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Raised Bill No. 5476 – *An Act Expanding the use of Drug Dockets*
Judiciary Public Hearing – March 18, 2016

The Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Associations is a not-for-profit organization of more than three hundred lawyers who are dedicated to defending persons accused of criminal offenses. Founded in 1988, CCDLA is the only statewide criminal defense lawyers' organization in Connecticut. An affiliate of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, CCDLA works to improve the criminal justice system by insuring that the individual rights guaranteed by the Connecticut and United States constitutions are applied fairly and equally and that those rights are not diminished.

CCDLA supports Raised Bill 5476, *An Act Expanding the use of Drug Dockets*. The proposed legislation properly acknowledges the reality many within the criminal justice system have faced for a long time, that severe substance abuse disorders need to be addressed via a specialized court that focuses more on treatment of offenders rather than simply punishment of them.

Drug addiction is a very serious problem that affects every community in this state regardless of racial, social, or economic barriers. Providing access to specialized drug dockets that can adequately address this public health crisis is in the best interests of the people of this State.

For these reasons CCDLA supports Raised Bill 5476 and respectfully requests the Committee approve this bill.