

Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Equity & Opportunity  
18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, Connecticut

**Testimony from Werner Oyanadel, Senior Commission Analyst for the  
Commission on Equity & Opportunity (CEO)**

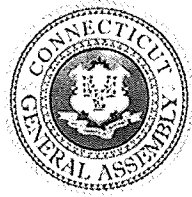
**Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 ~ LOB Room 1A – 1:00 PM**

*In support of Proposed HB No. 482 "An Act Concerning the Preparation of Racial & Ethnic Impact Statements"  
Proposed H.B. No. 6160 "An Act Requiring an Online List of the Membership of Legislative Boards and Commissions."*

Good morning Senators Winfield & McLachlan, Rep. Fox and all honorable members of the *Government Administration Elections (GAE) Committee* of the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA). My name is Werner Oyanadel, Senior Commission Analyst for the CGA's Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO). I am here today in support of Proposed HB No. 482 "An Act Concerning the Preparation of Racial & Ethnic Impact Statements," & Proposed H.B. No. 6160 "An Act Requiring an Online List of the Membership of Legislative Boards and Commissions."

For the record the mission of the CEO is to inform and engage all policy makers about constituent needs for the African American, Asian American, Pacific Islanders, and Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. We are a nonpartisan agency with a data driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation and our primary focus – again – is to recommend legislation that aims at eliminating disparities by creating opportunities, building connections and promoting social change.

CEO is highly supportive of HB 482, which if adopted by the CGA would allow all legislators upon request to require that a racial and ethnic impact statement be prepared for any bill going through the legislative process. Racial impact statements, according to the Sentencing Project, are a strong tool for lawmakers to evaluate potential disparities of proposed legislation prior to adoption and implementation. Connecticut, as you may know, became the second state in 2008 to authorize racial impact statements for proposed criminal justice policies upon request – currently there are three states that have implemented similar mechanisms and many other states are



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beginning to introduce similar legislation including Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, and Wisconsin. Connecticut, as far as we know, would be the first state in the country to expand it to all proposed policies which we at CEO strongly support.

CEO is also here to speak in support of the concept of HB 6160, which would make it a requirement for all legislative boards and commissions to post online a full list of their legislative board compositions. CEO is already ready to post our lists online for transparency purposes and allow public access to our membership at no extra cost to our internal budget.

It is within this context that we urge passage accordingly.