



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

Office of Chief Public Defender

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Testimony of Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel Office of Chief Public Defender

Public Health Committee - March 9, 2022

Raised S.B. No. 254 - An Act Requiring Long-Term Care Facility Residents to Undergo a Criminal History and Sexual Offender Registry Search

Mission Statement of the Division of Public Defender Services

Striving to ensure justice and a fair and unbiased system, the Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services zealously promotes and protects the rights, liberty and dignity of all clients entrusted to us. We are committed to holistic representation that recognizes clients as individuals, fosters trust and prevents unnecessary and wrongful convictions.

The Office of Chief Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee take no action on **Raised Bill 254, An Act Requiring Long-Term Care Facility Residents to Undergo a Criminal History and Sexual Offender Registry Search**. The proposal is extremely overbroad and would potentially disqualify anyone, including a vulnerable or elderly person, from admission to a long-term care facility, nursing home, or an assisted living facility because they were convicted sometime in their life of certain offenses, even if such conviction occurred decades before.

Included in the overbroad list of offenses for which a person could be denied admission are breach of peace, criminal trespass, and criminal mischief. While serious violent offenses are included in the list of disqualifying offenses, there is no look back in the proposal. As a result, a person convicted of a felony while in their late teens or twenties would not be admitted even if 10, 20, 30 or more years had passed since the conviction.

This office requests that no action be taken on this bill. In the alternative, this office suggests that the list of disqualifying offenses be narrowed and that a look-back period of 10 years be added. Thank you for your consideration.