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February 1, 2010

Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110-2320

Attention: Budget Committee

To the Hon. Paul Knierim
Hon. Diane Yamin
Hon. Joseph Marino

I am writing you today because I unfortunately cannot attend the meeting on February 3rd, I will be out of town. However, I want to show my support behind our CAPC president and the CAPC members. I have been a clerk and a member of CAPC for 7 years.

There are 2 issues that I am deeply concerned about. I have read the other letters that you've received on-line and I will tell you that this letter will be one on a personal level. I currently work 25 hours per week. I am one of those clerks that will only benefit with the new plan from probate administration; assuming I am hired in the new court. I currently get no vacation pay, no personal days, no sick time, and no bereavement pay. My history with major losses has been a 4 week medical leave with no pay; a parent who passed away out of state where I was gone a week and a half with no pay; and most recently, my father had quadruple bypass, and was hospitalized for 3 ½ weeks, with 3 of his 4 daughters living out of state, I had to travel each week to make sure he was getting the care he needed. I tell you this for one reason, which is the concern of having to accrue time in order to get paid for these unforeseen issues, whether it is a medical issue, bereavement, personal days or vacation. I hope that you are not so far removed from our reality that you can not put yourself in my shoes and imagine the burden it has been to get a partial paycheck every week for the last 4 weeks, and to have to choose between a beloved family member and your household budget, or returning to work after a hysterectomy after 4 weeks vs. 6 weeks because you can't afford to stay out any longer. This is the reality of having to accrue time. You are basically taking away our freedom to take time off as we need it for our personal lives!

Secondly, there is talk, and I am not sure if my understanding is accurate, that personnel policies are being grandfathered, where "new hires" would be subject to PA's personnel policy. Clerks in the existing courts would continue to use the one set up when they were hired. If that is the case; then in my own situation, I would be a merging clerk subject (I am assuming) to the PA's personnel policy. I would have more years experience than clerks in the "home" court but I would receive fewer benefits. I personally would like to see all employees of the same court have the same policy, whether it is the existing policy or the new PA policy which ever is better, obviously. To maintain unity within the court staff I believe consistency is best.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Pombar
New Hartford Probate Clerk