



State of Connecticut

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

Raised Bill No. 114 An Act Concerning Pretrial Divisionary Programs

Select Committee on Veterans' Affairs February 28, 2012

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports *Raised Bill No. 114, An Act Concerning Pretrial Divisionary Programs*. Section 1 of the bill would provide for a collaboration between the Court Support Services Division and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Veterans' Affairs in an effort to ascertain whether the veteran is amendable to treatment and whether appropriate treatment is available in cases in which a veteran has applied for Pretrial Supervised Diversionary Program for Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities. (C.G.S. §54-56l)

Section 2 of the bill would provide a veteran the opportunity to be considered for the Accelerated Pretrial Rehabilitation program (C.G.S. §54-56e) so long as the veteran had not had the program invoked on his/her behalf more than once previously.

Section 3 would provide that a veteran be referred to DMHAS, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Veterans' Affairs, for an evaluation once the court has granted the veterans' application for the Pretrial Drug Education program (C.G.S. §54-56i).

Adoption of the proposed bill would provide additional treatment opportunities to veterans accused of crime which are not serious in nature and in those instances where treatment for substance abuse or psychiatric disabilities is more appropriate than hindering a veteran with a criminal conviction.