



State of Connecticut

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

Raised Bill No. 238 **An Act Concerning Inmate Discharge Savings Accounts**

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing **February 13, 2013**

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports *Raised Bill No. 238, An Act Concerning Inmate Discharge Saving Accounts*. The proposed bill makes technical changes to those statutes pertaining to inmate discharge savings accounts, inmate compensation for employment and inmate labor in private industry. It does not appear to decrease the benefit to an inmate who has an inmate discharge savings account. Providing the funds accumulated in this account to an inmate upon release assists the inmate in his/her reentry into the community.

Section 1 pertains to inmate discharge savings account. Currently, the Department of Correction can deduct up to 10% of all deposits to an inmate's individual account to be deposited into his/her inmate discharge savings account until it reaches \$1000. When the account reaches \$1000, this deduction ceases. Thereafter, the Commissioner of DOC is required to deduct 10% of all deposits made to the inmate's individual savings account to reimburse the state of the cost of incarceration. The inmate discharge savings account balance is provided to the inmate upon release from incarceration.

Sections 2-4 pertain to the Commissioner's ability to disburse compensation earned by an inmate while incarcerated to satisfy current priorities to be paid from such which include federal and state tax obligations, restitution and support for the inmate's dependents. The proposed bill places deposits credited to the inmate's discharge savings account as the 8th priority to be paid after other obligations have been satisfied.