



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

OFFICE OF
THE CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

PATRICK J. GRIFFIN
CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

300 CORPORATE PLACE
ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT 06067
PHONE (860) 258-5800 FAX (860) 258-5858

March 12, 2025

Senator Gary A. Winfield, Co-Chairperson
Representative Juan Candelaria, Co-Chairperson
Appropriations Subcommittee
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

RE: Subcommittee Hearing Testimony

Dear Senator Winfield and Representative Candelaria:

During the Division's appearance before the Appropriations Committee on February 11, 2025, and in its letter to the Committee Co-Chairs dated March 5, 2025, the Division outlined its need for additional personnel. In addition to that request, Chief State's Attorney Patrick Griffin and I would like to discuss with you at the Subcommittee hearing our concerns regarding the Governor's recommended holdbacks as well as the Division's need to make an adjustment to its Current Services budget.

1. The Governor's Recommended Budget Holdback

The Governor's Recommended Budget proposes a holdback on the Division of \$3 million in each of the next two fiscal years. A holdback of this size will force the Division to freeze all hiring. The Division currently has thirty vacancies on its books. Freezing these vacancies will cripple the Division's ability to achieve its constitutional and statutory mandates. By comparison, the Public Defender's Office has a holdback of only \$600,000 per fiscal year. While the Division acknowledges the Public Defender's need for resources, we are concerned that the criminal justice system in Connecticut is becoming completely out of balance. Please note that the Division handles 100% of criminal cases added annually while the Public Defender's Office appears in only 52% of the docketed cases.

2. The Division's Current Services Budget Adjustment Request

During fiscal year 2023-2024, the Division entered into negotiations with the Connecticut Association of Prosecutors (CAP) union to increase starting salaries for newly appointed Deputy Assistant State's Attorneys. Since the end of the pandemic, the Division has only attracted, on average, five to ten applicants per

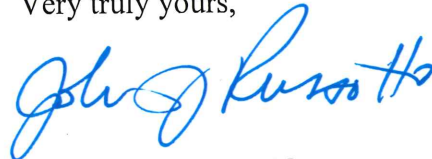
Senator Winfield and Representative Candelaria

advertised prosecutor vacancy. With the encouragement of the Criminal Justice Commission and the Appropriations and Judiciary Committees, the Division engaged in negotiations with CAP to raise starting salaries. The subsequent agreement to increase starting salaries, which has an annual budget impact of \$1.2 million, resulted in a significant increase in the number of applicants per prosecutor vacancy.

Due to a misunderstanding during the budgeting process this fall, however, the Division did not include the \$1.2 million for new starting salaries as a technical adjustment in its biennium budget proposal. Rather, the Division incorrectly assumed that the starting salary enhancement was already included in its Current Services budget. To correct this oversight, the Division is requesting a \$1.2 million adjustment to its proposed Current Services budget for each fiscal year of the biennium.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. Chief State's Attorney Griffin and I look forward to discussing our requests in more detail at the Subcommittee hearing.

Very truly yours,



JOHN J. RUSSOTTO

DEPUTY CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY
for Personnel, Finance & Administration

JJR/jc

cc: Patrick Griffin, Chief State's Attorney
Kevin D. Lawlor, Deputy Chief State's Attorney
Valerie Clark, Director of Finance
Susan Keane, Appropriations Committee Administrator
Brianna Pollard, Office of Fiscal Analysis