

## Legislative History for Connecticut Act

### PA 15-109

#### SB1114

House	6128-6132	4
Senate	1445-1448, 1462-1463	6
Judiciary	5233-5242	10
		<b>20</b>

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public  
Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives  
Proceedings

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**H – 1219**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2015**

**VOL.58  
PART 18  
5928 – 6275**

/dm  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 29, 2015

The bill passes. [gavel] Will the Clerk please  
call Calendar No. 604.

CLERK:

On Page 39, House Calendar 604, Federal Report  
of the Joint Standing Committee on Government  
Administration and Elections, Substitute Senate  
Bill No. 1114, AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMISSION ON  
RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITY IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
SYSTEM.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Representative Tong.

REP. TONG (147<sup>th</sup>):

I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's  
Favorable Report and passage of the bill in  
concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The question is acceptance of the Joint  
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the  
bill in concurrence with the Senate. Representative  
Tong, you have the floor, sir.

REP. TONG (147<sup>th</sup>):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This makes some  
minor changes to the Commission on Racial and  
Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System. It

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adds the Chairperson of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission. It restates the mission of the Commission and sets forth some additional duties of the Commission. The Clerk has an Amendment LCO No. 7518. I ask the Clerk please call the amendment and I be given leave to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Will the Clerk please call Amendment 7518, which will be designated Senate Amendment "A."

CLERK:

LCO No. 7518 designated Senate Amendment  
Schedule "A" and offered by Senator Coleman.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize. Is there any objection to summarization? Is there any objection? Hearing none, Representative, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. TONG (147<sup>th</sup>):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This makes some changes throughout our General Statutes, changing some outmoded language that some may deem offensive with the more modern references and language that is used today. I move adoption.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "A." Will you remark on the amendment? Representative -

REP. TONG (147<sup>th</sup>):

No, Madam, I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "A." Will you remark on the amendment? If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. [gavel] Will you remark further on the bill as amended by Senate Amendment "A?" Will you remark? Will you remark further on the bill as amended? If not, will staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take their seats, and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

[bell ringing] The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber. The House

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of Representatives is voting by roll. Members to  
the Chamber.

[pause]

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Have all the members voted? Have all the -

[pause]

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Have all the members voted? Have all the  
members voted? Please check the board to see if  
your vote has been properly cast. If all the  
members have voted then the machine will be locked,  
and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 1114, as amended by Senate "A," in  
concurrence with the Senate

Total Number Voting	144
Necessary for Passage	73
Those voting Yea	144
Those voting Nay	0

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Absent and not voting 7

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

The bill, as amended, passes in concurrence with the Senate. [gavel] The House will stand at ease.

(Chamber at ease.)

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Any announcements or introduction?

Representative Rojas.

REP. ROJAS (9<sup>th</sup>):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. For an introduction.

DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYERS:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. ROJAS (9<sup>th</sup>):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. One of the benefits of living relatively close to the Capitol especially during this time of year is that my family often gets to come up and visit me. So here in the Chamber today I'm lucky enough to have my wife, Sarah, and my three daughters, Addison, Stella, and Celia, and I would ask the Chamber to just give'm a warm welcome. Thank you.

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2015**

**VOL. 58  
PART 5  
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SENATE

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An immediate -

THE CHAIR:

I'm sorry. Yeah. Yes a roll call vote on - right.  
Senate [ ].

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the  
Senate. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered  
in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is open.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the  
machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please  
call a tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 569, as amended by Senate "A"

Total Number Voting	35
Necessary for Passage	18
Total voting Yea	29
Total voting Nay	6
Absent/not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

[gavel] The bill passes. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 51, Calendar No. 433, Substitute for Senate Bill  
No. 1114, AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMISSION ON RACIAL  
AND ETHNIC DISPARITY IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM,  
Favorable Report from the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE CHAIR:

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Good evening, Senator Coleman.

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Good evening to you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the Clerk should be in possession of LCO 7518. I'd ask that the Clerk call that amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 7518 will be designated Senate Schedule "A."

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Motion's on acceptance. Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Madam President, this amendment would simply replace outdated and obsolete references in our statutes, and specifically, references to crippled and references to defective eyesight. Where the words crippled appear in our statutes, they would be replaced with physical disabilities, and where defective eyesight appears - those words would be replaced with visual impairments. I urge support for the amendment, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Will you remark? If not, I'll try your minds. Oops. So sorry. Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President. I just rise to support the amendment. I believe it was a concept that we had in the Judiciary Committee that may not have made it through the process before our JF deadline and happy to see it attached to a vehicle that's destined to move this evening. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark on Senate Amendment "A?" Will you remark on Senate "A?" If I - I will try your minds. All those in favor, please say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? Senate "A" passes. Senator Coleman.

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. On the bill as amended, the bill before us would do four simple things. The first thing it would do would be to add a member to the Commission on Ethnic and - or, I'm sorry - the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System. And that member would be - that additional member would be - the Chairperson of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission. Secondly, the bill would provide for the quarterly meetings of the Commission.

Thirdly, the bill revises the Mission of the Commission to have the Commission address the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in the state criminal justice system. And finally, the bill, as amended, would require an Annual Report from

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the Commission to the legislature. I'd urge support for the passage of the bill as amended. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President. Happy to support the underlying bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not, Senator Coleman.

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Madam President, if there's no objection, I'd ask that this item be placed on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

Page 16, Calendar 427, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 900, AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADOPTION OF THE UNIFORM PARTITION OF HEIRS' PROPERTY ACT, Favorable Report from the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Coleman.

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Thank you again, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

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Thank you. Mr. Clerk. Will you please call those items on the Consent Calendar please?

CLERK:

Page 1, Calendar 448, House Joint Resolution 101.  
Page 2, Calendar 87, Senate Bill 877. Page 6, Calendar  
Bill 221, Senate Bill 103. Page 8, Calendar No. 260,  
Senate Bill 739. Page 8, Calendar No. 263, Senate Bill  
931. Page 10, Calendar No. 293, Senate Bill 1057. Page  
13, Calendar No. 379, Senate Bill 917.

Page 13, Calendar No. 366, Senate Bill 981. Page 13,  
Calendar No. 362, Senate Bill 1102. Page 16, Calendar  
No. 427, Senate Bill 900. Page 20, Calendar No. 460,  
House Bill 6717. Page 21, Calendar No. 464, House Bill  
6991. Page 22, Calendar No. 469, House Bill 6671. Page  
23, Calendar No. 476, House Bill 6913.

Page 26, Calendar No. 496, Senate Bill 1056. Page 38,  
Calendar No. 114, Senate Bill 865. Page 39, Calendar  
No. 139, Senate Bill 523. Page 42, Calendar No. 201,  
Senate Bill 445. Page 44, Calendar No. 244, Senate  
Bill 481. Page 45, Calendar No. 291, Senate Bill 1054.  
Page 45, Calendar No. 292, Senate Bill 1055.

Page 48, Calendar No. 349, Senate Bill 361. Page 50,  
Calendar No. 412, Senate Bill 677. Page 51, Calendar  
No. 433, Senate Bill 1114. And page 51, Calendar No.  
414, Senate Bill 467.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Please call roll call vote. The  
machine will be opened on the first and last Consent  
Calendar.

CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the  
Senate for Consent Calendar 1. An immediate roll call  
vote has been ordered in the Senate.

[pause]

THE CHAIR:

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If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

CLERK:

Consent Calendar No. 1

Total Number Voting	35
Necessary for Adopted	18
Total voting Yea	35
Total voting Nay	0
Absent/not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. [gavel] Senator Duff.  
Senator Duff. Can somebody put Senator Duff on please.  
Thank you. Thank you.

SENATOR DUFF:

Thank you, Madam President, and despite the human cry to do even more bills tonight -

THE CHAIR:

Yeah, right.

SENATOR DUFF:

I think it is time for us to call it a night and to advise our Senators and staff that we'll be back at noon tomorrow. We will go straight in. We will not caucus first. Or pass go. We'll just go right in at noon tomorrow. And we - make sure that everybody has a very safe ride home tomorrow, and we'll ask if anybody has any points or announcements before we adjourn.

THE CHAIR:

Points of personal privilege? Senator Martin.

SENATOR MARTIN:

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**JUDICIARY  
PART 9  
4923 – 5290**

**2015**



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION



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**Executive Director**

Mui Mui Hin-McCormick

**Legislative Analyst**

Alok Bhatt

March 20, 2015

Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Alok Bhatt, Legislative Analyst for the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC). APAAC serves as a liaison between Connecticut's Asian Pacific American (APA) population and state policy makers. Our primary areas of concern include civil rights, education, economic development, health access, housing, and other issues impacting the APA community's quality of life.

As the sole agency charged with informing the State of issues facing the APA community in Connecticut, and in solidarity with all who experience systematic disparities, APAAC writes in strong support of **SB 1114: An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**.

Very little data exists on the APA community's interaction with Connecticut's criminal justice system. Brief perusal of Department of Corrections (DOC) statistics indicates that, between the years 2000 and 2004, APAs were arrested for Larceny at far greater rates than violent offenses, such as Murder, Aggravated Assault, Rape, or Robbery<sup>1</sup>. In 2003, APAs, who represented approximately 4% of the population of the State of Connecticut at the time, represented .6% of the state's incarcerated population, and .5% of the state's supervised population<sup>2</sup>. Though these general numbers do not seem to indicate significant disparities facing the APA population, mere statistics do not present the narrative or experiences on the ground.

Although APAs do not populate Connecticut prisons in great numbers, they face significant barriers navigating the justice system. Courts typically do not translate pertinent legal documents into Asian or Pacific Island languages, leaving Limited English Proficient (LEP) with little help to discover and utilize critical resources. Furthermore, court interpreters play an indispensable role in ensuring APA access to the criminal justice system, yet our courts typically rely on telephonic interpretation for low-diffusion, and sometimes even major, languages. An individual sitting unknowable miles away on the other end of a receiver can hardly serve as an adequate substitute for a culturally competent and linguistically trained interpreter to guarantee that a defendant comprehends his or her rights and responsibilities during judicial proceedings. These same concerns weigh heavily on the futures of all world language speakers in the State of Connecticut.

Furthermore, APAAC cannot accept the appalling disparities facing our brothers in sisters in the Black and Latino communities in the criminal justice system. Our Black and Latino community members face the justice system at greater rates and younger ages than APAs and all other groups. These profound and historic inequalities must be addressed with sustainable solutions to ensure the best future for the State of Connecticut, the United States, and our increasingly connected world.

APAAC strongly hopes the Commission proposed in SB 1114 can contribute to the

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2008/rpt/2008-R-0008.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2003/olrdata/jud/rpt/2003-R-0837.htm>

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## STATE OF CONNECTICUT

### *ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION*



discovery of such solutions, and looks forward to collaborating with all possible partners in effectuating sound and just policy in the State of Connecticut. Although we specifically serve the APA community, APAAC represents the equality and equity of all people, regardless of ethnicity, economic status, or any other aspect. We will continue to pursue policies, programs, and activities which further these goals.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alok Bhatt  
*Legislative Analyst, Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission*

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State of Connecticut  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

IN SUPPORT OF:

**S.B. No. 1114 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMISSION ON RACIAL  
AND ETHNIC DISPARITY IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

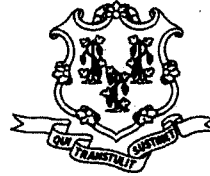
March 23, 2015

The Division of Criminal Justice supports S.B. No. 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System, and respectfully recommends the Committee's **JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**.

The Division of Criminal Justice has been active member of the Commission since the inception of the Commission in 2000. The Commission provides a vital opportunity for state agencies and members of the public the to meet and discuss the important issue of racial and ethnic disparity in the criminal justice system.

After nearly fifteen years in existence, the Commission assembled a working group to review its mission. This legislation is the result of that thoughtful process. The changes proposed in S.B. No. 1114 will make the Commission more inclusive by providing for a representative of the Asian Pacific American community and better focus the efforts of the Commission, particularly with an emphasis on multi-agency forums and training.

In conclusion, the Division supports this bill recommends the Committee's **JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT** for S.B. No. 1114. We thank the Committee for affording us the opportunity to offer input on this bill and we would be happy to answer any questions the Committee might have.



## State of Connecticut

African-American Affairs Commission

State Capitol  
210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509  
Hartford, CT 06106  
860-240-8555

Good Afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, Senator Kissel, Representative Rebimbas, Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Subira Gordon and I am the legislative Analyst for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut. I am writing today to support S.B. 1114, AAC the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System.

The AAAC has been a member of the Racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system commission since its inception. The commission has been able to successfully organize events such as screenings of the color of justice as recently as last April despite the fact that it has no funding. The members of the commission are a dedicated group on individuals comprising of police chiefs, a judge, legislative commissions, and representatives from the State's attorney's office to name a few. The varying backgrounds provide a unique and beneficial perspective on the judicial system in the state. This proposal would add a representative from the Asian and pacific American affairs commission to the group. The Asian population is growing in the state and they have seen increase in their interactions with judicial system and are over represented in the criminal justice system, like African Americans and Latinos, so it is fitting that they are represented on the Commission on racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system.

This legislation inserts language about the mission of the commission making it clear that the goal is to address overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal justice system. The new language removes

language that relates to juvenile justice, as in recent years there have been a number of new groups and commissions formed that are dedicated to dealing with juvenile justice issues. Also a part of this bill is the deletion of requirements that are unable to be fulfilled due to the fact that this is a volunteer board with very little staff resources.

The AAAC supports this bill because it will make the statute stronger and ensure that a dedicated group of individuals are able to fully carry out the charge of the commission and comply with the statute.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

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Testimony of  
**Ernest Green, Senior Assistant Public Defender,**  
**Office of Chief Public Defender**

Judiciary Public Hearing - March 23, 2015  
Bill No. 1114 - An Act Concerning the Commission on  
 Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of Bill No. 1114 An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System. As attorneys appointed to represent the indigent, Connecticut Public Defenders have worked in and against the atmosphere of disparity that pervades the Criminal Justice System. Our Agency has made efforts to educate ourselves, our colleagues and our courts about the intersection of race/ ethnicity and poverty, and have supported efforts to identify, reduce and eliminate explicit and implicit biases that affect the administration of justice in our state. Public Defenders have actively participated in the work of the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System and have joined in that work because of the importance of the issues that the Commission was created to address.

The goals that have been set for the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice pursuant to § 51-10c of the General Statutes are important ones. In actual practice, however, a number of individual mandates of § 51-10c have proven overly burdensome to a Commission with a small budget and volunteer staff. The Commission now seeks to change its statutory charge without diluting the overall goal of reducing disparity in the administration of justice through a narrowed focus on manageable and measurable objectives. The Office of Chief Public Defender believes that the newly focused charge will enhance the work of the Commission by clarifying what actually can and must be accomplished. Through a renewed focus on education and advocacy, the Commission can be an important agent of change while acting within time and budgetary constraints. Additionally, expansion of its membership and revision of its charge will also make the Commission more efficient and effective. A more streamlined approach will assist the Commission as it works to illuminate areas of disparate treatment, and identify procedures and practices that can eliminate both explicit and implicit biases, and improve the experience of all those involved in the Criminal Justice System. There is ample room for heightened awareness of rights and realities. The proposed statutory revision will facilitate and enhance the work of the Commission as it moves the system of justice in Connecticut towards greater equity and fairness.

Therefore, the Office of Chief Public Defender respectfully requests that the Judiciary Committee act favorably upon Raised Bill SB -1114.



## STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## Commission on

**Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**

Honorable Lubbie Harper, Jr.,  
Chairperson  
Tel: (860) 721-2197

c/o CSSD  
936 Silas Deane Highway  
Wethersfield, CT 06106

**Testimony of the Honorable Lubbie Harper, Jr., Chair,  
Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**

**March 23, 2015**

**Judiciary Committee Public Hearing**

**S.B. 1114, AAC the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the  
Criminal Justice System**

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, Senator Kissel, Representative Rebimbas, Senator Doyle, Representative Fox and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in favor of S.B. 1114, AAC the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System. This proposal, which was unanimously endorsed by the members of the Commission, would amend the Commission's authorizing statute. Thank you for raising the bill.

The purpose of this bill is twofold. It would: (1) expand the Commission's membership and purview by broadening the populations it represents; and (2) refine the Commission's charge to more closely reflect the Commission expertise and strengths, as evidenced by the good work that the Commission has engaged in for nearly 15 years.

The Commission was created by the Legislature during the 2000 session and became operational on October 1, 2000. The authorizing legislation gave the Commission an expansive and ambitious charge – in essence, it asked the Commission to solve the long-existing issue of racial and ethnic disparity in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Since the Commission began its work, its members have worked diligently to do so. However, the Commission has not been provided with the resources necessary to fully address this important and complex issue. It has never been provided with state funding, and consequently hasn't been able to hire dedicated staff, secure its own offices or even purchase supplies. The Commission relies entirely on the voluntary efforts of its members, who have busy full-time jobs, and member agencies to accomplish its work.

Resident Chambers  
235 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510  
Tel. (203) 503-6830

In order to make the best use of these limited resources, over the years the Commission has honed its focus to those areas where it can have the largest impact. These include sponsoring educational events targeted at those working in the criminal and juvenile justice systems, collaborating with state agencies and community organizations to facilitate conversation and get the word out, and promoting initiatives to address bias. This proposed amendment to the Commission's charge would bring it in line with these more achievable goals. It will also broaden the Commission's charge to include overrepresentation of all racial and ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system, thereby allowing the Commission to address the impact of changing populations over time.

I would note that the Attorney Natasha Pierre, the State Victim Advocate, has suggested additional language to be inserted in subsection (b) to specifically state that the Commission's purview includes consideration of the impact that racial and ethnic disparity has on victims of crime. I fully endorse her suggestion and urge you to adopt it as substitute language.

In conclusion, on behalf of all the Commission members, I thank you for your consideration and urge you to approve this bill.



NATASHA M. PIERRE, ESQ.  
*State Victim Advocate*

Testimony of Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., State Victim Advocate  
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee  
Monday, March 23, 2015

Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Tong and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Natasha Pierre and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning:


Senate Bill No. 1114, An Act Concerning The Commission On Racial And Ethnic Disparity In The Criminal Justice System

The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) is an active member of the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System and fully supports Senate Bill No. 1114 as it will enhance the effectiveness of the Commission by broadening the populations that it represents while refining the Commission's mandates to achieve more attainable goals. The proposal before you contains the recommendations agreed upon by the Commission. The OVA had the opportunity to participate in these discussions concerning changes to the Commission's enabling statute. There is one provision concerning the commission's mission as it relates to victims of crime that was discussed by Commission members but seems to have been inadvertently omitted from Senate Bill No. 1114. As a result, the OVA would like to offer the following amendment:

(b) The mission of the commission shall be to address the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities, with particular attention to African-Americans and Latinos, in the state's criminal justice system, and shall include consideration of the impact of such racial and ethnic disparity on minority communities. The commission's purview shall include consideration of the impact that racial and ethnic disparity in the criminal justice system has on victims of crime. The commission shall:

Thank you for consideration of my testimony and suggested amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Natasha Pierre, Esq.  
State Victim Advocate



**CCDLA**  
*"Ready in the Defense of Liberty"*  
Founded 1988

**Connecticut Criminal Defense  
Lawyers Association**  
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March 23, 2015

The Honorable Eric D. Coleman, Co-Chair  
The Honorable William Tong, Co-chair  
Joint Committee on Judiciary  
Room 2500, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

**Re: Raised Bill No. 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**

Dear Chairmen and Committee Members:

The Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (CCDLA) is a statewide organization of over 300 licensed lawyers, in both the public and private sectors, dedicated to defending persons accused of criminal offenses. Founded in 1988, the CCDLA works to improve the criminal justice system by ensuring that the individual rights guaranteed by the Connecticut and United States constitutions are applied fairly and equally and that those rights are not diminished.

The CCDLA strongly supports **Raised Bill 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**. This bill articulates the Commission's mission more precisely and includes improved descriptive language concerning the particular manner in which the Commission shall proceed in the future to accomplish its mission. Subsections (1) through (6) of Section 1(b) explicitly outline the avenues the Commission will follow to be more inclusive, to educate stakeholders and policy makers, and to effectively address the factors that lead to racial and ethnic disparity in the criminal justice system. These six subsections reflect an extraordinarily well conceived plan to effect change within Connecticut's criminal justice system to eliminate racial and ethnic disparity. The CCDLA believes this statutory revision is timely and will improve the Commission's overall efficiency and positive impact.

For the reasons stated above, **the CCDLA strongly supports the passage of R.B. 1114, An Act Concerning the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**. If you have any questions regarding this testimony please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa L. Villa, President  
CCDLA  
860-655-9434