

Testimony of Bouchra Frank in support of S.B. 31, An Act Concerning Continued Delivery of Legal Services to the Poor (March 10, 2014 Judiciary Committee)

My name is Bouchra Frank and until I received legal help and the belief that I had the power to make a change in my life, I was married to an abusive, irrational and mean man. I was living in a prison of sorts and unable to figure out how to get out of it. I was under the wrong belief that if I sought a divorce I could lose my child. Once I met with Attorney Plancher at Connecticut Legal Services in Stamford, I saw that my life could be happy and could be very different. I could leave my husband and get custody of my child. Both truths were possible.

With help and guidance from Legal Services, I completed a dissolution action and obtained custody of my child. Connecticut Legal Services gave me assistance throughout the entirety of the dissolution process which in my case took a long time because of the complication that my son was living temporarily in Morocco. Legal Services provided the guidance I needed to understand the laws regarding custody and support.

After the case was over, I needed more legal help. As I am from Morocco and my son had spent a year of his life there with his grandparents, I wanted to travel home to visit family. My ex-husband continued his emotional abuse by refusing to provide consent for me to travel with our son to visit family. Connecticut Legal Services helped me to ask the court for permission to travel. The judge recently issued a ruling in my favor and found that it is in my child's best interest to visit with family in Morocco.

I am so grateful to Connecticut Legal Services for helping me find the strength I needed to pursue my legal rights and for giving me the tools I needed to get what was just. My daughter and I thank legal services from the bottom of our hearts.

Respectfully,

Bouchra Frank