



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

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**Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Higher Education and Employment
Advancement Committee Public Hearing
March 12, 2015**

**Senate Bill 966, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners At
Institutions Of Higher Education**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch in support of **Senate Bill 966, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners at Institutions of Higher Education**. This bill would allow sexual assault forensic examiners (SAFEs) to provide immediate care and treatment to victims of sexual assault at health care facilities operated by an institution of higher education.

In 2009, the Judicial Branch's Office of Victim Services (OVS) was authorized to establish a program to train and make SAFEs available at acute care hospitals. Its purpose, in part, is to provide timely, compassionate, patient-centered services to sexual assault victims who present within 120 hours of the assault at participating hospitals. Since its inception, the program has responded to more than 730 sexual assault cases.

OVS has been a party to the discussion of extending SAFEs to health care facilities operated by an institution of higher education, and is supportive of this meaningful initiative.

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