

# Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-901  
AN ACT CONCERNING A REGISTRY OF PERSONS CONVICTED OF  
**Title:** FINANCIAL CRIMES AGAINST ELDERLY PERSONS.  
**Vote Date:** 02/28/2023  
**Vote Action:** JFS to Floor  
**PH Date:** 2/2/2023  
**File No.:**

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Aging Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill would establish a registry of persons convicted of financial crimes against elderly persons.

The JFS language (LCO 5157) stipulates that the court makes a finding that at the time of the offense was committed the victim was at least sixty years of age and that the Dept of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall not later than July 1, 2024 establish and maintain a registry of persons convicted of financial crimes against elderly persons.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

**Dept. of Aging and Disability Services, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Ms. Mairead Painter:** Testimony was in **support** of this legislation. She believes a registry of people convicted of financial crimes will serve as a tool for individuals, long term care facilities and financial institutions to screen potential employees and that this accountability could deter people who might otherwise exploit or abuse older adults. She also feels that such a registry could prevent future crimes against the elderly.

**Judicial Branch, External Affairs Division:** They are taking **no position** on this bill but offer some suggestions to improve the proposal. The request that the effective date of the bill be July 1, 2023, it be amended to state a “financial crime against an elderly person” and that the court make a finding that an offence took place after the victim was sixty years old.

**State Office of the Victim Advocate, Ms. Natasha Pierre, Victim Advocate:** She is **supportive** of this bill and believes that it will assist family members as important decisions are made for the care of elderly persons.

**Office of the Chief Public Defender, Ms. Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel:** Their office is **opposed** to this bill stating that any registry as they have not been proven to reduce recidivism. They point out that any registry is a collection of names and addresses of person based upon convictions of a certain statute and that public disclosure increases speculation and that may lead to an erroneous perception about the registrants.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Connecticut Assisted Living Association:** They **support** concepts that enhance protections from crimes against the elderly.

**Connecticut Bankers Association, Mr. Tom Mongellow:** They offer their support for this legislation and urge passage. This bill would serve as a tool in preventing the financial exploitation of our state's elderly residents. A 2021 audit by the state's Auditors of Public Accounts noted that more than 36% of referrals made to the Dept. of Social Services Protective Services for the Elderly Program included allegations of elder financial exploitation. Another 2018 report by the National Adult Protective Services Association analyzed the elder financial exploitation laws of 21 other states and found benefits of registry laws.

**Mr James McGovern – Constituent:** He **supports** this bill and suggests that it should enable landlords to use the law to filter tenants and that appearing on the registry be used as legal grounds for termination of contracts.

**LeadingAge Connecticut, Ms. Gag Morelli, President:** They are **support** of this legislation and see the value that this registry would have in adding these types of offenses to the background check system currently in use by providers.

**The Arc of Connecticut, Inc., Ms. Carol Scully, Director of Advocacy:** They are in support of this proposal, and they also recommend adding disabled persons language to the bill.

**AARP Connecticut, Ms. Regina Stankaitis, AARP Volunteer and Victim of Abuse:** She is in **support** of this bill. She also feels that policymakers should require a comprehensive background check for all LTSS workers. Individuals who have been convicted of burglary, larceny, sexual crimes, crimes involving financial exploitation or crimes involving abuse or neglect of individuals should be prohibited from employment in all LTSS settings.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**One Standard of Justice, Ms. Cindy Prizio, Executive Director:** She offered her testimony in **opposition** to this legislation. She believes that naming, shaming and blaming are not the way to create safe communities. Public registries are failed policy and do not reduce crime or reoffending. Registry's ruin lives, not only those who are registered but their families and children who become collateral damage.

**ACLU Connecticut, Ms. Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel:** Their testimony is in **opposition** to this proposal. Public registries limit the ability of people living with criminal records to contribute to society and build successful lives for themselves and their families. People living with a criminal record face more than 550 legal barriers to participating in today's society. These barriers prevent them from obtaining employment, housing, education and services and the collateral consequences are bad for children and families as well.

**Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk**

**Date: 3/1/23**