

CLERK:

Senate Joint Resolution No. 21. RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF THE HONORABLE GERARD I ADELMAN, OF MERIDEN, TO BE A STATE REFEREE. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH) :

Representative Tong.

REP. TONG (147TH) :

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance to the Joint Committee's favorable report and adoption of the resolution in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH) :

Questions on acceptance of adoption and concurrence?
Representative Tong.

REP. TONG (147TH) :

Yes, Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Judge Adelman is here before us again. He is a graduate of the Ohio State University, he went to Southern for a Master's in History and graduated from UCONN School of Law.

Judge Adelman has spent almost his entire career in our state's family courts, both as a judge and as a lawyer. He did spend 18 months in our criminal courts.

Judge Adelman has a long and distinguished record of service to his community in Meriden and beyond, including his service on the Boards of United Way, the local Legal Services Organization, the Meriden Rotary Club, the YMCA, or the YWCA of Meriden, his local temple, and a local school in Middlefield.

Mr. Speaker, prior to Judge Adelman's hearing, public hearing in the Judiciary Committee, many members of the Committee received feedback and testimony from members of the public and there was some testimony about Judge Adelman, by members of the public who appeared before the Committee on the hearing date. These people expressed very serious concerns about Judge Adelman and complained of his temperament and his treatment of litigants in his courtroom. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we take those complaints and that testimony very seriously. And every year in our Committee, almost every year that I have been in the General Assembly, there are some judges who draw more than the average amount of interest from the public. There are some judges whose record of performance is substandard, and some of those judges don't make it to the floor of this House. That has happened this year. And so, the process, through the public hearing process and the Committee process works. It works to press judges to look into their record of performance and their background and to give both the Committee and the public the opportunity to do our collective due diligence on the jurists that appear before us.

And, so, because of the complaints about Judge Adelman, when he appeared before us, I asked him, "Judge, there a number of complaints about you and your demeanor on the bench," and I asked him to answer those concerns, and he did. And I thought Judge Adelman answered in a forthright sincere and honest manner, and I take him at his word.

Judge Adelman, as an experienced family court practitioner, has on behalf of really the entire state, he has stepped up to the plate to be a judge on the Family Court trial docket in Hartford. And in that role, he has stepped up to a very, very difficult job, where he has to sit as a judge and a factfinder often on some of the most difficult and contentious cases involving families, involving couples that are seeking

a divorce, involving children, and those are very, very difficult cases that are highly emotional, highly charged, and I guess we refer to them as high conflict cases. And because of that I think it's fair to say that there are people who feel very strongly about their cases and their position and there are some people who have testified before us who feel that they have not been given a fair shake by Judge Adelman. And I have listened to their testimony, I have read transcripts, I have talked to Judge Adelman, and I have talked to people from Meriden, I have talked to colleagues from Meriden, I have talked to the judges and other lawyers and practitioners, and we hear those concerns. But I think on balance, what we are considering -- who we're considering today is a fair-minded and tough judge. We need our judges to be tough, particularly in family. That's a place where because it is so emotionally charged, you have to keep order in the courtroom, and that can be a very difficult position to be in. But I think because of that and because of the diligence that we as a Committee have done, we think that Judge Adelman balanced most of the members voted in favor of his renomination and because of that I encourage adoption of the resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Thank you, sir. Representative Rebimbas.

REP. REBIMBAS (70TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Judge Adelman, and I certainly echo each and every statement that the good Chairman just stated.

Judge Adelman is a jurist that comes with a great knowledge and legal experience prior to the bench and family law. When we look to nominate new judges, we try

to nominate judges that we believe will be assets to the bench. He has gracefully taken on the chore of serving on the bench in our family court system, which has been described on numerous occasions as high conflict issues that come before them. So, he has great experience off the bench in family law and he brings that experience onto the bench. With that experience comes a sense of courage, of being able to say, "I will take these conflict cases." You don't hear that from many judges. In fact, I would probably say, many judges would say, "If I can serve somewhere else, I will." But this particular individual believes in helping families and takes that service to the bench.

Now, looking at the analysis of family court in and of itself, the Judicial Branch has a variety of different programs, resources, and assets and abilities of addressing conflicts within the parties that come before them. Because ultimately the goal of everyone, whether you're pro se or represented by an attorney, is not to have the man or woman on the bench with the robe to make decisions in your cases. You are the parents, you are the parties, you are the vested interested individuals in your lives and these minor children's lives. You are the best suited individuals to make the best suited decisions in the best interest of your lives or in your children's lives. So, we provide programs. The Judicial Branch provides family services, pretrials, mediations, special masters, and I can go on and on and on about the different services that is offered to each and every individual that walks through a family court. Because the intent and goal is see if you can reach an agreement, it's best for all involved. It is only when those individuals are unable to reach an agreement that then the judge is left with the facts and circumstances and evidence that comes before the judges to make those tough decisions and none of those decisions are easy in any way, shape, or form. And unfortunately, many times you may have one side or two sides that will not be satisfied with that decision.

Then add the factor that in family court, things are fluid, things are modifiable. There is changes in circumstances, whether financially, a person's job schedule, personally people's homes, people remarry, people fall on tough times or have illnesses and challenges of health and life.

So, these are all things that make certain parties go back to court to modify orders. So, many times these people are subjected again to the court system over and over again. And again, these services are offered. And again, sometimes tough decisions have to be made by the judges, but these judges are purely making decisions based on the facts that are provided to them in court, not the other things that are alleged out there, but just purely the facts that come before them. And we expect the judges to evaluate those facts based on fairness, and application of the law, nothing more, nothing less. We are not asking judges to deliver messages, we are not asking judges to legislate law.

Judge Adelman has consistently shown to his best abilities, a just, reasoned decisions in his cases. I have had the opportunity to observe Judge Adelman in the courtroom and on several occasions, because he did serve previously in one city and now is sitting in another city, as I sit there in the courtroom and I look at the individuals who come before him, it's tough for me even to think, "Wow, I thought my one case was challenging." But as I sit there waiting for my turn, I watch case after case after case that I would describe as challenging. These are not easy situations. It is not an easy profession for these judges to be placed in, but unfortunately, it's their job, their duty, and their responsibility. And when they are doing it to the best of their ability, then I do believe that they do deserve to continue to serve.

Again, I will reiterate the challenges that we have sitting on the Judiciary Committee and asking questions

of the people who testify before us. We can't ask all the questions we want to, out of respect to the person that comes before us and the dignity of the person, because if we were, there would be facts and circumstances and sensitive topics that we could dive into, but out of respect, respect to the other parties that are in our presence, respect to the minor children, that these are their lives, these stories that are being told, that we don't. But our responsibilities as members is to inquire on each and every allegation that's made against these judges, we as legislators have the duty and responsibility to do so. So, we look at the transcripts, we look at the decisions, we look at the facts of that case, of the individual who came before us. And more often than not, we're shocked because of the new information that we are learning and obtaining. And it's tough for judges when they come before us, and we deserve to give them tough questions, but they too, there is a certain sensitivity of the facts and circumstances of that case that they may not want to be relitigated in the public's eye. Many times, those decisions have been made and they are public and they hope that each individual will properly look at them and analyze them. And I think we have done so. And certainly, every judge has offered to meet with any individual, whether sitting on the Judiciary Committee or outside of, to ask them those tough questions. I am proud of the fact that many of certainly have done so.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do rise in support of Judge Adelman, and again for all of the reasons that the Chairman reiterated and for his dedication and service and knowledge that he brings to the bench in the sensitivity of the tough issues that come before every judge, but we certainly have seen time again, and again, and again, that truly some of the most passionate issues and tough issues have been in the family law arena, and I certainly encourage that these judges also continue to work with the Judicial Branch

in providing the services that they have and continue those programs, because we don't want to see those judges making those tough decisions in people's lives, but many times they are left with no choice.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Judge Adelman.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH) :

Thank you very much, Madam. Will you remark further? Representative Gonzalez of the 3rd District, you have the floor, madam.

REP. GONZALEZ (3RD) :

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't believe, I can't believe this. Hundreds of people criticize this judge and the way that they describe this judge as having a bad, bad temper. Well, I got a bad temper, right, that's what a lot of people say here, but it is different when a judge on the bench is dealing with parents.

A judge that ignore other judge's court order, a judge that has been threatening parents to take their kids away and put them in jail, if they don't pay Guardian Ad Litem thousands and thousands of dollars, orders a psych evaluation with the fact that he decide that he want, so these parents they go to court, they are not allowed to choose a doctor, they are not allowed, he has to go with whatever he decide. He abused his power and enjoy abusing and controlling parents.

This past Friday, at the beginning of Judge Adelman's interview he was very calm. He painted himself as one of the best judges. Oh, My God, what a difference behavior in court, compared to his behavior in this public hearing. The first question to Judge Adelman came from our Chair, my Chair, Representative Tong. And the question from Representative Tong was that many

grievances were filed by people for whom Judge Adelman have. He said, if the people that they were complaining about him, if the grievance -- the people file grievance against him, if those people were in front of him and the answer from Mr. Adelman was, many grievance were filed by people from who Judge Adelman have no involvement in the case. And that's what Judge Adelman is saying, no, there a lot of people, they file a grievance against me, but most of those people never been in front of me. That was the answer from Judge Adelman to the Chair or the Committee. Well, he mentioned a couple of names, he mentioned Ida Shaw, he mentioned Mike Nowacki [phonetic], and he mentioned Susan Skipp [phonetic], those people have never been in front of him. Those people that just look at him on the website and they are complaining about me. Well, guess what, he lied to my Chair. Now, he don't lie only to the Latina Rep that have a heavy accent, he lie to my Chair, because this is a court order that Judge Adelman signed against Susan Skipp, one of the people he said that never that person be in front of him. And that court order, he was ordering the mother to bring the kid to the father no later than 1: 45 today, failure to do so will result in all parental access by the defendant mother to be terminated. So, yes, she was in front of him. Mr. Chair, he lied to all of you and all of us. But what is very rare in this and funny is that the mother received the court order at 12: 45, and he want her to deliver the child by 1: 45, knowing that this mother was working as a teacher and she has to go -- she was working in Hamden, she have to go to Fairfield, and then have to go to Redding less than an hour. So, this was very clear an order to Susan Skipp, that he really said that she never was in front of him. So, she lying to my Chair, under oath.

I never check the case of -- the Chair was talking about, it was Anthony Hightower [phonetic], but only God knows what happened in that case. He -- the way that he treat special woman when that Chair ask him,

they are complaining a lot about you that you are biased. The answer was, my wife is a woman, duh, my wife is a woman, and I have a daughter; that was the response. But we were not dealing with his wife or his daughter in court. He also stated that when parents go to court they get emotional, that he will stop and they will get tissue to those parents [Laughter] that are crying. Tissues, can you imagine? That's what he said. That they will provide tissues to those parents, they are crying. I was there. I don't know how many times I have been in the court. The first time, he noticed that I was there and the look that he gave me was horrible. But, I continue going back because there was so many complaints against this judge. I continue to go back. So, when he said that they provide tissues, I'm going to tell you what he provide them. I was there when a mother, very, very well educated, a professional. She start crying because she was fighting for her son, she start crying and what he did, he didn't provide no tissues. He called the Marshalls, and the Marshalls -- he had the Marshall to stay behind her and move the shackles, so she was going to be distracted and she was going to be scared, and that what he does with these mothers. He treats them with no respect.

So, I think that my next step will buy tissue for the court, so that way for sure they are going to use tissues, but -- the other thing he said that a parent, when a parent get emotional and they start crying, he knows that the parent is not going to obey the court order. That's crazy to say that. I can go to court and maybe because I'm nervous or maybe because I'm fighting for my son, I get emotional, and I can start crying. That doesn't mean that I'm not going to obey a court order. But that's what he said. I ask him -- I ask him if the Appellate Court completely overturn an order, can an attorney come to court later on with some motion for contempt for no compliance with those orders, and he said, "the order -- that has been overturned," and I said, "uh-huh. " He said, "No. " And I said "No?" Then

he respond, "Well, because that's no longer an order. " And I said, "Exactly my point. " A lawyer came after they overturn a decision. A lawyer came to court and file a motion for contempt of court, that's supposed to be illegal. And he allowed that -- the home is meant for contempt of court, knowing that that court was vacated six months ago. So, this man went to the appellate court and he filed motions and they make the finding -- that Adelman make a finding of willful contempt on 10/11/2012, and that that motion was vacated on 04/24/2012, but he didn't care anyway. He hold this person in contempt of court.

So, I heard a lot here, a lot of good things about Adelman, he was asked a lot of questions and at one time I did remind him that he was under oath, and that was the time that he kind of lose control. Because this judge always, always want to be in control.

So, looking at this judge and all of the complaints about him, this is the worst judge. We have, I don't know how many appointments today or reappointments, but from all the judges, I will say this is a terrible, terrible judge. He protect the Guardian Ad Litem even though the Guardian Ad Litem abusing the parents. He protect Guardian Ad Litem even though the Guardian Ad Litem are charging thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars. When they ask the Guardian Ad Litem, why \$ 150,000 dollars in court, the answer is, you got to pay the Guardian Ad Litem, that's what they are asking for. So, I will say that when I also ask him about ADA accommodation, he gave me a quick compassionate sounding response. But when you check the reality, he don't want -- he don't like to deal with pro se or ADA, people that need ADA accommodations.

So, Judge Adelman doesn't have any respect for us or for our process. When he come in front of us and he start lying to the Chair, and I got the notes here, I'm not inventing this, it's impossible for me to invent

all of these things. So, he don't have no respect for our process. He is a judge and he believed that he can do whatever he wants. I ask this body today, please not ignore his behavior towards us and also to the parents that go in front of him. He came to this Committee, Judiciary Committee and he purged himself. I got proof here that he purged himself.

I know a story about a mother that went in front of this judge, she's been in front of this judge a couple of years, she lost her kids, her job, and she ended up homeless. She said that she is going to court with that -- so the reason that I am saying, you can check, that her name was removed from the deed of her home by the same time that the court ordered her, Judge Adelman ordered her, to sell her house because the attorneys, ad litem, and the AMC they want money. So, he ordered her to sell her house. She went to court and she was fighting in court for nine months. And she thought that because her name was removed from the deed illegally, she thought that she was going to win the case. She fought for nine months. And about one month ago, she was getting home and a police officer was waiting for her. And he said, "You've been evicted. " She said, "Evicted by who?" And the police officer say, "You've been evicted by Judge Adelman gave the order. So, you have two hours to get your stuff, whatever you can pack in two hours, and you got to leave. " And she said, "How this is possible, if I'm going through a process in court and I'm waiting for the decision, how can Judge Adelman order this?" She was asking questions about the house. She was asking questions about how much they pay for the house; she didn't receive no answer. But I am sure that if we ask about -- if we ask about it, they might have an answer ready, even if it is not true. My God, a clique like this in the court is dangerous, is dangerous.

There is a lot of corruption in our broken system, is work only for some people, for the AMC, Guardian Ad

Litems, they are getting richer day by day. You can check a Guardian Ad Litem, then maybe in the 2013, she was handling two cases, but then you check '14, '15, and '16, the case is going up and up and up because it's a lot of money there.

Our system is not about justice or fairness. Our system is about money. This is not the only case like this. I know about other cases where the court is working with a group selling homes and attorneys, Guardians Ad Litem and God knows else is involved. All of this and more is going through the court system, and this body keeps sending back these judges to the bench.

Let's stop the corruption. Let's do something about it. It's easy to label the parents as crazy just because people would not believe anything that is going on and also go ahead, just label the Latino Rep, that is defending this parent, that's okay, I'm used to that, just label again the Latino Rep.

Let's do the right thing. Let's send a message to these judges that when they are not following the law, and let's send to our constituents and to the people of Connecticut that we are here to protect their rights. And I have been voting against judges today and even if I get one, two, three, four vote, five, whatever, and I can get -- and I can keep that judge out of the bench, for me, even though that maybe you don't think about, for me, it's a victory, it's a victory. Even though if I can't get these judges out of the bench. People are listening and the corruption is out there, or we decide that we are going to change the system, so we can help these parents. Or we will continue allowing these judges to abuse these parents and abuse the system.

I will ask my colleagues to oppose his reappointment. Vote no, because the residents of Connecticut they deserve the best.

Thank you, Ms. Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further?

Representative Abercrombie.

REP. AMBERCROMBIE (83RD) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the nomination for Gerard Adelman. As someone that was born and raised in Meriden, I have known the judge for many years. I have known him since he was on our Board of Education. Yes, this is a tough individual, but this is an individual that is fair and consistent. And I can tell you that I can't imagine how difficult family court must be. Yes, is it emotionally driven, absolutely. Does my heart go out to the families, absolutely, but a judge is not there to be emotional. A judge is there to do what's in the best interest of the family, and I can tell you standing here right now, that Judge Adelman puts a lot of thought and time into his decisions and goes by the law.

I'd also like this Chamber to consider the vote that came out of the Judiciary Committee, it was 33 to 7, so there were a number of people on that Committee that heard the same about this judge and looked favorably upon him.

So, I urge my colleagues to confirm the confirmation of Judge Adelman.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further?
Representative Santiago.

REP. SANTIAGO (84TH) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in support of the resolution for the Honorable Gerard Adelman. I've known him for many years. He was a teacher in another town, but lived in Meriden. He was on the Board of Education for many, many years, and then he decided to go back and become a lawyer, back to school become a lawyer and now he is a judge. While he was on the Board of Education, I went before the Board of Education many times years ago, my son now is 37 years old, and I had to fight for him to get into the Special Ed program, and he was one of the Board of Education members that helped me to do that, because I didn't know what I was doing. So, he explained the system. He explained what I had to do, to write a letter and make sure that the principal knew that he needed those services.

So, I know Gerard Adelman in a different capacity. I just want to read something about his record. There is an evaluation summary that goes around to all of the lawyers that come before him. And in the last three years, the comportment, which is one of the areas that they rate these judges, all the judges combined, this is up to January 2015, all the judges combined was 89 percent. This individual judge was 94 percent. Legal ability, all the judges combined was 89. Judge Adelman was 94 percent. Management skills, which includes the pace of proceedings, explanation of rulings, latitude allowed to attorneys, attention, staying on top of proceedings, promptness, and making rulings, that's what management skills are. All the judges combined 90 percent. Judge Adelman was 96 percent. And I'm sure that there have been cases where parents weren't happy with decisions that he made. It's very emotional going into court and fighting for custody of your children, fighting for issues that deal with your family, and the

judges there with all the evidence before him, and to look at that evidence, look at the testimony, look at the stories, look at the history, and make the right decision; somebody is going to come out losing, it's either going to be the father or the mother. You're not going to make everybody happy. And judges have to make those rulings each and every day and family services and family court is not one of the easiest courts to be in. It's almost like being in the Chamber, Appropriations is one of the toughest committees, if you want a simple committee, then you join Commerce or one of the other ones, the smaller ones, right? [Laughter] So, that's what happens, so you got to -- nothing against Commerce, but I haven't been in that committee yet, but just to draw the difference that family services is very, very difficult to deal with.

The judges have to be the voices for these children and he is the voice for these children. If the parents can't make a decision, a simple decision on child custody and who visits who on what weekend, what date, what holidays to take the child, then the judge has to make that decision, and that's what he is there for.

I challenge anyone in this Chamber to remember what they did last week, what they did two years ago, what they did 10 years ago, and for those that have been here 20 years, what bills they voted on 20 years ago. I'm sure that we are going to have a time when you are not going to remember all of the bills that you voted on, you are going to have to go back and research that or have your legislative aide research that.

So, we are proud in the City of Meriden, and have the privilege of Gerard Adelman representing not only Meriden, but the whole State of Connecticut. Like I read before, he has a high percentage rating amongst lawyers, and I'm sure if he wasn't that good, they wouldn't be rating him that high percentage that I just read to you a little while ago. And this is a rating

that he has among his peers. He not only stands up for this franchise, but treats everybody equally. When he makes a decision, he studies, and he does his homework, and the decision is a fair one with the evidence that's presented to him.

So, I urge all of my colleagues in the Chamber to support the Honorable Gerard Adelman with this resolution.

Thank you, Madam Chair, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, madam. Will you remark further? Representative Fishbein.

REP. FISHBEIN (90TH) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also rise in favor of Judge Adelman. I've been practicing law approximately 15 years and as a new lawyer, one of my first cases, then attorney Adelman was on the other side of the case. And it was one of these high conflict cases, and myself being a new lawyer, I thought that everything in a family case you had to fight and you had to argue and that was the way family cases were supposed to be. And my client wanted to fight and Gerard's client wanted to fight and the rudder in the whole case was Judge Adelman, who was able to calm down the whole situation. We did go to trial, but the result was one that was a good result.

So, as an attorney, I've known Judge Adelman to be competent and steadfast in his work. I clerked for a time in the Superior Court, and judges sometimes talk about that they don't want to do family work, and I understand now why they don't, because when they come up for appointment, they are accused of lying, they are

accused of not caring. We don't often hear those things about judges that just do civil matters.

As a judge, I've known Judge Adelman to bring his knowledge of human nature in the legal process to every case, and that's commendable. During his tenure, he has even served the Regional Family Trial docket, located in Middletown, where specifically high conflict cases go. So, this is somebody who is saying, "Bring me high conflict cases," and he has the skills to resolve those cases. Could you imagine every day going to work, hearing people fight and asking to be part of that process? That is commendable.

Now, my understanding is that because of his senior status, that Judge Adelman is going to be a JTR and I think he has the opportunity to pick where he is going to be stationed out of, and he is not asking not asking to be stationed out of Meriden, where he is from, he is asking to go to Hartford, to do the good work in Hartford where there are more high conflict cases. And I think he should be commended for that.

My every contact that I have had with Judge Adelman has been respectful and I rise in favor and urge my colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, sir. Will you remark further? Representative Vargas.

REP. VARGAS (6TH) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have been through this several times before and with all due deference to the Chair of Judiciary Committee, Representative Tong and to the ranking member, Representative Rebimbas, I have to rise to say I am going to be opposing the reappointment of Judge Adelman.

We have been around this many times with family court. I have been watching this for a long time, and I have expressed my feelings about this whole GAL system, the Guardian Ad Litem system. Representative Gonzalez just explained how a person lost their home. I fail to see how best interest of the child is protected by forcing someone to sell their home.

Judge Adelman has become the poster boy of the worst of the worst. I wasn't too happy with some of the other appointments, wasn't too happy to have to vote against Judge Suarez, a fellow Latino, but as you noticed, most of us who represent Latino communities voted against the reappointment of Judge Suarez.

If we at least don't reject Judge Adelman, if at least we don't stand up to one judge in this Chamber, I think we're sending the wrong message that this whole reappointment process is just a rubber stamp. I'm sorry I feel this way about this, but I was informed up in the Senate that there were some senators that voted against reappointment, including two Republicans, Senator Fasano and Senator Witkos, it was a bipartisan effort by some of the senators to stop this renomination process. I'm hoping we have better luck here in the House of Representatives.

So, I urge my colleagues to vote no on the reappointment of Judge Adelman. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further? Representative Gonzalez, for the second time.

REP. GONZALEZ (3RD) :

Thank you, Madam Chair, thank you for this second time.

I listen to both sides and I look at the members of Judiciary Committee that are here, starting with my good Chair, Representative Tong, and I can't believe that under oath he lied to the Chair, and he lied to all of us. He lied to all of us and we got proof to that. If we not gonna -- that everybody is praising him, well, I'm not an attorney. I don't have to go in front of him. I don't have a case. I don't have to defend a client. So, me, as not an attorney, I will say the truth, what is out there. That I have been in his court so many times and I see the way he treat parents, especially mothers, and I will say God will help your constituents, my constituents, and everybody else here that goes in front of the judge. And if you don't stand up and fight for them, they will continue being abused by this judge. It's not that he's a bad judge just because he's a bad judge, he is a horrible judge. He is terrible. He don't have no respect for anybody. And I don't know how many of the Reps here, they are not an attorney, has been in his court. Cause I have been there, maybe five times, and I will say, God protect the people of Hartford now, because now he is transferred to Hartford. So, that means that I am going to spend more time in his court. But I have been there. I know the way he abuse these mothers. And I can testify in there and other than he lied again to the Latino State Rep, maybe people don't care. But to lie to the Chair of this Committee need to have a lot of guts. And yes, he is a very powerful judge, he is very strong, because that's the way he shows authority to all these people that don't know how to defend themselves, and don't have money to pay an attorney. But again, I would say, if this body is going to ignore that he lied to the Committee, if that's what we're doing, if that's what we are going to allow this judge to do, then I will say with all due respect, that we got a problem at the Judiciary Committee. We got a serious, serious problem.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further? Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, frankly I'm tired of sitting through this process and being called out as a member of the Judiciary Committee as an attorney who practices throughout the courts of the State of Connecticut and being categorized as one who is afraid to vote against a judge because we may or may not appear before them. Frankly it's wrong, it's inconsiderate, it's totally out of line.

So, I've sat here all day quietly, but I've heard enough.

I vote in favor of this judge for a number of reasons. Number one, I don't even do family law. I will never appear before this judge, but I sat there and listened through the testimony, I listened through the public hearing. I know how difficult it is to try cases, especially family law cases. We cannot find judges to do these cases because it is such a hostile environment in that court. And for a member of this Chamber to call out a judge and to say that he is a liar, has gone too far, Madam Speaker.

So, I for one am sick of it. I hope we don't hear any more of it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GENTILE (104TH) :

Thank you, representative. Will you remark further? Representative Tong.

REP. TONG (147TH) :

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Much has been said. I wasn't planning to speak again, but as the Chair of the Judiciary Committee, I think it's important to speak on behalf of the Committee and its members and the process that we go through often on the Judiciary Committee.

It has been the honor of my public service career to serve on the Judiciary Committee, the highest honor to be its Chairman. And I can tell you that every time we step into the hearing room or the committee room, particularly on these judicial nominations, we take this responsibility to investigate, to ask tough questions, to consider the renomination of our judges, we take that responsibility very seriously. I take umbrage at the suggestion that we are a rubber stamp. That could not be further from the truth, and I tried to say it subtly earlier, but maybe I should be more explicit. There are judges who come before us whose performance is substandard, whose performance evaluations suggest that they should not serve another term on the Judicial Branch. We ask those tough questions. We press those judges, and judges at times would draw their request to be renominated, that happened just yesterday. Because this Committee did its work. This is not the first time. There have been other judges when I was a junior legislator, a judge said disparaging things about immigrants in open court. He was nominated for the Appellate Court, he withdrew his nomination in the middle of that day because he knew that tough questions were coming.

This Committee subjected Judge Adelman to extensive thorough searching, aggressive questioning. And I will tell you that I do not believe, as a Chair of this Committee, that I was lied to. And I will tell you that I take very seriously the suggestion that I might have been lied to, so seriously that I have spent much of this day running down not just that allegation, but

other charges about other judges that appeared before us, to make sure that I was not lied to. But that's my judgement to make, whether I was lied to. As a member of the Committee, as a member of this General Assembly and as a member of the Chair of this Committee.

We have made a lot of progress in this General Assembly in reforming our family courts. In no small part, because of the advocacy of Representative Gonzalez, that is a fact. The 2014 Reform Bill I was not the Chairman at that time; Judge Fox was the Chair, but that was an extensive reform of our family courts. The sensitivity of this Chamber to those issues is much higher than it was when I stated and much higher than it was five years ago. We're on the case on this issue. Is there still more work to be done, yes, but Judge Bozzuto, who was confirmed and renominated today, she has been on the case and leading the effort. And I appreciate the remarks of Representative Gonzalez and others crediting her for her work on those issues. So, we're making progress. We are hearing people, but these are very difficult cases, and I think we have to take a step back and say we need good tough judges to sit on these dockets, to make these decisions and maybe we should have a longer conversation about what our role is as a legislature and as a Judiciary Committee. But I want to say with respect to Judge Adelman, Judge Devlin, Judge Suarez, and the many other judges we've considered today and will going forward, they are nominated by the governor and confirmed by us. They sit by virtue of our state constitution. They are members of a co-equal branch of government. They don't work for us. They work for the people of this state. They come before us for a job interview every eight years, and I said to the Judicial Branch, we've had some tough conversations, I said to Judge Carroll and I said to the Chief Justice, who pushed back on some of the questioning, I said, there is no problem with these questions, these tough questions, because it is our right and prerogative as a legislature and as a co-

equal branch of government to ask these hard questions and to put them through their paces and prove that they deserve reappointment to our courts. And so I have no problem, as Chairman of this Committee and a member of this legislature with tough questions, but we cross a line when we step -- we try to step into their shoes and second guess them in the discharge of their duties. They have to make very tough calls. They have to sit there for hour upon hour, days and days, weeks and months hearing testimony, assessing the credibility of witnesses, looking at proof, whether it is competent or not. They have to make tough decisions and it's not appropriate for us to step in there for a brief second and say, "You know what, if I were there I would have made a different call." When it's a reasonable decision within the range, it's not our province to second guess the business of judging. It is our responsibility to assess the quality of the discharge of their duties, yes, how is their comportment, their demeanor, their management of the courtroom, their knowledge of the law, all of that is important, ask all of those questions. But it becomes very difficult in a tough case when you don't know what's happening in that courtroom to second guess what went down that day.

And so I pledge to everyone here, that this Committee will continue to take its responsibility to confirm judges very seriously. If anybody has questions about that, speak to me or the Vice Chair, or the ranking member. We meet with the people that testify before a committee, we take their phone calls. We meet with them in district. We talk to them in the hallway. We spend a lot of time on these issues, and I can tell you with absolute confidence that due diligence has been done here. Judge Adelman deserves reappointment.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.