

# *Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.*



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## TESTIMONY

### GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE Friday, February 22, 2013

#### **HB 5421 – An Act Exempting Death Certificates of Minors from Public Disclosure** **SB 283 – An Act Concerning On-Line Voting for Military Personnel** **HB 5289 – An Act Concerning the Timing of Certain Special Municipal Elections**

Good morning Senator Musto, Representative Jutila, Senator McLachlan, Representative Hwang and the distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. My name is Michele Grande and I am the Town Clerk in Redding and a member of the Legislative Committee for the Connecticut Town Clerk's Association. I am here to testify on various proposals before you today.

First the Association supports, *HB 5421 An Act Exempting Death Certificates of Minors from Public Disclosure* but recommends that the proposal be amended so that it can be properly managed. As clerks, we are well aware that certain information contained in a death certificate can be used to establish identity or to locate and harass family members. Following the recent tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, the Newtown Clerk has brought this issue to the forefront and we are fully supportive of her attempt to provide some protection to the families who have lost a minor child. There are several bills currently under consideration by various committees of the General Assembly.

The Association recommends that a short form death certificate be developed, similar to the short form birth certificate. This short form death certificate would provide the protection from unnecessary public disclosure of private information while providing appropriate access to vital records by the general public. For example, a short form "death registration" could be established which would include the name, date of death and town of death. This alternative would balance the public's right to know with the protection and privacy that we are seeking.

In addition to this bill, the Association would like to comment on:

*SB 283 AAC On-Line Voting for Military Personnel.* We currently have a procedure in place, which allows military voters the option of receiving their ballot by email, however, the voter must return the ballot to the town clerk by regular mail. In order for the ballot to be counted the town clerk must receive the ballot no later than 8:00pm on Election Day.

*HB 5289 AAC The Timing of Certain Special Municipal Elections.* We support allowing a municipality to combine elections that fall within thirty days of one another, which would reduce costs and be more convenient for the voters.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I'm available to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Grande  
Redding Town Clerk  
Member of CTCA Legislative Committee