specialist at the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at Central Connecticut State University, the working group held numerous meetings to discuss potential changes in the classification of certain unclassified felonies and the penalties and fines associated with each. As a result, the Office of Chief Public Defender requests that this proposed bill be voted out favorably.