

McCall, Brandon

From: Christine Whitehead <chris@whiteheadlegal.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 04, 2013 1:55 PM
To: Jud Testimony
Subject: Letter to Members of Judiciary Committee regarding Bill 1155

April 4, 2013

Email: Jud.testimony@cga.ct.gov

Re: [Bill 1155](#)

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Please be advised that I've been a matrimonial lawyer for over 30 years and was President of the Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers 3 years ago and I continue to be a member of the group.

There is great debate about whether alimony formulas make sense for husbands and wives coming before Superior Courts of our State. Having worked with alimony numbers on behalf of both men and women and understanding the variables involved in the statute and the factors to be taken into account, I support the Bill which of course deals with more than the suggested alimony formula..

While it's been argued that the formula is bad for women who've been out of the job market, that is not my perception. At least 80% of my clients are women and I strenuously advocate for them every day. I'd never, ever consider sacrificing their rights and interests in any way. The reason I feel that the formula as a starting point is a good idea is that it assists members of the judiciary who have not worked in this field regularly and have no idea where to begin; I've run these numbers with some of my own cases and have found the results to be in line with what I would expect; the Bill is very clear that the statutory factors are always considerations and the Court has discretion to vary this result. Further, consistency and predictability in advising clients, be they men or women, is extremely helpful to clients. Fundamental fairness is also more easily achieved if people earning the same amounts end up with similar amounts of family income at the end of the divorce unless otherwise agreed. Finally, having a consistent range of alimony assists in achieving reasonable legal fees in the resolution of a divorce case. I've seen women beaten down by the fact that the litigation is going on and on and the costs escalating so they just capitulate. This Bill gives at least a fair baseline that can then be varied depending upon particular facts.

Many thanks for considering all points of view regarding this Bill.

Sincerely,

Christine Whitehead

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