



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

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Testimony in Support of House Bill 5389: An Act Concerning Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record

**Submitted by, Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate
Southern New England Conference United Church of Christ
March 4, 2020**

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and distinguished members of Labor and Public Employees Committee,

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Southern New England Conference United Church of Christ and I am writing today in support of House Bill 5389: An Act Concerning Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record.

I am writing on behalf of the 614 congregations and more than 120,000 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 2014 the assembled delegates and ministers of the historic Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ met and voted on a Resolution that called upon the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ to call for an end to Mass Incarceration for Non-Violent Offenses, to advocate for passage of legislation that promotes alternatives to mass incarceration, and to support racial and economic justice in criminal sentencing and restorative justice principles in all possible circumstances.

Connecticut residents with a criminal record, including those returning home from incarceration, on parole, and on probation face challenges as they search for jobs and housing, apply for insurance and credit and attempt to participate in public programs. People returning home in Connecticut after incarceration face hundreds of legal barriers to supporting themselves and their families.

All of God's children deserve a second chance and an opportunity to work, obtain housing, insurance and participate in public programs and services. People living with a criminal record should have a fair chance to get their lives on track. House Bill 5389 will help Connecticut residents obtain these necessities.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of this bill.

Blessings,
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