



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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

HOUSING COMMITTEE - FEBRUARY 18, 2025

Raised Bill No. 6948

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CRIMINAL RECORDS ON HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports *Raised H.B. 6948 - An Act Concerning the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Records on Housing Opportunities*. This bill provides that it would be a discriminatory practice for a housing provider/potential landlord to require a potential tenant to complete in writing or orally any inquiry regarding the potential client's criminal record prior to the housing provider/potential landlord making a conditional offer. The proposal articulates a process to be followed prior to accepting an application fee and after issuing a conditional offer to the applicant. This bill is consistent with similar legislation providing essential services such as "ban the box" legislation¹ in the employment context and attempts to remove this discriminatory practice in the housing context as well as the employment context.

On June 1, 2016, Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy signed into law a "ban-the-box" statute, which will take effect on January 1, 2017. The law, "An Act Concerning Fair Chance

¹ On June 1, 2016, Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy signed into law a "ban-the-box" statute, which took effect on January 1, 2017. The law, "An Act Concerning Fair Chance Employment", Public Act No. 16-83, prohibits covered employers from inquiring about a prospective employee's prior arrests, criminal charges, or convictions on an initial employment application.

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

February 18, 2025

Housing Committee

Raised H.B. 6948 **An Act Concerning the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Records on
Housing Opportunities**

Employment,” Public Act No. 16-83, prohibits covered employers from inquiring about a prospective employee’s prior arrests, criminal charges, or convictions on an initial employment application.

If passed, the bill would substantially assist prior offenders as they attempt to re-enter their communities. Once released from incarceration or while on probation or parole and even after all have ended, a person with a conviction faces numerous collateral consequences that can block not only reentry but growth as a person and member of society. These collateral consequences negatively impact persons when trying to obtain employment, education and housing. This bill would assist persons seeking housing, especially if any criminal involvement was in the distant past.

In conclusion, this office requests that the Committee vote favorably on this bill. Thank you.