



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

Aging Committee - March 8, 2022

Raised S.B. No. 266 - An Act Concerning a Registry of Persons Convicted of Financial Crimes Against Elderly Persons

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 this Committee take no action on **Raised Bill 266, An Act Concerning a Registry of Persons Convicted of Financial Crimes Against Elderly Persons**. The proposal would create a registry within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection for persons to register, for 5 years, if they had been found guilty or not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect of certain financial crimes against an elderly person. A person who does not register or maintain their registration is guilty of a class D felony and subject to incarceration of up to 5 years. Further, the registry information will be accessible by the public through the Department of Public Health's website where the public can obtain the registrant's "last known address, convictions or other disciplinary actions taken, and a general description of offenses committed by the person."

Consistent with prior testimony, this office opposes efforts to create such a registry as registries have not been proven to reduce recidivism. The existence of registries which publicly

March 8, 2022

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display convictions create collateral consequences for the offenders listed, including increased difficulty obtaining housing or employment. Publicly displayed with their addresses, information pertaining to registry offenders does not provide any distinctive case circumstances but only the statutory reference of the offense for which they were convicted.

Registries do not disclose whether the registrant poses a risk of any threat to public safety. Instead, the registry is a collection of names and addresses of persons based upon convictions of a certain statute. Public disclosure on a registry increases speculation and may lead to an erroneous perception by the public about the registrants.

Issue such as these have been considered over the last few years by the Connecticut Sentencing Commission regarding the sexual offender registry. The Office of Chief Public Defender believes that registries should not be supported until evidence exists demonstrating that such are effective in reducing crime and do not negatively impact registrants as they re-enter the community and seek employment and housing. In conclusion, this office requests that no action be taken on this bill. Thank you for your consideration.