



DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES
State of Connecticut

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Testimony of the Office of Chief Public Defender
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Committee on Aging – February 2, 2023
Raised S.B. No. 901 – An Act Concerning a Registry of Persons
Convicted of Financial Crimes Against Elderly Persons

Consistent with testimony submitted previously, the Office of Chief Public Defender respectfully requests that this Committee take no action on **Raised Bill 901, An Act Concerning a Registry of Persons Convicted of Financial Crimes Against Elderly Persons**. This proposal would require the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to create and maintain a registry for anyone found guilty or not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect of certain financial crimes against an elderly person. Such persons would be required to register upon release into the community for five years. Failure to register or maintain the registration would be a class D felony and subject the persons to a period of incarceration of up to five years. All the information in the registry would be accessible to the public through the Department of Public Health's website, where the public can obtain the registrant's "last known address, identifying information, current address and email, date of conviction, description of the conviction and sentence imposed."

This office opposes efforts to create any registry as registries have not been proven to reduce recidivism. The existence of registries which publicly display convictions and other identifiable information creates collateral consequences for the offenders listed, including increased difficulty with obtaining housing or employment. 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.

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.

Issues pertaining to the existing sexual offender registry have been considered in the past by the Connecticut Sentencing Commission. 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 upon registrants as they re-enter the community and seek employment and housing. Therefore, this office requests that no action be taken on this bill. Thank you for your consideration.