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**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING
FOR PROBATE COURT
FEBRUARY 19, 2016**

My name is Kevin Brophy, and I am the Director of Elder Law for Connecticut Legal Services, a non-profit legal aid agency. My testimony is submitted on behalf of the elder attorneys of Connecticut's Legal Services Programs, the low income elderly clients they serve and the many other low income elderly residents of CT needing the services of the Probate Court system.

Low income individuals in Connecticut use the Probate Court for a variety of different matters, including conservatorships, guardianships, adoption, restoration of maiden name, and accounting of financial records. They should have the same right of access to the Probate Court as those of means.

It is crucial that the Probate Court has sufficient funding to serve these low income individuals. Funds are needed so that individuals who are low income can file petitions and motions with fee waivers, have court-appointed attorneys paid adequately, and have interpreters fairly compensated when they are assigned for non-English speaking individuals or those who are hearing impaired. Please consider the needs of low income individuals whose access to the Probate Court system will be seriously curtailed if sufficient funding for probate courts is not restored.

Thank you.

