

**TESTIMONY OF CHERRON M. PAYNE, ESQ:**

**SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS  
COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2016**

Good day Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. My name is Cherron Payne and it is an honor and privilege to be appointed to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities by Governor Dannel P. Malloy. I offer my sincere thanks to this committee for the opportunity to appear before you to express my desire to serve on this Commission.

I am a native of Toledo, Ohio and I received my bachelor's degree from the Honors College at Ohio University. I graduated summa cum laude and was selected by *USA Today* to be a member of the United States Academic Team. After my graduation from college, I earned a Master's degree in the History of Science from Harvard University where I was awarded the Graduate Prize Fellowship. Thereafter, I received my Doctor of Jurisprudence from Vanderbilt University Law School, and an advanced diploma from Oxford University.

In 2003, I moved to Connecticut to commence my legal career. I worked as an associate attorney at two law firms and I also worked as corporate counsel for the global headquarters of an emissions corporation. In 2010, I started my own law firm where I currently practice in the areas of housing law, litigation, entertainment law, business law, and contracts. In 2011, I was appointed by the judicial branch to serve as a magistrate for small claims and motor vehicle infractions.

For many years, I have been active in civil rights initiatives. However, my interest in public service commenced while working for a Connecticut law firm that specialized in housing, specifically public housing. Throughout my work as an associate at the firm, I observed many disparities in income and housing, especially among minorities. This experience catalyzed my desire to serve the underrepresented in this state and to intersect my legal background with public service and social justice.

In my role as an attorney and a magistrate, I have gained experience listening to all sides of an argument, weighing evidence, obtaining facts, and expeditiously making sound and prudent decisions. I have garnered the leadership skills to effectively interact with self-represented parties, effectuate due process, and maintain orderly proceedings.

Since its inception, the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities has worked to establish equality. Therefore, it is my intent to continue this tradition with the skill, compassion, and commitment that is necessary to solidify standards of equality in the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to serve on the Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities. It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I embark upon this role of public service.