



Chambers of
Hon. Robert J. Devlin, Jr.
Judge

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
SUPERIOR COURT**

Item 05-02a
(011320)

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March 29, 2019

Justice Andrew J. McDonald
Chair, Rules Committee of the Superior Court
P.O. Box 150474
Hartford, CT 06115-0474
Re: Proposed Amendment to Section 1-11C

Dear Justice McDonald:

The Judicial-Media Committee is a standing committee of the Judicial Branch comprised of Judicial Branch officials and journalists working in the print and broadcast media. The Committee meets twice a year to discuss issues surrounding media coverage of the courts. I co-chair the Committee along with Karen Florin, staff writer for The Day of New London.

The Judicial-Media Committee is proposing an amendment to Section 1-11C Media Coverage of Criminal Proceedings. Section (b) of our current rule contains a complete prohibition of camera coverage of trials or proceedings involving charges of sexual assault. This prohibition is also contained in Section 1-10B(3). The proposed amendment would permit a judge to authorize camera coverage of a homicide case involving sexual assault provided the victim's family affirmatively consents to such coverage. Of course, the judge could deny such coverage as well. See section 1-11C(f).

In the Judicial-Media Committee's view, the privacy concerns that underlie the general prohibition of camera coverage of sexual assault cases are largely absent in a rape/murder case. In such cases, the provisions intended to protect the privacy of a sexual assault victim should not shield from camera coverage an accused murderer who also sexually assaulted the victim – particularly where the victim's family endorses such camera coverage.

Attached is the proposed language. I (along with Karen Florin) would be happy to appear before the Rules Committee to provide additional information on the proposed change.

Very truly yours

ROBERT J. DEVLIN, JR.

Sec. 1-10B. Media Coverage of Court Proceedings; In General

(b) No broadcasting, televising, recording or photographing of any of the following proceedings shall be permitted ...

(3) Except as provided in section 1-11C(q), proceedings involving sexual assault

Sec. 1-11C. Media Coverage of Criminal Proceedings

(b) Except as provided in subsection q, no broadcasting, televising, recording or photographing of trials involving sexual assault charges shall be permitted.

(q) NEW. In a homicide case involving sexual assault, camera coverage of the trial may be permitted provided the victim's family affirmatively consents to such coverage