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House Bill No. 6505, An Act Concerning Court Operations, Section 29

Section 1 of Public Act No. 19-187 requires that any case of a juvenile that is transferred to the adult criminal docket be private and confidential. This law barred crime victims from the proceedings and from receiving all the rights and information they are entitled to receive. Pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, crime victims are afforded specific constitutional rights throughout the criminal justice process, including the right to attend proceedings and access information regarding the criminal case and the defendant.

House Bill No. 6505, Section 29 will correct this violation of crime victims' rights. This proposal will restore the constitutional rights lost to victims as a result of *Public Act No. 19-187* by exempting victims and their next of kin from being excluded from the proceedings and obtaining information regarding the criminal case and the defendant. However, inherent in the bill is that crime victims are required to maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and not further disclose any information about the case.

Proposed House Joint Resolution No. 49, Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution Concerning Crime Victims' Rights

In 1996, Connecticut residents overwhelmingly supported passage of the Victims' Rights Amendment to the State Constitution. Despite the efforts of the Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) throughout the last 20 years to advance and improve the rights of crime victims, crime victims' constitutional rights are consistently violated throughout our criminal courts. Additionally, when a violation of crime victims' rights occurs, there is no remedy available for crime victims. Constitutional rights without a remedy are merely words on paper.

The Victims' Rights Amendment to the State Constitution bars crime victims from seeking redress for a violation of their rights through the courts. The amendment also requires the General Assembly to enact laws for the enforcement of crime victims' rights, however, the General Assembly has failed to do so. (*State v. Skipwith*, 165 A.3d 1211, 1222 (Conn. 2017)).