



**State of Connecticut**  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

RICHARD J. COLANGELO, JR.  
CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

300 CORPORATE PLACE  
ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT 06067  
(860) 258 5800

May 11, 2021

Claudine Fox  
Public Policy and Advocacy Director  
ACLU Smart Justice Connecticut  
765 Asylum Avenue, FL 1  
Hartford, Connecticut 06105

Dear Ms. Fox,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the ACLU Smart Justice Connecticut Survey. Please find attached to this email my responses to the survey. I've also attached a short bio per your request.

The separation of powers and the three branches of government require that some of these issues raised in the survey need to be specifically addressed by the legislature, but we all need to be part of the conversation.

Sincerely,

RICHARD J. COLANGELO, JR.  
CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

Enclosures

Richard J. Colangelo, Jr., Esq.  
Office of the Chief State's Attorney  
300 Corporate Place  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Dear Attorney Colangelo:

It has come to our attention that you are seeking the opportunity to be re-appointed to the role of Connecticut's Chief State's Attorney. As you know, The ACLU of Connecticut Campaign for Smart Justice is grounded in the knowledge that the people closest to the problem are closest to the solution. We are an unprecedented cohort of advocates who have been directly impacted by Connecticut's justice system.<sup>i</sup> We are working to usher in a new era of justice, and we are not alone. We are part of the nationwide Campaign for Smart Justice, a multiyear effort in all 50 states.



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This letter serves as an official request of you to complete our *ACLU Smart Justice Connecticut Pledge for Connecticut Chief State's Attorney Applicants*. While the Chief State's Attorney role is not an elected position, this public position is critical in protecting the safety and well-being of Connecticut residents. As such, the public has a right to know your views on various topics referenced within the pledge.

**Please provide your full response by May 10, 2021**

Our pledge consists of 10 Yes/No questions, each with the opportunity to provide a 250-word comment. Where neither "Yes" nor "No" is selected, the response will be recorded as "Did Not Respond." We also request that you submit a brief 1 paragraph biography with your responses to this pledge. Your response will be posted on our website, as well as circulated to our more than 41,000 ACLU supporters in Connecticut and the broader public.

Please direct any questions to Claudine Fox, Public Policy and Advocacy Director at 203-685-8875 or [cfox@acluct.org](mailto:cfox@acluct.org).

Sincerely,  
The ACLU CT Smart Justice Campaign Cohort



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1. As you are aware, the Chief State's Attorney is the face of the division of criminal justice at Connecticut's state legislature and regularly weighs in with positions regarding legislation and budgetary proposals, including in legislative testimony and in interviews with the press regarding Connecticut General Assembly proposals. Will you commit to transparency and professional accountability for state's attorneys by supporting legislation that requires additional training for prosecutors as part of their continuing education on topics including racial bias, collateral consequences, alternative dispositions, victim and trauma-informed practices, and reentry? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

I support additional education and training for all Division of Criminal Justice employees and I have been pushing the legislature to increase the training budget which is less than half of the funds the Office of the Chief Public Defender receives. Shortly after I became Chief State's Attorney, I hired a training coordinator who has been holding regular training sessions on such topics as implicit bias, alternative dispositions and prosecutor wellness.

2. As the face of the division of criminal justice at Connecticut's state legislature, will you commit to transparency and professional accountability for state's attorneys by supporting legislation requiring meaningful and measurable biennial performance evaluations of all 13 state's attorneys performed by the Criminal Justice Commission using data from [PA No. 19-59](#), which measures the overall well-being of communities impacted by prosecution? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

I supported S.B. 892 which was signed into law by Governor Ned Lamont on May 6. Section 4 of that bill requires biennial evaluations of all 13 State's Attorneys.

3. As the face of the division of criminal justice at Connecticut's state legislature, will you commit to fairness and transparency by supporting legislation requiring specific the Chief State's Attorney and the 13 State's Attorneys to come together to create uniform policies in areas where prosecutors have discretion to be promulgated by the Division of Criminal Justice Advisory Board for all 13 state's attorney offices? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

No, while I support uniform policies -- and the Division has more than 200 of them -- I do not support having restrictive policies specifically regarding prosecutorial discretion which is vital for the true administration of justice and fairness.

4. As the face of the division of criminal justice at Connecticut's state legislature, will you commit to increasing transparency by supporting legislation reducing the length of state's attorney terms from eight years to four years? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

No, I don't think this is a good idea. Most State's Attorneys get appointed to complete a term of office, finishing the term of their predecessor. This initial term allows the Criminal Justice Commission to see how they are adapting to their new role in a management position. An eight-year term allows a State's Attorney to develop relationships within the office and in the community so they can determine what is important in the Judicial District that they are appointed to. Each District has unique areas to address.

5. As the face of the division of criminal justice at Connecticut's state legislature, will you commit to ending mass incarceration by supporting legislation to modernize Connecticut's criminal code by (a) eliminating duplicative criminal penalties, (b) eliminating mandatory minimums and sentence enhancements, (c) capping all prison sentences to 20 years? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to all four subparts and any explanation.

This cannot be answered yes or no. This is a decision that is in the purview of the legislature. If they make any of these changes, then I will make sure the new legislation is followed by the Division.

6. Will you commit to racial justice and police accountability by ensuring that the new office of the Inspector General has plenary discretion to make all prosecutorial decisions independent of you? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.



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The Inspector General will have the authority to independently investigate police use-of-force cases and the findings will be provided to the Office of the Chief State's Attorney and be made public upon completion.

7. Will you commit to racial justice and holding police accountable by supporting legislation in which killings by police are justified only if it is clear that police have exhausted the reasonable alternatives to use of deadly physical force? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

This cannot be answered yes or no. This is a policy decision that is in the purview of the legislature. The legislature has been making changes in this area during the current legislative session and also made changes last summer.

8. Will you commit to holding police accountable by (a) ensuring that all 13 judicial districts develop and implement uniform Brady policies? (b) creating a statewide "Brady List" of police officers excluded from testifying in criminal cases because of a proven history of lying or other professional or criminal misconduct? c) ensure all 13 prosecutorial districts' uniform Brady policies rely on credible sources other than police to identify and track police whose conduct precludes them from testifying in criminal cases? Please give a clear "Yes" or "No" to the question and any explanation.

The Division has a uniform policy that ensures that prosecutors receive sufficient information to meet their obligations under *Giglio v. United States*, and ensures that the due process rights of accused individuals are protected. The disclosure to prosecutors of potential impeachment information concerning law enforcement witnesses ensures that the Division is acting at all times to promote public confidence in the integrity of our work in pursuing justice. Lists expire and prosecutors using lists could get information that is antiquated. When prosecutors want to call a police officer as a witness to the court, they send a "Giglio letter" to the officer's police chief, asking if the department has any records or information that could negatively impact the credibility of the officer if they had testified as a witness on the stand. If police leaders provide any such information, the prosecutor is required to notify their supervisor and the state's attorney immediately. These efforts by



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prosecutors are timely, open and transparent and available to the public in court filings.

9. Will you commit to racial justice and police accountability by making the “Brady List” available to the public on request? Please give a clear “Yes” or “No” to the question and any explanation.

This cannot be answered yes or no. This information might be covered by employment law and would need further research.



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10. In an effort to reduce recidivism and promote racial justice, will you support legislative efforts to eliminate collateral consequences of a criminal record? Please give a clear “Yes” or “No” to the question and any explanation.

This question is too broad to be answered yes or no. Eliminating collateral consequences of a criminal record is a policy decision that is being considered by legislators during the current legislative session.

*The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, non-profit membership organization that defends, promotes and preserves individual rights and liberties under the U.S. and Connecticut constitutions in state and federal court, the General Assembly and the state’s 169 towns and cities.*

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<sup>i</sup> To learn more about the ACLU’s Smart Justice Campaign visit: <https://www.acluct.org/en/issues/smart-justice>



State of Connecticut  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**RICHARD J. COLANGELO, JR.**  
CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

**Richard J. Colangelo, Jr.**, is the chief law enforcement officer of the State of Connecticut and administrative head of the Division of Criminal Justice, the independent agency in the executive branch of state government that is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all criminal matters in Connecticut.

A career prosecutor, Chief State's Attorney Colangelo has served in various capacities, most recently as State's Attorney for the Judicial District of Stamford/Norwalk. He has vast experience trying major felony cases and has been involved intricately in criminal investigations and criminal justice education for decades.

Chief State's Attorney Colangelo is a member of the Criminal Justice Commission, Connecticut Sentencing Commission, Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission, Criminal Justice Information System Governing Board, and the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. He also oversees the specialized prosecution bureaus that operate out of the Office of the Chief State's Attorney.

Chief State's Attorney Colangelo is a graduate of Norwalk State Technical College (A.S.M.E. 1986), the University of Connecticut (B.S.M.E. 1989) and the Quinnipiac School of Law (J.D. 1992). He has taught in the Connecticut community college system, the University of New Haven and the National Computer Forensics Institute in Hoover, Alabama.

He and his wife, Attorney Carolyn Colangelo, are the proud parents of four children.