



Testimony on Senate Bill 912

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Good afternoon distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. We are writing to testify in opposition to **Senate Bill 912: An Act Concerning the Status of Probate Court System Employees**. For questions or follow-up, please contact me at meghan@yankeeinstitute.org

Connecticut's probate court system was completely overhauled in 2009 because it was in financial ruin. Based on similar bills in past years, reclassifying probate court employees as state workers for the purposes of collective bargaining will have a significant fiscal note. Given the state's current fiscal status and the probate court system's history, we warn against passing any legislation that will increase costs.

In testimony for the 2017 version of this bill, the president of the Connecticut Association of Probate Clerks (CAPC) said that 85% of their members either do not support this bill or have no opinion. Further, the president explains that CAPC was not involved with the bill's development, but rather it was developed by a source outside the probate system.

The Executive Director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), Betsy Gara, testified opposing the 2020 version of this bill stating, " municipalities have a tremendous stake in ensuring that the probate court system remains financially viable so that towns are not required to incur any additional costs or provide additional in-kind contributions to support the system. As such, COST is very concerned with HB-5274, which would significantly increase probate court costs."

It seems this bill does not address any problem raised by actual probate employees, but a desire, for whatever reason, by outside special interests.

Therefore, we urge you to oppose this bill. When legislating, you must do so in support of the people directly affected, rather than interest groups manufacturing problems for their own benefit.