



# State of Connecticut

## DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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### Testimony of Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director Office of Chief Public Defender

#### JUDICIARY COMMITTEE – MARCH 26, 2025

##### Raised Bill 1309

#### AN ACT CONCERNING FINES FOR CERTAIN DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND THE DEPOSIT OF SUCH FINES INTO A FUND FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL PERSONS WHO ARE INCARCERATED

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) opposes *Raised S.B. 1309, An Act Concerning Fines for Certain Disciplinary Actions in Correctional Facilities and The Deposit of Such Fines into A Fund for The Benefit of All Persons Who Are Incarcerated*. The bill will impact upon indigent persons who would be unable to pay a fine if imposed and the imposition of fines is better suited for a court of law as the majority of these enumerated offenses would necessarily lead to a criminal court case.

**Section One** grants discretion to the Wardens of the various correctional facilities within Connecticut to impose a fine on any inmate for discipline for certain conduct. OCPD opposes this as an indigent inmate could also be the recipient of such a fine. The language of the bill does not provide what action is taken against an indigent inmate if unable to pay such a fine. In addition, by granting Wardens the discretion to impose fines, the potential for inconsistency exists. The fines are not established by the bill. As a result, the discretion to impose such fines could result in inconsistency throughout the correctional facilities in Connecticut. The inconsistency is not only whether such fines will be imposed, but the amounts of fines that could be imposed. Moreover, and as already stated, the imposition of fines is better suited to take place within a court of law and by a superior court judge who has the necessary training to address and weigh such fines in a criminal proceeding

Therefore, OCPD requests that the Committee *take no action* on this bill. Thank you.