

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

<b>Public Act:</b> 00-92	2000
<b>Bill Number:</b> 5677	4
<b>Senate Pages:</b> 1569, 1595-1597	20
<b>House Pages:</b> 2947-2966	4
<b>Committee:</b> Government Administration: 400-402, 471	

Page Total: 28

Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate  
and House of Representatives Proceedings

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CONNECTICUT  
GEN. ASSEMBLY  
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS  
2000

VOL. 43  
PART 5  
1359-1732

001569

7

kmg

Senate

Tuesday, April 25, 2000

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

463 is PR.

Page 13, 464 is PR, as is 465, 466 and 467.

468, HB5184 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

Page 14, 469 is PR.

470 is Go.

471 HB5677 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

472 is PR.

473 is to be passed temporarily.

Page 15, 474, HB5771 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SEN. JEPSEN:

475, HB5055 I move to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

001595

33

kmg

Senate

Tuesday, April 25, 2000

Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. An immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar.

Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

Madam President, first Consent Calendar begins on Calendar Page 1, Calendar No. 452, SJR30.

Calendar No. 453, SJR32.

Calendar Page 2, Calendar No. 454, SJR33.

Calendar No. 455, SJR34.

Calendar No. 456, SJR35.

Calendar No. 457, SJR31.

Calendar No. 458, SR21.

Calendar Page 3, Calendar No. 459, SR22.

Calendar No. 460, SR23.

Calendar Page 6, Calendar No. 340, HB5712.

Calendar Page 11, Calendar No. 410, HB5146.

Calendar Page 12, Calendar No. 448, Substitute for HB5175.

Calendar No. 462, Substitute for HB5754.

Calendar Page 13, Calendar No. 468, Substitute for HB5184.

Calendar Page 14, Calendar No. 471, Substitute for HB5677.

Calendar Page 15, Calendar No. 474, Substitute for HB5771.

kmg

Senate

Tuesday, April 25, 2000

Calendar No. 475, Substitute for HB5055.

Calendar No. 479, Substitute for HB5052.

Calendar Page 20, Calendar No. 250, SB500.

Calendar Page 22, Calendar No. 136, SB445.

Calendar No. 173, SB514.

Calendar No. 184, Substitute for SB24.

Calendar Page 23, Calendar No. 414, Substitute for  
HJR62.

Calendar No. 415, Substitute for HJR96.

Calendar Page 24, Calendar No. 485, Substitute for  
HJR139.

Madam President, that completes the first Consent  
Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. Would you once again announce a  
roll call vote, the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the  
Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to  
the Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on  
the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return  
to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted,  
the machine will be locked. Clerk, please announce the

001597  
35

kmg

Senate

Tuesday, April 25, 2000

tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar No. 1.

Total Number Voting	35
Those Voting Yea	35
Those Voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is adopted. Senator Sullivan.

SEN. SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Madam President. First, for purposes of an announcement. For the record, Senator LeBeau will be missing roll call votes today. Today is the funeral of his father. And I guess while I'm at that point, it probably, with your indulgence, would be appropriate for us in thinking about our colleague, Gary, and his family, just to pause for a moment of silence on the passing of his Dad.

THE CHAIR:

Members, please rise.

Are there announcements or points of personal privilege? If not, Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Turning to the Call of the Calendar. Calendar Page 16, Calendar No. 481, Files Nos. 227 and 644.

H-827

CONNECTICUT  
GEN. ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS  
2000

VOL. 43  
PART 9  
2764-3067

002949

gmh

506

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

town of less than \$50, the bill would not be sent. Under the recommendation of Representative Roraback we are changing the \$50 cut off down to \$26.

There's a hospital in his district and the town clerk may therefore send a bill for more than \$26.

We are removing the requirement that the town clerks summarize a charter commission amendment and instead requiring the publication as in current law of the entire charter amendment. So that keeps current law and we are striking an additional section under 50-6 that deals with the duties of town clerk for stray animals and lost property. The file copy eliminates Section 50-6 and 50-7 is a companion obsolete statute that the amendment would also delete.

Madam Speaker, I move its adoption.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The question is adoption of House Amendment "A".  
Will you remark further?

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Yes. Again, Madam Speaker, these are three small changes worked out in a bipartisan basis and I would urge the passage of this amendment.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on House Amendment "A"? If

002947

gmh

504

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

Will the Clerk please return to the Call of the Calendar, Calendar 219.

CLERK:

On page 24, Calendar 219, Substitute for House Bill Number 5677, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF TOWN CLERKS. Favorable Report of the Committee on Environment.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Knopp.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Yes, Madam Speaker. This is what I expect to be a non-controversial bill. It passed the House unanimously last year, supported by the Town Clerks Association. It does make a number of minor and technical changes in the duties of town clerks and to eliminate a number of obsolete provisions. So, for example, in the future, it will delete the requirement that town clerks receive a certificate of an election of the trustees in a

002948

gmh

505

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

corporation for each Methodist church in the state. It deals with the impoundment and disposal of stray animals, the sale of horses, cattle, asses, mules, sheep, goats, swine or geese. And many other similar matters.

Madam Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment that makes a number of technical and small changes. Would the Clerk please call LCO Number 4049 and may I be permitted to summarize?

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO 4049, to be designated House Amendment "A". Would the Clerk please call?

CLERK:

LCO Number 4049, House "A" offered by  
Representative Knopp and Representative San Angelo.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Knopp has asked leave to summarize. Seeing no objection, you may proceed.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a bipartisan amendment making several small changes.

First, the file copy would have provided that if there is a bill from a municipality in which there is a hospital or in which other records are made to another

002949

gmh

506

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

town of less than \$50, the bill would not be sent. Under the recommendation of Representative Roraback we are changing the \$50 cut off down to \$26.

There's a hospital in his district and the town clerk may therefore send a bill for more than \$26.

We are removing the requirement that the town clerks summarize a charter commission amendment and instead requiring the publication as in current law of the entire charter amendment. So that keeps current law and we are striking an additional section under 50-6 that deals with the duties of town clerk for stray animals and lost property. The file copy eliminates Section 50-6 and 50-7 is a companion obsolete statute that the amendment would also delete.

Madam Speaker, I move its adoption.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The question is adoption of House Amendment "A".  
Will you remark further?

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Yes. Again, Madam Speaker, these are three small changes worked out in a bipartisan basis and I would urge the passage of this amendment.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on House Amendment "A"? If

002950

gmh

507

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

not, I will try your minds.

All those in favor, please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill, as amended?

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Yes, Madam Speaker, there are two more amendments that I expect to be juried uncontroversial.

The first one is LCO 4050. May the Clerk call and I be permitted to summarize?

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO 4050. Will the Clerk please call? To be designated House "B".

CLERK:

LCO Number 4050, designated House "B" offered by Representative Knopp, Representative San Angelo, et al.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Knopp has asked leave to summarize.

Without objection, sir.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is an amendment that incorporates the text of the bill that was approved

002951

gmh

508

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

unanimously by the House last year and unanimously by the GAE Committee this year.

It simply clarifies existing law that districts, as well as towns and cities, are able, if they want to, by charter revision to adopt municipal codes of ethics.

Madam Speaker, I move its adoption.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The question is adoption of House Amendment "B". Will you remark further?

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Madam Speaker, some people consider there to be an ambiguity because in a number of the statutes in which municipalities and town powers are mentioned, in some of those districts those are mentioned, in some of those they are not. There are a number of districts in the State including several in Norwalk which is why this was sponsored by the Norwalk delegation that have or wish to adopt codes of ethics. This is simply enabling legislation and therefore it clarifies that a district as well as a town and city may adopt a code of ethics if it desires.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further on House Amendment "B"?

If not, I will try your minds.

002952

gmh

509

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

All those in favor, please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill, as amended?

Representative Knopp.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Thank you. I would now like to yield for a friendly amendment to Representative Kerensky.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Kerensky, the Chair recognizes you have the floor, Madam.

REP. KERENSKY: (14TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Clerk has an amendment, LCO Number 4050 -- wait a minute, wrong number.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Wrong number.

REP. KERENSKY: (14TH)

I'm sorry. The Clerk has an amendment, LCO Number 3770. Would he please call and I be allowed to summarize?

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

002953

gmh

510

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

The Clerk is in possession of LCO 3770 to be designated House Amendment "C". Will the Clerk please call?

CLERK:

LCO Number 3770, House "C" offered by Representative Kerensky and Representative Flaherty.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Kerensky has asked leave to summarize and without objection, Madam, proceed.

REP. KERENSKY: (14TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This amendment clarifies Section 9-369b of the statutes. And the small change provides an important opportunity for municipalities to make materials available to the voters once the legislative body has voted to place an issue on the ballot as a referendum question. This, in no way, alters the current prohibition - I move its adoption. To continue, this would, in no way, alter the current prohibition of the material --

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Kerensky, did you move adoption of House "C", Madam?

REP. KERENSKY: (14TH)

Yes.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

002954

gmh

511

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

The question is adoption of House Amendment "C".  
You may remark further, Madam.

REP. KERENSKY: (14TH)

Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I said, this, in no way, alters the current prohibition of the material to advocate approval or disapproval. This is a common sense good government change which will allow communities to inform voters so that they can make an informed vote and I urge adoption.

Thank you.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, Representative Kerensky.

Will you remark further on House "C"?

Representative Knopp.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Yes, Madam Speaker. I regard this as a friendly amendment. This was also a bill heard at the GAE Committee at a public hearing. Its text has been agreed to by the State Elections Enforcement Commission's executive director and preserves the current law mandate that no materials prepared by a town can use taxpayer funds to advocate for or against any question on a referendum and therefore it will help the voters not violate the rule against advocacy and I urge its adoption.

002955

gmh

512

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on House "C"?

Representative Prelli.

REP. PRELLI: (63RD)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I understand the concept here and I think it's a great concept. The problem is the way I read it is we're allowing now the towns to - the town attorney to authorize the preparation and printing of materials concerning any such proposal. I'm building a new high school in my town. I think we need a swimming pool. I send out a piece of information showing this beautiful swimming pool and explaining the great needs of it.

That's selling the referendum. That's using public money to sell the referendum. I understand what we're talking about. Maybe we just want to put plans together and we want people to be able to read them, but if I read this and I read the language here, we're now going to allow the towns to package it exactly the way they want and that's the information that's going to go out in the referendum.

Look at this nice glossy little print that shows us how nice the school' going to look with this swimming pool with all the kids swimming in it and the great add

002956

gmh

513

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

on and all of a sudden that's all the information coming out in the referendum.

I'm not opposed to everybody getting public information. I think it's a great idea. I am opposed to using public money to sell a referendum and my concern reading this and I understand that that is not the intent of the amendment. I understand that's not where we're going, but when I see that they can, by printing the material concerning any such proposal or question, they can now sell the referendum.

And that's wrong. We should not be using public money to influence a referenda vote, Madam Speaker. That's my concern with this and unless there's a real good reason and I'm explained to it differently, I'm planning on voting against this.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further? Representative Knopp.

REP. KNOPP: (137TH)

Madam Speaker, for the second time on the amendment just to respond to my friend Representative Prelli's comments.

I also very strongly oppose the use of taxpayer money to advocate for or against an issue at a

002957

gmh

514

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

referendum as does the director of the State Elections Enforcement Commission and that's why it's very clear in the text that there could be no advocacy and in addition, this is something that the town attorney has to certify to.

If you look over current law on the front side of the amendment it's very clear that the preparation of the explanatory text, which also has to be approved by the town attorney, cannot advocate one way or the other. There are other provisions in other parts of the statute that allow a municipality to vote to establish an advisory board to prepare materials pro and con. This is designed to say that if the town has blueprints that are available of something, they can prepare them and put them out on the front desk of town hall, that kind of document and under a certain interpretation of the existing statute, there could not even be the making available things like blueprints and anything connected with the issue.

This will simply say that the town attorney has to approve after the legislative body votes to prepare materials concerning the question and as long as they do not advocate the approval or disapproval of an issue. Now whether or not somebody might say that a blueprint constitutes advocacy because it shows how a pool could

002958

gmh

515

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

fit in, well that's something to interpretation. Here the goal of this is simply to say no advocacy period. That's the standard. But still there are some materials that a legislative body could make available with the town attorney's approval simply to have available for citizens describing what's going to be built, for example, with the blueprint, an architect's rendering, something like that.

The advocacy standard is very clear. Elections Enforcement can go to court on this standard if a citizen in town complains and I think what we tried to work out was something that, in no way, starts down the slippery slope, but really just allows a town to have materials available without, in any way, allowing advocacy and the two protections that go to the municipal body and the oversight of the town attorney.

I think this is a reasonable way to do that without violating our strict rule against advocacy. Again, anybody in the town could go to Elections Enforcement and then go to court if they believe that any material violates this standard.

There is a separate section in the statute that allows a town to publish pro and con arguments already. This is just saying putting the blueprints out on the front desk at town hall is allowable as long as there is

002959

gmh

516

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

no advocacy as part of that.

I think it is reasonable. I agree, we have to be concerned about this and that's why this was drawn as narrowly as possible. Elections Enforcement went to court last year. The Connecticut Supreme Court construed the provision and that's the only reason why we're coming up with this narrow window for materials this year, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further? Representative Googins.

REP. GOOGINS: (31ST)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm learning something here this evening that I really wasn't aware of. The Town of Glastonbury has been following this process of explanatory text with just plain data for many, many years for schools, for pools, for other kinds of facilities. The materials are prepared that inform the taxpayer of how much it's going to cost them, what the facility is going to look like, blueprints and whatever, clearly and very, very closely not advocating, but informing the public. I don't understand how elected officials, local or otherwise can be putting forth a project to a town and its citizens spending millions of dollars and not informing them in the best way possible.

002960

gmh

517

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

In our town and it has to be in other towns too, that it is reviewed by our attorney and it is reviewed also by bond counsel and they are about as strict as can possibly be before any of that text goes forward.

Of all the explanatory text that we have sent out, there have been occasional challenges to this and I'd say probably 99% of the occasions, the Town of Glastonbury has won when there have been challenges to that expression.

We have to assume prudence on the part of the elected officials, but I can't imagine asking a town to spend \$50 something million on a school and having the citizens vote on this issue and not give them data that would give them something to evaluate in as objective a manner as is possible.

I urge support of this amendment.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Flaherty of the 8th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. FLAHERTY: (8TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am also rising in support of the amendment. We have a number of very important principles in our statutes and some of them

002961

gmh

518

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

are a little bit intentioned.

One of them is, of course, the prohibition against use of public dollars to advocate for or against a referendum, but another principle is the idea that citizens have a right to be informed both as to what is being proposed as to what to vote upon, but also perhaps some sense of how their own elected leadership feels about a particular issue.

We have certainly had referenda in my district where the elected officials, those with the most knowledge about what is being proposed, have felt completely inhibited about sharing their knowledge with the citizens who elected them and with the citizens who are being asked to vote.

I think this is a very reasonable and very narrowly drawn change in the law, but I think that it will provide some ability both to increase the knowledge of voters, but also to give some comfort to our elected officials in our towns who are working most of the time on a volunteer basis to try to work for the good of their community.

So I urge support of the amendment. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

002962

gmh

519

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

Will you remark further? Representative Bernhard.  
You have the floor, sir.

REP. BERNHARD: (136TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. This amendment was just brought to my attention earlier this evening and I thought I would just add my two cents to it in that I serve as a town attorney for two municipalities and have often been presented with this problem as trying to devise language for a concise statement as to best advise the voters on how they're going to be voting. And quite frankly, I think this amendment can be quite useful to serving as a vehicle for inviting intelligent feedback from the town people and to allow for a more intelligent vote.

It is possible to draft a statement, but without sometimes in -- for example, I just recently had to do so with respect to the purchase of open space. Well, it certainly made it an appropriate addition to the referendum to be able to show pictures of the open space that was going to be acquired. And I think an amendment like this and passing it and making it our law would be a useful thing for the electors of the State of Connecticut and I urge this General Assembly to vote for it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

002963

gmh

520

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further? Representative Flaherty of the 68th.

REP. FLAHERTY: (68TH)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I came in the Chamber a little while ago and Representative San Angelo said, "Brian, tell me about your amendment on this bill." And I looked at it and I said this is Representative Flaherty of the 8th district, but at least once a year both Representative Flahertys have to agree on an amendment and maybe both speak on an amendment.

This is one of them. A long time ago there was another House bill, Madam Speaker. It had a couple of provisions regarding how town dollars are spent on elections, referenda or regular elections and I had a piece of the bill in one section and this amendment was another section of the bill and Representative Kerensky and I appeared together and testified in front of the GAE Committee.

At that hearing were two members of my board of education who were there. They happened to strike up a conversation on the bill and they said, "You know, Brian, that's a pretty good section 2." And after having

002964

gmh

521

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

spoken with Representative Kerensky about it, I wanted to rise. I wasn't aware it was up today and I want to support it.

I have a town that goes through at least five referenda on every budget and I know that sometimes with a general budget there isn't too much of an explanation to put forward. It's pretty straight forward, but there are other issues where some explanation is warranted. And as I see the way this amendment is drawn, it still has the prohibition about having that explanation advocate one position or another on the referendum.

I'm satisfied by the way this is drawn. I was going to actually -- if I had one reservation it might have been about the town attorney part because, with all due respect to the previous speaker, sometimes that can be a somewhat jaded viewpoint. But as I see this amendment, I don't really have a problem with it, even as highly charged as those referenda can be, even as highly charged as the charges can be by some group or an individual, that the information printed by a town is somehow leading the voters in one direction or another. I think this makes sense and I would urge the members to adopt this amendment.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

002965

gmh

522

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

Thank you, Representative Flaherty.

Will you remark further? If not, I will try your minds.

All those in favor of House Amendment "C", please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill, as amended? If not, staff and guests to the well of the House. The machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber, please.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Have all members voted? If all members have voted, please check the machine to make sure your vote is properly recorded. The machine will now be locked and the Clerk will please take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill Number 5677, as amended by House

002966

gmh

523

House of Representatives

Tuesday, April 18, 2000

Amendment Schedules "A", "B", and "C"

Total Number Voting	149
Necessary for Passage	75
Those voting Yea	149
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not Voting	2

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

The bill, as amended passes.

Will the Clerk return to the call of the Calendar,  
Calendar 282.

CLERK:

On page 27, Calendar 282, Substitute for Senate  
Bill Number 479, AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIFORM CHILD  
CUSTODY JURISDICTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT, as amended by  
Senate Amendment Schedule "A". Favorable Report of the  
Committee on Government Administration and Elections.  
The committee recommends passage with Senate Amendment  
Schedule "A".

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

Representative Abrams, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ABRAMS: (83RD)

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I move for  
acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and  
passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE HARTLEY:

JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS

GOVERNMENT  
ADMINISTRATION  
AND  
ELECTIONS  
PART 1  
1-408

2000  
INDEX

least in my own experience as someone who attends all of the board meetings, a representative, one or more representatives of OPM are traditionally at every meeting.

And I just want to give as an example, the one issue that this Legislature is going to be dealing with this session is the retired teachers' health insurance fund because it's facing a severe deficit. And as a means of addressing that problem, the Teachers Retirement Board over the last, really, now two years, has constituted a study committee to make recommendations to the Legislature in terms of saving that fund and OPM has been a member of that subcommittee as has other interested groups like CEA and the retired teachers.

So in my experience, they've actually been at the table in an unofficial way in providing that input.

REP. KNOPP: Any further questions? Thank you very much, Ms. Kaplan. Appreciate your testimony.

ROBYN KAPLAN-CHO: Thank you.

REP. KNOPP: I'm going to call up Mr. Friedberg, and I can't tell whether it's Miss or Mr. McHugh and Sandra Hutton of the Town Clerks Association. I appreciate this significant turnout on behalf of our rather technical bill and please proceed. And the next witness after this will be Mr. Burgess and Mr. Knoll.

ED FRIEDBERG: Mr. Chairman and Committee members, my name is Ed Friedberg. I am town clerk in Glastonbury. I'm past president of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association and I'm currently legislative chairman for our association. And I have with me Sandra Hutton who is town clerk in Middletown and is the current vice-president of our association. And also Barbara Tarbax town clerk of Groton.

We're here this morning to speak in favor of Raised HB5677 An Act Concerning the Duties of the Town Clerks. I've passed out a letter from our

president, Joan Gerdson of Mansfield who unfortunately was not able to be present this morning but I am here to read it and then I'll make a few comments as well.

As president of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association I thank you for this opportunity to address this Committee on Raised HB5677. This is an act concerning the duties of town clerks.

The changes recommended by the Association reflect our group's wish to clean up and eliminate obsolete provisions affecting duties of the town clerk. It also reflects provisions for future digitized images of the land records and making necessary notations on them.

Wording also clarifies calendar timing related to proposed charter changes and the ability of publishing in summarized form if authorized by the appointing authority, the proposed charter or amendments. The publishing of a charter or charter changes in its entire form, is very expensive and does not warrant the cost. The complete charter and/or changes shall be available in the municipal clerk's office.

Bills amounting to less than \$50 will not be sent to resident towns for vital statistics. This year for example, Mansfield sent out bills and have received funds of such amounts as \$2 for vital records filed or recorded. Thirty or more of these bills make no sense and cost far more than the fee received.

As Joan pointed out in her letter, this bill is basically to clarify items and eliminate obsolete sections. The bill is similar to one that was proposed last year which was unanimously passed by three committees of the legislature including this one. It clarifies calendar timing, helps alleviate some costs, allows town clerks, registrars of vital statistics of towns of residence to issue certified copies of marriage licenses and death certificates and eliminates the need for one church denomination to file with us since no others are required to do so.

We're here this morning to answer any questions that the Committee has, but I would like to turn over the microphone to Sandy Hutton for one or two minutes.

SANDY HUTTON: Obviously, I'm in favor of this bill's passage or we wouldn't be before you. Last session some of you may recall we tried to pass this bill. It got bogged down on the floor with some problems and didn't pass, so we would really urge you this time if we could possibly, to remove these from the statutes, to clean them up, streamline them. They're just obsolete basically. It's really no duties, there's really no opposition that we're aware of. So we would just urge you to help us get it passed this session.

REP. KNOPP: Thank you very much.

SANDY HUTTON: Mr. Chairman, may I just bring your attention, I did pass out also a memorandum from my assistant registrar of voters in Middletown and it regards the ConnVERSE bill, HB5685 that Secretary Bysiewicz spoke on earlier.

The reason I was comfortable presenting this to you today as her written testimony because she could not be here is that I am one of a few pilot town clerks on the ConnVERSE system running a town clerk's portion. So I felt comfortable just to submit that interesting fact.

REP. KNOPP: It's been distributed to every member of the Committee.

SANDY HUTTON: It has been, yes.

REP. KNOPP: Yes, thank you very much.

SANDY HUTTON: Thank you.

REP. KNOPP: Thank you. Any questions. Well the House agreed with you last year. We'll try to get the Senate to pass this bill this year.

SANDY HUTTON: Thank you. We'll appreciate it.

JOINT  
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PART 2  
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Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc.



February 28, 2000

As President of the Connecticut Town Clerk's Association, I thank you for this opportunity to address this Committee on Raised Bill No. 5677.

This is an Act Concerning the Duties of Town Clerks.

The changes recommended by the Association reflect our groups wish to clean up and eliminate obsolete provisions affecting duties of the Town Clerk. It also reflects provisions for future digitized images of the land records and making necessary notations on them. Wording also clarifies timing calendar related to proposed charter changes and the ability of publishing in summarized form, if authorized by the appointing authority, the proposed charter or amendments. The publishing of charter or charter changes in entire form is very expensive and does not warrant the cost. The complete charter and/or changes shall be available in the Municipal Clerk's office. Bills amounting to less than fifty dollars will not be sent to resident towns for vital statistics. This year, Mansfield for instance sent out bills and/or received funds of such amounts of \$2.00 for vital records filed or recorded. Thirty or more of these bills makes no sense and costs far more than the fee received.

The Town Clerks Association urges this bill to go forward.

Thank you for your assistance.

*Joan E. Gerdson*

Joan E. Gerdson  
President, Connecticut Town Clerks Association  
Town Clerk, Mansfield