



Greater Hartford Legal Aid

October 16, 2009

Attorney Carl E. Testo
Director of Legal Services
State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
100 Washington Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

RE: Opposition to Proposed Amendment to Rule 7.4A(d)

Dear Attorney Testo:

I am a founding member and former executive committee member of the elder law section of the Connecticut Bar Association. I have practiced elder law for over 20 years. I represent individuals over sixty years of age under a grant funded by the Older American's Act.

I am writing to oppose the amendment to Rule 7.4A(d) of the Rules of Professional Conduct seeking to include elder law among the fields of practice for which Connecticut attorneys may be certified as specialists.

While the proposal raises nominal goals that would benefit both the profession and the public, there are sound reasons to give pause before recognizing this particular certification.

I respectfully submit that elder law is not so much a field of law as it is the demographic description of the population targeted for marketing a variety of legal services. Although the proponents of the modification quoted Attorney Kate McEvoy's description of elder law practice that included "representation of younger individuals with disabilities," the definition approved by the proposed certifying agency is "the legal practice of counseling and representing older persons and their representatives..."¹ See May 19, 2009 letter from Attorney Franklin A. Drazen. Providing services to the elderly is a very profitable industry. Even if the practice of elder law is not limited to representing "older" persons, it is an amorphous description of an area of law.

¹ The definition itself includes providing legal services to persons other than the elderly individual in regard to issues that affect the elderly individual's rights.

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