

Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-360

AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSCRIPT FEES CHARGED BY OFFICIAL

Title: COURT REPORTERS AND COURT REPORTING MONITORS.

Vote Date: 3/28/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/18/2024

File No.: 506

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Court reporters and court monitors perform a crucial role in our judicial system, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of court records, facilitating the fair administration of justice. Their work requires a high level of skill, attention to detail, and professionalism, often under the pressure of fast-paced and emotionally charged courtroom environments. This bill establishes legal rules for the waiving of court monitor transcripts, seals non-billable transcripts, and increases the per page fee.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language retains the per page increase in Section 1, but allows the Judicial Branch to retain the exemption from having to pay for transcripts. The substitute language also removes Section 2.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

External Affairs Division, State of Connecticut Judicial Branch: They testified with strong concerns surrounding sections of the bill. Their first concern is due to the perceived violation of the April 2021 collective bargaining agreement that stipulated that the court monitors "(a) would type transcripts ordered by judges, family support magistrates, and employees of the Judicial Branch on state time with no additional per page compensation, and (b) could no longer type private transcripts on state time and they could no longer use state supplies to produce such transcripts on their own time." Their second concern is the financial impact that the Judicial Branch would incur to pay the proposed fees.

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Office of Chief Public Defender: She testified with concerns over the proposed fee increase outlined in the bill. She estimated the cost to the agency would be approximately \$55,000 and that additional funding would be needed to cover said fees.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Two unions testified in support of the bill on the grounds that the per page rate has not increased since 2004 and during that time inflation has risen by 64%. They believe the 20% per page rate is a modest increase designed to make the rate more equitable. They state that judges often hand out court monitor's work for free and this seeks to compensate the court report monitors fairly for their work.

Brian Anderson, Legislative Director, Council 4 AFSCME Union
Ed Hawthorne, President Connecticut AFL-CIO

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Beverly Allen: She testified that she had concerns and stated her opposition.

Reported by: Murray Cento

Date: 3-28-24