



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**

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT - MARCH 11, 2025

Raised Bill No. 7186

**AN ACT REQUIRING A REPORT CONCERNING THE USE OF BODY
SCANNING MACHINES AND STRIP AND CAVITY
SEARCHES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.**

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports H.B. 7186, An Act Requiring A Report Concerning The Use of Body Scanning Machines and Strip and Cavity Searched in Correctional Facilities. The bill requires the Department of Correction to report on the cost of obtaining body scanning equipment for its facilities and the “number of strip searches and cavity searches of persons who are incarcerated...broken out by correctional facility” policies concerning such and lawsuits filed by inmates regarding strip or cavity searches.

Currently, incarcerated young adults and adults are routinely subject to strip searches in order to attend school or medical appointments. Additionally, incarcerated individuals are subject to body or invasive cavity searches that are mandated under Department of Correction Administrative Directives and conducted on any inmate before and after a visit with persons from outside the correction facility, *including a legal visit with their attorney*. Body or cavity searches are conducted on sentenced inmates, pre-trial detainees held for any offense including misdemeanors, who cannot afford bond and despite the fact that they are **presumed innocent** under both the federal and state constitutions.

Most alarming is the fact that this practice is used on the **youth** of this state irrespective of gender when incarcerated. And because of the demographics of the correction population, this practice has a substantial **disparate impact on persons of color**.

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

March 11, 2025

Government Oversight Committee

Raised H.B. 7186 **An Act Requiring A Report Concerning The Use of Body Scanning Machines
and Strip and Cavity Searched in Correctional Facilities**

In conclusion, this Office supports not only the report required pursuant to this bill but the purchase of such equipment and technology to ensure security and the total elimination of strip or invasive cavity searches of all inmates. This Office requests that you vote joint favorably on this bill. Thank you.