



**State of Connecticut**  
**DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES**

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

**Judiciary Committee – March 18, 2026**  
**R. B. 504 – AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE**  
**CRIMINAL PROCEDURE LAWS OF THIS STATE**

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports **R.B. 504 – An Act Concerning a Study of the Criminal Procedure Laws of This State**. This office requests that the Chief Public Defender be added to the membership of the working group as it carries out its charge to study the criminal procedure laws of this state. This office’s substantial experience in the Connecticut courts, both pretrial and post-conviction, including its Connecticut Innocence Project, gives this agency a unique perspective on Connecticut’s criminal and juvenile delinquency laws and procedures.

Pursuant to C.G.S. 51-296<sup>1</sup>, the Division of Public Defender Services, as a state agency, provides legal representation to indigent adults and juveniles in criminal proceedings, including direct appeals. For these reasons, OCPD requests that the bill be voted on favorably by the Committee and requests that the Chief Public Defender be included as a member.

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<sup>1</sup> C.G.S. 51-296 also requires the Division of Public Defender Services to provide: “(A) *Legal services and guardians ad litem to children, youths and indigent respondents in family relations matters in which the state has been ordered to pay the cost of such legal services and guardians ad litem, provided legal services shall be provided to indigent respondents pursuant to this subparagraph only in paternity proceedings and contempt proceedings; and (B) legal services and guardians ad litem to children, youths and indigent legal parties in proceedings before the superior court for juvenile matters.*”