



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
JUDICIAL BRANCH

CHAMBERS OF  
PATRICK L. CARROLL III  
DEPUTY CHIEF COURT ADMINISTRATOR

231 CAPITOL AVENUE  
HARTFORD, CT 06106

**Task Force to Study Converting Legislative Documents from Paper  
to Electronic Form Public Hearing**

**November 18, 2010**

**Testimony of Judge Patrick L. Carroll III, Deputy Chief Court Administrator**

Senator Crisco, Ms. Henry and members of the Task Force, my name is Patrick Carroll and I am the Deputy Chief Court Administrator. I have come here today to speak to you about the serious concerns that the Judicial Branch has with the proposal to eliminate the transcription of Legislative public hearings.

Legislative history is a critical part of the legal research that our judges and many Judicial Branch staff - law clerks, research attorneys, our in-house counsel and others - engage in each and every day. Judges rely on legislative history as an integral part of their case analysis. Legislative history allows judges and staff to gain insight into the purpose and intent of the laws enacted by the General Assembly.

Transcripts of public hearings are a vital part of legislative history. Indeed, sometimes they constitute the only legislative history to be found. This is because often there is little or no floor debate when a bill is passed, particularly in the Senate, where many items go on the Consent Calendar and thus are not debated. Failure to maintain transcripts of public hearings would have a detrimental effect on the adjudicative process.

Legislative history is also valuable for other purposes. For example, judges often rely on public hearing transcripts when preparing for appointment and reappointment to the bench, often consulting their own past testimony as well as the testimony of their colleagues. In addition, Judicial Branch staff rely on legislative history when they conduct background research on bills and in the implementation of public acts. Elimination of these transcripts would create a significant gap in our ability to know what the Legislature has intended.

Thank you for your consideration.