

## Haggerty, Katie

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**From:** Janet Schragger <jschragerphd@icloud.com>  
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**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** COMMITTEE BILL 5505

JANET SCHRAGER, PH.D.  
LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST  
68 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
WEST HARTFORD, CT 06107  
TELEPHONE (860) 561-6179  
FAX: (860) 561-6184

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am responding to express my concerns regarding Committee Bill Number 5505. Having read the bill, I have some very specific concerns.

1. Families experiencing high conflict are in need of a neutral experienced professional to assist the process of resolving conflict. The bill recommends that parents that are already at a point of no agreement identify that professional. I think this can only exacerbate the conflict in an inflamed situation. Furthermore, families are not typically experienced with the professionals with backgrounds in child psychology, family dynamics, and the nature of high conflict families. A knowledgeable judge, mental health professional, or family law attorney would be in a position to recommend or select an appropriate professional.
2. In line 45, the recommendation that the selection of the psychologist includes, "giving due consideration to the health insurance coverage," is an inappropriate use of insurance. Health insurance is for medical purposes. It is inappropriate to lead families to believe that their health care insurance will cover the expenses of a legal action such as a custody evaluation.
3. Selecting a treating professional for therapy for the child or family is different than selecting a custody evaluator. These two actions should not be combined under the same statute. A treating professional will be relating to family members and the children for an extended period of time in the role of psychotherapist. The evaluator is a neutral party for a fixed period of time, making specific recommendations. The evaluation process is typically completed by experienced evaluators with knowledge of this process.

Janet B. Schragger, Ph.D.