



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

231 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 757-2270 Fax (860) 757-2215

Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Human Service Committee Public Hearing
February 19, 2015

**House Bill 6764, An Act Concerning Income Withholding
For Child Support**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch in support of **House Bill 6764, An Act Concerning Income Withholding for Child Support**. This bill contains a number of provisions designed to ensure the more timely payment of child support.

Sections 1 and 2 of the bill would codify a recommendation of the *Task Force to Study Methods for Improving the Collection of Past Due Child Support*, chaired by Sen. Paul Doyle and Rep. Laura Hoydick, which concluded its work last winter. These two sections would require the State Comptroller and the Department of Labor (DOL) to put into place an electronic system capable of receiving and honoring court-ordered income withholdings transmitted electronically by the child support program.

As members of the Committee may be aware, many private employers in Connecticut have been voluntarily participating in the electronic withholding program for years; their participation ensures a more timely payment of child support, and saves valuable staff time and resources. If enacted, these two sections would allow thousands of court-ordered child support income withholdings to be transmitted electronically to the state, thereby extending more timely payments of child support in instances where the obligor parent is employed by the State of Connecticut.

Section 3 of the bill would require employers - when making a referral regarding an employee to a worker's compensation carrier - to include a copy of any income withholding order currently in place relative to the employee. The section would also require the worker's compensation carrier to withhold funds pursuant to the order and to pay the withheld sums. Passage of this section will ensure that there is no interruption in financial support for children and families when employees receive compensation through a worker's compensation carrier. Current practice requires the Judicial Branch's Support Enforcement Services (SES) to independently research, identify and follow-up with carriers to ensure that court-ordered support is withheld, often leading to a gap or delay in payment of financial support for children.

Section 4 provides the court with a new remedy to use against an employer who fails to withhold court-ordered child support. Namely, it would authorize the court to order a cash-deposit to be paid by the employer and held in escrow either by SES or by the Department of Social Services' Bureau of Child Support Enforcement. This remedy - which is already successfully utilized against child support obligors - would again, ensure a more timely payment of child support for families in need.

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