STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

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Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 24, 2014

House Bill 5588, An Act Concerning Bail Bonds

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch regarding **House Bill 5588*, An Act Concerning Bail Bonds.*** The Branch is opposed to sections 2 and 3 of the bill.

Section 2(b) of the bill would allow bondsmen to seek a release from the bond in instances where a principal absconds and a bond forfeiture order is issued, for good cause shown. If adopted, the Branch anticipates a significant increase in the number of motions filed for release, since there will be little for a bondsman to lose. The effect on the Branch is two-fold: not only will increased filings take court and judge time away from other pending criminal cases, but should these motions be granted, all notices of release must be provided manually because our computer system is not designed to provide any such notice.

The Judicial Branch is also opposed to section 3(a)(4) which would allow a defendant to voluntarily return to court within six months after the date that his or her bond was ordered forfeited, with the result being a termination of the bond and the surety released. As members of the Committee may be aware, the point of bond is to ensure that an arrested person shows up for his or her court date. The court's authority is severely diminished if a person can pick and choose when to show up in court without consequence.

We would also respectfully note that the inclusion of an identical provision in last year's Public Act 13-158, *An Act Concerning Bail Bonds,* resulted in Governor Malloy's veto of that act.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to this bill.