

Government, Administration and Elections Committee
Feb. 13, 2015
Testimony of James H. Smith, President
Connecticut Council on Freedom of Information

H.B. 6746 AN ACT EXTENDING THE TERMS OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION.

Sen. Cassano, Rep. Jutila, Sen. McLachlan, Rep. Smith, and committee members, The Connecticut Council on Freedom of Information is a nonprofit in its 60th year advocating for open government for the people. I am James H. Smith, CCFOI president. We support HB 6746.

But we feel it doesn't go far enough. Superior Court judges are appointed for seven years. So should the commissioners of the FOI Commission.

There is a reason the terms of judges aren't conterminous with that of a legislature – or even the governor who appointed them. It takes time to develop the particular expertise required to do a good job and the appointees to an independent administrative adjudicator position should not appear to be beholden to the politicians who initially appoint them for future reappointment.

At the very least two-year terms for FOI commissioners should be extended to four years.

Thank you.