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BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES
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**Testimony of Carleton J. Giles
Chairperson
Board of Pardons and Paroles**

**H.B. 5005 An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2021
Appropriations Committee
February 11, 2020**

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Formica, Representative Lavielle, and honorable members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Carleton Giles, Chairperson of the Board of Pardons and Paroles ("Board") and I am submitting this testimony in response to the Governor's recommended budget adjustments for FY2021.

The Board is an independent agency within the Department of Correction ("DOC") for administrative purposes only. As a result, the Board's budget regularly appears as a line item within the larger DOC budget. The Board currently has 76 established positions of which 66 are currently filled and 6 are pending immediate refill (one of which is a full-time Board member). There are also three (3) vacant part-time Board member positions that are subject to being filled by the Governor, but are not reflected in our established position count.

The Board has the independent authority to: (1) grant or deny parole; (2) establish conditions of parole or special parole; (3) rescind or revoke parole or special parole; (4) grant pardons, commutations, and certificates of employability; and (5) authorize the early termination of parole or special parole supervision. Additionally, the Board is responsible for administering parole transfers and extraditions under the Interstate Compact for Adult Offender Supervision.

Over the past fiscal year, the Board has remained committed to the efficient and careful use of every dollar appropriated. As a relatively small agency, we have filled only those positions necessary to meet our immediate needs. In this past year, we have seen our responsibilities increase in the area of pardons as a result of an increase in both eligible applications and participation in community outreach events. We also created a new case management system for pardons (ePardons) that will include an online application process for the public which will be the first of its kind in the nation. In doing so, we have managed to absorb costs and refrained from requesting any additional funds above what we currently believe is absolutely necessary. The Governor's proposed budget adjustment does allow us to maintain appropriated staffing levels and to fill current approved vacancies, but also calls for a reduction in funds for FY 2020 to reflect current spending. With several upcoming agency retirements, we anticipate we will be able to absorb this reduction through attrition savings.

In conclusion, the Board remains committed to fulfilling all of its responsibilities in the most efficient and fiscally prudent manner possible in order to best serve the citizens of the State of Connecticut. However, any further changes to funds as revised by the Governor's Budget may compromise our ability to: (1) continue to implement programs; and (2) review and improve existing practices as required by statutory mandates.

Thank you for your continued support and I am happy to provide any additional information the Committee might require, or to answer any questions you might have.