



**Substitute Senate Bill No. 426**

**Special Act No. 16-19**

***AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO LEGAL COUNSEL IN CIVIL MATTERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study the nature, extent and consequences of unmet legal needs of state residents in civil matters. The task force shall examine, on a state-wide basis, the impact that the lack of access to legal counsel in civil matters is having on the ability of state residents to secure essential human needs.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a director of a legal clinic program of a law school located in the state, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city with a population exceeding one hundred thousand;

(2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be an attorney who either has a solo practice or is in a law firm located in the state with twenty or fewer attorneys, and one of whom shall be an attorney in a law firm located in the state with one hundred or more attorneys;

***Substitute Senate Bill No. 426***

(3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of the Open Communities Alliance, and one of whom shall represent an organization advocating on behalf of the disability community;

(4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city with a population not exceeding one hundred thousand;

(5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of a pro bono program organized by a law firm located in the state, and one of whom shall be a state resident who has been a pro se litigant in a civil matter in a state court;

(6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Bar Association, and one of whom shall be an in-house counsel attorney for a state business;

(7) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary;

(8) Three appointed by the Chief Court Administrator, one of whom shall be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the Family Division or has been assigned to the Family Division in the three-year period prior to the effective date of this section, and one of whom shall be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the housing session or has been assigned to the housing session in the three-year period prior to the effective date of this section;

(9) The Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court, or the Chief Justice's designee;

***Substitute Senate Bill No. 426***

(10) The Chief Public Defender, or the Chief Public Defender's designee;

(11) The Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's designee;

(12) The Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee;

(13) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(14) The Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee;

(15) The president of the Connecticut Bar Association, or the president's designee;

(16) The president of the South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut, or the president's designee;

(17) The president of the George W. Crawford Black Bar Association, or the president's designee;

(18) The president of the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association, or the president's designee;

(19) The president of the Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association, or the president's designee;

(20) The president of the Connecticut Bar Foundation, or the president's designee;

(21) The dean of The University of Connecticut School of Law, or the dean's designee;

(22) The dean of the Quinnipiac University School of Law, or the dean's designee;

***Substitute Senate Bill No. 426***

(23) The dean of the Yale University School of Law, or the dean's designee;

(24) The executive director of Connecticut Legal Services, or the executive director's designee;

(25) The executive director of Greater Hartford Legal Aid, or the executive director's designee;

(26) The executive director of the New Haven Legal Assistance Association, or the executive director's designee; and

(27) The executive director of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, or the executive director's designee.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(f) Not later than December 15, 2016, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. Such recommendations shall include suggested mechanisms to: (1) Secure access to justice and legal

***Substitute Senate Bill No. 426***

representation in civil matters by increasing the availability of legal assistance with civil matters throughout the state; and (2) encourage increased pro bono service by the state's legal community. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or December 15, 2016, whichever is later.

Approved June 10, 2016