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**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 880: An Act Increasing Fairness and
Transparency in the Criminal Justice System
Submitted by, Debra Mastroni-Kenyon, Director of Faith Formation
Monroe Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
March 21, 2019**

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and distinguished members of the Judiciary
Committee,

I am Debra Mastroni-Kenyon, Director of Faith Formation, Monroe Congregational Church, United
Church of Christ and I am writing today in support of S.B. 880 An Act Increasing Fairness and
Transparency in the Criminal Justice System.

I am writing on behalf Monroe Congregational Church, one of the 233 congregations and more than
67,000 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest
Protestant denomination in Connecticut. In 2014 the assembled delegates and ministers of the
Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ (CTUCC) met and voted on a Resolution
that calls upon the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ to call for an end to Mass
Incarceration for Non-Violent Offenses, to advocate for passage of legislation that promotes
alternatives to mass incarceration, and to support racial and economic justice in criminal sentencing
and restorative justice principles in all possible circumstances. Also, in 1990 the assembled
delegates and ministers of CTUCC met and voted on a Resolution that calls upon CTUCC to work
for Equal Justice for Victims and to seek reform of the judicial system through involvements that
protect the rights of the accused and the victim.

Prosecutors in Connecticut hold a lot of power in the criminal justice system and we are asking the
state to publish data about prosecutors' work so the lawmakers and the public can better evaluate
the criminal justice system in Connecticut which would add to the betterment of Connecticut
residents. According to Connecticut prosecutors, the Division of Criminal Justice currently has
funding to create a digital case management system and is in the process of completing the system.¹

All of God's children deserve transparency; it is critical for our democracy. The Division of
Criminal Justice, the agency that includes Connecticut's state prosecutors is generally not
considered a public agency under the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, making it almost
impossible to obtain information about its work.² S.B. 880 will help Connecticut residents obtain
that transparency they deserve.

¹ ACLU Connecticut

² ACLU Connecticut

Massachusetts and Florida passed legislation requiring state prosecutors to release data about their decisions and we believe Connecticut should as well.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of S.B. 880.

Blessings,

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