



State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

March 31, 2015

Senator Eric Coleman
Deputy President Pro Tempore
Co-Chairman, Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2500
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Representative William Tong
Co-Chairman, Judiciary Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2405
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

We want to thank you for holding a public hearing to consider SB 1129 An Act Establishing a Pilot Program to Identify and Track the Homeless, Addicted or Mentally Ill Persons Entering the Justice System and Concerning the Earned Risk Reduction Credit Program.

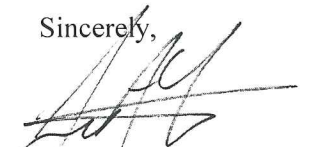
This proposed legislation would establish a "gatekeeper" pilot program in New London and New Haven to identify early on in the process offenders who are drug addicted, mentally ill, homeless, or veterans, and place them into treatment programs without first prosecuting them. Republicans have proposed and advocated for this program, which has also been included in the Senate Republicans' 'Plan for Progress and Opportunity in Connecticut's Cities' as a new way to reduce recidivism.

In addition to establishing the "gatekeeper" pilot program, this bill also would require more accountability in the state's Risk Reduction Earned Credit program. These proposed changes to Connecticut's early release program signify a major step forward in strengthening protections in our justice system and ensuring that programs are monitored and administered properly.

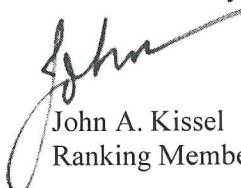
We all want to enhance safety and accountability in the system while providing people with the tools they need to turn their lives around and prevent future crimes. This legislation goes a long way to advance Connecticut. We are thankful for the opportunity to have our ideas presented and discussed in a public hearing.

We fully support the Committee's efforts to consider this bill and we look forward to Wednesday's public hearing to gather public input on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,


Len Fasano
Senate Minority Leader


Themis Klarides
House Republican Leader


John A. Kissel
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee

cc: Members of the Judiciary Committee