

**CCDLA**  
*"Ready in the Defense of Liberty"*  
Founded 1988

**Connecticut Criminal Defense  
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March 23, 2015

The Honorable Eric D. Coleman, Co-Chair  
The Honorable William Tong, Co-chair  
Joint Committee on Judiciary  
Room 2500, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

**Re: Raised Bill No. 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic  
Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**

Dear Chairmen and Committee Members:

The Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (CCDLA) is a statewide organization of over 300 licensed lawyers, in both the public and private sectors, dedicated to defending persons accused of criminal offenses. Founded in 1988, the CCDLA works to improve the criminal justice system by ensuring that the individual rights guaranteed by the Connecticut and United States constitutions are applied fairly and equally and that those rights are not diminished.

The CCDLA strongly supports **Raised Bill 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**. This bill articulates the Commission's mission more precisely and includes improved descriptive language concerning the particular manner in which the Commission shall proceed in the future to accomplish its mission. Subsections (1) through (6) of Section 1(b) explicitly outline the avenues the Commission will follow to be more inclusive, to educate stakeholders and policy makers, and to effectively address the factors that lead to racial and ethnic disparity in the criminal justice system. These six subsections reflect an extraordinarily well conceived plan to effect change within Connecticut's criminal justice system to eliminate racial and ethnic disparity. The CCDLA believes this statutory revision is timely and will improve the Commission's overall efficiency and positive impact.

For the reasons stated above, **the CCDLA strongly supports the passage of R.B 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**. If you have any questions regarding this testimony please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa L. Villa, President  
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