

Mary Jo Ross
Testimony before the Labor and Public Employees Committee of the
Connecticut General Assembly
February 18, 2014

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Tercyak, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Mary Jo Ross. I've worked as a Probate Court Officer in the New Haven Regional Children's Probate Court for the last six years. I'm here in **support of HB 5066: AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN WORKERS' RIGHTS TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN**. Thank you for raising this bill again this session to provide us probate court employees the right to form a union. I was up here last year testifying in support then as well.

Unfortunately, the fundamental issue has not changed. Probate employees are still paid through the state, have our pensions invested by the state, report to supervisors who are state employees, but we are not state employees. We are, as we are told again today, unique and special.

That uniqueness apparently means that I should not have a voice in negotiating over my vacation time, my sick time, my wages or my health insurance options. I should accept whatever comes down from the Probate Court Administrator's desk, whatever he determines is fair.

But that is simply not fair.

This bill seeks to provide us probate court employees with the respect and dignity we deserve.

Thank you. I'd be happy to answer any questions.