



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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Testimony of Christine Perra Rapillo, Chief Public Defender Office of Chief Public Defender

Government Administration and Elections Committee Public Hearing February 28, 2020

Raised Bill 233 - An Act Concerning Elections

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports Section 3 of *Raised Senate Bill 233, An Act Concerning Elections*, which would restore electoral privileges to citizens on parole.

Every one of us has a stake in returning citizens' reintegration into society. It impacts them, their families, and the community at large. Their success is our success, and the task we all share is to create a better future together. By any definition, a better future must include returning citizens avoiding recidivism, and research shows that strong family and social connections make a positive difference in this regard. Restoring parolees' electoral privileges ensures that such citizens are reconnected with that fundamental American right - that they are recognized not only as having a stake in the future, but also the power to shape it.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important issue.