



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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Testimony Of
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Office of Chief Public Defender
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing- April 1, 2015

Raised Bill 1129
An Act Establishing A Pilot Program To Identify And Track
The Homeless, Addicted, Or Mentally Ill Persons Entering The Justice System
And Concerning The Earned Risk Reduction Credit Program

While not opposed to Section 1 of this Bill 1129, the Office of Chief Public Defender strongly urges this committee not to place primary responsibility for screening and/or tracking these cases with the prosecutors. Instead, the Office of Chief Public Defender proposes that a better entity to gather such information may be the Court Support Services Division-CSSD, specifically Bail/IAR (Intake, Assessment, Referral), and Adult Probation, so long as the defendant's right to counsel and right against self incrimination are not infringed upon.

The Office of Chief Public Defender is in support of the general concept of the pilot program because it emphasizes treatment and diversion for those arrested persons who are particularly vulnerable to reoffending, rather than prosecution and incarceration. These goals are consistent with other legislative initiatives designed to reduce recidivism while also providing persons with the support and services they require to achieve their full potential. The Office of Chief Public Defender takes no position on Section 2 of this Bill 1129.

