



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of the Judicial Branch
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 27, 2017**

**S.B. 981, An Act Concerning Strategic Litigation Against Public
Participation and a Special Motion to Dismiss**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch regarding S.B. 981, *An Act Concerning Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation and a Special Motion to Dismiss*. The Judicial Branch has some concerns with the bill as proposed.

Should the Committee act favorably on this bill, we would request that the effective date be changed to October 1, 2017. From a technical standpoint, time will be needed to comport our system with the new types of pleadings contemplated by the bill. Additionally, training for staff and judges will be needed. The later effective date would allow sufficient time for the Branch to implement the proposal effectively, especially as the bill applies to existing cases.

We would also point out, as an additional concern, that the special motion to dismiss created by the bill must be filed not later than 60 days after service of the complaint, counterclaim or cross claim. For pending case, this window may well have long passed. Although the proposal allows the court to extend the 60-day period for "good cause shown", we would note that language specifying that the 60-day period does not apply to cases pending at the time of the bill's passage, could be useful in the application of the bill to existing cases.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.