

**TESTIMONY OF
KATHY HOLIDAY CRAWFORD
SUPERVISORY PROBATION OFFICER
FAMILY COURT SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION
D.C. COURTS**

**ON H.R. 5600, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COURTS, OFFENDER SUPERVISION, PAROLE,
AND PUBLIC DEFENDER EMPLOYEES EQUITY
ACT OF 2008**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE
FEDERAL WORKFORCE, POSTAL SERVICE,
AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2008

Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Norton, Members of the Subcommittee, My name is Kathy Holiday Crawford, a Supervisory Probation Officer with the Superior Court's Family Court Social Services Division, which handles juvenile probation for the District. I have been employed by the D.C. Courts, with the Social Services Division, for 19 years. I am here to offer testimony on H.R. 5600, the "District of Columbia Courts, Offender Supervision, Parole, and Public Defender Employees Equity Act of 2008." On behalf of the over 250 court employees whose retirement eligibility was adversely affected by the 1997 Revitalization Act, I want to thank the sponsors of the legislation that seeks to restore to us our due.

I joined the Social Services Division in 1989 as a juvenile probation officer. Juvenile Probation Officers, or POs, are considered law enforcement officers and are eligible for retirement after 20 years, given that our employment falls within the realm of hazardous duty. Which means that at age 50, with 20 years of service, we can retire. I am now 49 years old and have 19 years of service, and under ordinary circumstances would be able to retire in less than one year. I recently spoke with the Courts' Human Resources Division, however, and was told that the years between when I was hired in May 1989 and when the Revitalization Act went into effect in 1997 do not count toward my retirement eligibility. This means that I will have to work an additional 8-1/2 years before I can retire. I watched my colleagues who were hired in 1987, a mere two years before me, retire in 2007. Under current law, however, I must work until 2017 before I am retirement-eligible. So, despite being hired in 1989, it is as if I was hired in 1997.

This situation has placed my husband and me in a position of having to rethink our retirement plans, which were to retire at the same time. My husband is also in law enforcement and retirement-eligible. Our retirement plans now have to be deferred by almost a decade. This is not fair to me or to my colleagues, the law enforcers who work with me in Social Services, as well as others in divisions throughout the Superior Court, Court of Appeals, and Court System. We were hired

with certain expectations about our retirement eligibility and the Revitalization Act changed that – to our detriment – solely by virtue of when we were hired.

I want to make sure the Subcommittee members understand: I am passionate about my work. The 19 years of loyal service I've given to the citizens of the District of Columbia have had many rewards. I find great fulfillment in trying to help teens who have lost their way a little bit -- or a lot -- get back on track. Now that I am a supervisor, I enjoy mentoring younger probation officers and helping guide juvenile justice programs that make a difference in the lives of our youth and their families. With that being said, I feel that after 20 years of hazardous duty service I deserve to be able to retire when I was told I could retire, **after 20 years of service as a law enforcement officer.**

I urge the Subcommittee to pass this legislation and ask that you do all that you can to see that it is enacted before the end of this Congress. I want to thank Chairman Davis and Congresswoman Norton for their sponsorship of the legislation, for holding this hearing on an issue which, as you can tell is 'near and dear to my heart,' and for allowing me to testify today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have. Thank you.