

Terrance D. Lomme
Judge

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Probate Court
District of Saybrook

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To; **Committee, Co-Chairman Senator Eric Coleman**
Committee, Co-Chairman Representative William Tong.

Re; **House Resolution No. 67 specifically Sec. 2. Section 6 of said article fifth**

The reasons I support this bill;

When the constituency decides to elect a judge who they know turns 70 during his or her term, their wishes should not be thwarted by this restriction. In the last election my opponent made my age one of his campaign issues. Despite this effort, I was elected. Even though this bill affects me directly, it also affects several other sitting judges. I think it is in the best interest of the general populace for the affected judges to be able to finish their terms, for the reasons described below.

COST TO TOWNS

There is the continuity that the public expects from courts. If a judge turns 70 during the term, and is required to retire, one option is that another judge or judges will have to fill in depending on the size of the court and the availability of other judges. The town's people in the retiring judge's district have no input as to who the substitute judge(s) are. With larger districts and fewer judges it is not easy to find available judges. The other option is a special election. In my case the district consists of 9 towns and 12 polling places so the cost to all these towns, in both dollars and man hours, of a special election, is high. The newly elected Judge then has to run again in the normal election, which may only be months later. If they do not win, then there is another transition and a lack of continuity.

COST TO STATE

As a financial matter, allowing a judge to finish their term saves the state money, in that they are paying for only one retirement/ salary for a longer period of time. Given the number of judges who will reach 70 in the next few years, this savings is potentially quite substantial. A great

majority of the retiring judges have been judges for several years, so their retirement payment is substantial.

LACK OF PROPER TRAINING AND TRANSITIONING

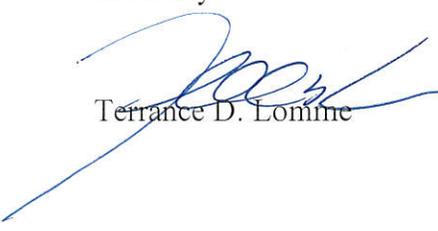
If there is a special election, the new judge takes over immediately. They would not have the benefit of the substantial training judges receive between elected in November and taking office in January. Additionally, the transition from retiring judge to new judge is much smoother if they have time to meet and review polices, personal and hearing procedures. It is extremely difficult for a judicial candidate to spend time at the court, as the sitting judge cannot appear to be supporting either candidate. If the candidate is in the court offices or sits in on hearings, it may have the appearance of impropriety, relative to the judge. Given the number of hearings, the new judge will have to start hearing matters prior to being fully trained. This does not benefit any of the participants.

QUALIFIED RESOURCES LOST

As a result of our extended lifespans, people are more active and are working longer. I have known several judges who were required to retire under this rule who would have finished their terms as excellent and capable jurists. Their experience and knowledge was extensive and they were an asset their district.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely



Terrance D. Lomine