

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Justin Silverman, Esq.

OFFICERS

Thomas Fiedler
NEFAC President
Boston University
Terry Williams
First Vice President
The Keene Sentinel (N.H.)
Robert A. Bertsche, Esq.
Treasurer
Prince Lobel Tye, LLP (Mass.)
Lance Johnson
Communications Chairman
Red Rabbit Communications (Conn.)
Mike Donoghue
Clerk
Burlington Free Press (Vt.)
Lynne DeLucia
Fundraising Chairwoman
Connecticut Health I-Team

DIRECTORS

Iris Adler
WBUR-Boston
Jonathan P. Albano, Esq.
Bingham McCutchen, LLP (Mass.)
Dan Barrett
ACLU of Vermont
Karen Bordeleau
Providence Journal
Dieter Bradbury
Portland Press Herald
Edward Cafasso
Burson-Marsteller (Mass.)
Peter Caruso, Sr., Esq.
Caruso & Caruso, LLP (Mass.)
Joseph V. Cavanagh, Jr., Esq.
Blish & Cavanagh, LLP (R.I.)
William Chapman, Esq.
Orr & Reno (N.H.)
Richard Gagliuso
Gagliuso & Gagliuso (N.H.)
George Geers
Academy of New England Journalists
Helen Bennett Harvey
Journal Register Company (Conn.)
Andrew Marsters
University of New Hampshire
Maggie Mulvihill
Boston University
Mitchell Pearlman
University of Connecticut
Elizabeth Ritvo, Esq.
Brown Rudnick, LLP (Mass.)
Walter V. Robinson
The Boston Globe
David Rosen
David Rosen Communications (Mass.)
Sigmund D. Schutz, Esq.
Preti Flaherty (Maine)
James H. Smith
Connecticut Council on FOI
Emily Sweeney
The Boston Globe
Gregory Sullivan, Esq.
Malloy & Sullivan (Mass.)
Tim White
WPRI-TV Providence
Mary Jane Wilkinson
Scituate, Mass.
Janet Wu
WCVB-TV Boston

*Affiliations appear for
identification purposes only.*

2015 MAJOR SUPPORTERS



THE ROBERTSON FOUNDATION



New England First Amendment Coalition

Phone 508.983.6006 Fax 617.860.2559 Web nefirstamendment.org
Twitter @FiveFreedoms Mailing Address 111 Milk Street, Westborough MA 01581

Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Rooms 2500, 2405
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
c/o Sen. Eric D. Coleman
and Rep. William Tong

May 1, 2015

Dear Sen. Coleman and Rep. Tong,

I'm writing on behalf of the New England First Amendment Coalition and to express support for House Bill 6750, An Act Expanding the Requirement for Disclosure of Arrest Records During a Pending Prosecution Under the Freedom of Information Act.

Founded in 2006, NEFAC is a broad-based coalition of people who believe in the power of an informed democratic society. Our mission is to advance and protect the five freedoms of the First Amendment and the public's right to know. By supporting this bill, our coalition joins other organizations such as the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission and the Connecticut Council on Freedom of Information. We desire transparency within the state's criminal justice system and believe H.B. 6750 will help keep government accountable and our communities informed.

For two decades, Connecticut citizens relied on § 1-210(b)(3) of the state's FOI statute to govern the public's access to criminal records. This section of the law allowed the public to examine the actions of police, but it also provided protection for witnesses who may be endangered as well as several other exemptions sought by law enforcement. It provided a balance between the public's right to know and the interests of police and prosecutors. The Supreme Court last year, unfortunately, tipped the scale in favor of secrecy by ruling that a different section of the FOI statute governed requests for criminal records. The original H.B. 6750 passed by the Government Administration and Elections Committee would tip the scale back to the balance that existed for 20 years and require that § 1-210(b)(3) again control these requests.

Please consider amending the bill back to its original form. H.B. 6750 will help restore the transparency Connecticut residents expect from their law enforcement and again provide the public information it needs.

Sincerely,

Justin Silverman
Executive Director

CC: Brendan Sharkey, Speaker of the House
Martin Looney, Senate President
Rep. Ed Jutila