

# The Connecticut General Assembly

## Task Force to Improve Access to Legal Counsel in Civil Matters

Co-Chairs:

William H. Clendenen, Jr. / Timothy Fisher



c/o Judiciary Committee, Room 2500  
Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

LCCM@cga.ct.gov

### MINUTES

(DRAFT)

Monday, November 21, 2016

8:00 a.m. Room 2B LOB

300 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, Connecticut 06106

The meeting was called to order at 8:16 a.m.

The following committee members were present:

Chair William H. Clendenen, Chair Dean Timothy Fisher, Brian Austin, Catherine Bailey, Work Chair Dean Jennifer Brown, Dan Cargill, Senator Eric Coleman, Jamey Bell, Work Chair Judge Gerry Fox, III, Kathy Flaherty, Monte Frank, Judge Ingrid Moll, Robert C. Hinton, Walter Menjivar, Edward O'Hanlan, Representative Rosa Rebimbas, Alexis Smith, Judge Elliot N. Solomon, Susan Storey, Alvin Wilson, Work Chair Michael Wishnie, Deborah Witkin, Judge Glenn A. Woods, Perry Zinn-Rowthorn

The following committee members were absent:

Judge Michael Albis, Mayor Dan Drew, Senator John Kissel, Daniel D. Jo, Anthony Shannon, Work Chair Tim Shearin (due to injury), Cecil Thomas

Motion to approve minutes for November 10, 2016 meeting by Brian Austin, seconded by Judge Gerald Fox, III, and approved by the members.

Chairs welcomed Alexis Smith to the committee. Ms. Smith is the new director of the New Haven Legal Assistance and will be filling the position on the task force formerly held by Susan Garcia Nofi.

During this Thanksgiving week, the chairs reflected on the many things we have to be thankful for and to be mindful of the task force charge and each member's contribution to the task force goals.

Executive Summary Discussion:

- Recommendations would not be placed in any hierarchal order.
- #6 recommendation to be restated: "Authorize the OAG to redirect a portion of funds recovered in penalties and fines to legal services providers up to a set limit."
- Consolidate #8, #9 & 10 regarding directives to State Agencies.
- #12 recommendation regarding "Admin" impact analysis to be called "constituent" impact analysis.

Remainder of Final Report Draft Discussion:

- Members discussed the draft page by page with consensus on most items and some areas requiring further contemplation.

- Barriers section recommendation #5 regarding pro bono requirement to be restated: “Consider ways to increase the level of pro bono reporting.”
- Barriers section recommendation #6 restate: “Study the efficacy of unbundled services and other regulatory changes. Consider alternative business structures.”
- Program section: Convert to descriptive rather than proscriptive structuring.
- Program section: State the challenges with existing programs not the “inadequacies” of existing programs.
- Task force recommendation section at end is redundant and not necessary.

#### Continuing Discussion:

- Work Group Chair Michael Wishnie explained the roster approach to legal assistance is cheaper but much less efficient than using representation similar to how Chief Judge Katzmman structured the Immigrant Justice Corps. Dedicated staff under one roof with similar training and quality controls. This model provides superior quality and illustrates the difference between counting “clients served” and “results obtained.”
- Develop a consistent style and order to the work group reports.
- Continuing discussion on where to list all recommendations.
- Chairs stated it can’t be stressed enough the long-term savings based on studies revealing \$1 spent now will yield \$5 in costs being avoided in the future.

Jeryl Gray provided oral and written testimony to the members in addition to a highlighted copy of “LawyerCorps Connecticut”.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:07. The final meeting will be held Friday, December 9 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 2D of the LOB.