



Legislative Testimony
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Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 926, An Act Concerning Persons Committed to the Jurisdiction of the Psychiatric Security Review Board

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Jess Zaccagnino, and I am the policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am writing to testify in support of Senate Bill 926, An Act Concerning Persons Committed to the Jurisdiction of the Psychiatric Security Review Board.

The ACLU-CT believes that people receiving treatment in psychiatric facilities, no matter the security level of those facilities, are entitled to dignity and to their constitutionally protected rights. Senate Bill 926 recognizes that people who are under the jurisdiction of the psychiatric security review board are not only people who have been found not to be criminally liable for their actions as a result of their mental health condition, but also that they are patients committed to a hospital for treatment. Oftentimes, people in our state's forensic mental health hospital spend a longer time committed than the time that they would have served in prison if found guilty. Senate Bill 926 is a good step in addressing the fundamental problems with the psychiatric security review board. As such, the ACLU-CT supports this bill, and urges this Committee to do the same.