

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

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CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

PROCEEDINGS
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4893-5297

Saturday, May 31, 1969

238

mec

MR. HEALEY: (87th)

It is a good Amendment, and it ought to pass.

THE SPEAKER:

Now that it has the blessing from both sides of the aisle, will you remark further on the Amendment? The gentleman from the 1st.

MR. KENNELLY: (1st)

Mr. Speaker, I fully subscribe to the Amendment. The Amendment strengthens the bill, and I urge its adoption.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further on the Amendment? If not, all those in favor, indicate by saying Aye. Those opposed? The Amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? If not, all those in favor, indicate by saying Aye. Those opposed? The bill is PASSED.

ASSISTANT CLERK:

On Page 9, Calendar 1273, Substitute for House Bill No. 6715.

An Act concerning the Creation of a Department of Children and Youth Services. Favorable report of the Committee on Appropriations.

THE SPEAKER:

The gentleman from the 78th.

MR. PAPANDREA: (78th)

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE SPEAKER:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

The gentleman from the 78th.

Saturday, May 31, 1969

239

MR. PAPANDREA: (78th)

mec

Mr. Speaker, this is a most significant piece of legislation. It is very difficult in a state as advanced and progressive as ours to believe that there remains such a significant piece of legislation to be enacted for the benefit and welfare of our children. It was my pleasure during the past year and a half to serve as a representative from the Legislature on the Governor's Committee on Youthful Wards of the State, and I must say that that experience certainly brought it home quite clearly to me that this piece of legislation is very sorely needed, and one which will be of extreme benefit to all of the children of this state. I would commend the members of the House, rather than take their time in a exhaustive presentation, I would commend, however, that they take the hour and a half or two which would be required to read in detail the Special Report made by the Committee to Study Youthful Wards of the State to Governor Dempsey dated January 21, 1969. Now this report was passed out to every member of this House, and certainly after reading it, and the pathetic case histories of children whose problems were not properly diagnosed, services and facilities which were terribly overcrowded, of the difficulties presented in many of our institutions because of lack of coordination, and lack of staff, I am sure you will agree that the reasons for the enactment of this legislation are both compelling and cogent. I think that we can talk about the fiscal crisis and be concerned with dollars, but I think after we become familiar with the tremendous needs within our state for the coordination of services and facilities to take care of the delinquent, to take care of the emotionally disturbed, to take care of the psychotic, to take care of the child who falls nowhere really in a clear category, I think we can

Saturday, May 31, 1969

240

mec

all then agree that this bill has earned our serious attention and unanimous passage. I would now yield to the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Representative Carrozzella.

THE SPEAKER:

The distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from the 81st.

MR. CARROZZELLA: (81st)

Mr. Speaker, I know you are, and I speak for myself and for my committee, heartily in favor of this bill before us, because I think when we all go home and when we consider many of the worthy measures we will have passed at the Session's end, this bill will be among the first and the foremost. The benefits of this bill will be felt for years to come in this state because this bill involves your children and my children. It reaches out to help those children, children in trouble, and to aid them to become full and responsible citizens of this great state of ours.

The bill establishes a new Department of Children and Youth Services. The Department will include the Long Lane School for Girls and the Connecticut School for Boys. This, in and of itself, is important, because presently these institutions are governed by separate Boards of Trustees and have operated more or less autonomously. In addition, the Department is authorized to establish and to contract for the use of other facilities to assist our children, and this is one of the big problems that we now face, because there are not enough facilities to put our wayward children, and children in need of help, in such facilities so that they can get the help that they need. The Department will be able to develop a creative, constructive and coordinated program for children.

Saturday, May 31, 1969

241

mec

Children will come to this new Department from three sources. First, if the Juvenile Court determines that a child is a delinquent, the Juvenile Court can send such child to that Department. Secondly, children will come there from the Department of Corrections when they can be benefitted by the program of this new Department. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, children can come to this new Department through a voluntary admission. This voluntary admission permits a child, with his consent, if he is over 14, or with the parents' consent if he is under 14, to be admitted to the Department for the purpose of getting the benefit of its services. Thus, Mr. Speaker, a child in school or a difficult home, or who is on the verge of serious trouble, can be intercepted, and helped at a very critical moment of his life. It is to be noted Mr. Speaker that children voluntarily admitted cannot be sent to a confining institution like Long Lane or Connecticut School for Boys and can be discharged on thirty days notice. The bill, as Representative Papandrea pointed out is the synthesis of the recommendations of three study commissions of the last two years - The Cowles Commission to study the Juvenile Court System, the Committee headed by Dr. Elias Marsh to study the Youthful Wards of the State, and the Juvenile Delinquency Sub-committee headed by Judge Thomas Gill of the Governor's Committee on Criminal Administration. This bill has the enthusiastic support of all of the Judges of our Juvenile Courts. The Judiciary Committee firmly believes that this new Department will put Connecticut in the forefront insofar as providing services for the children and youth of our state. This bill also fulfills a mandate of Governor Dempsey in his opening message to this Session to improve the services for our young people. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that the bill is very artfully drafted, because it was drafted by

Saturday, May 31, 1969

242

mec

Bob Satter whom we all know, and the draftsmanship is his product, I think we should commend him for this. It is a good bill, and I urge its passage.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further? The gentleman from the 141st.

MR. MCKINNEY: (141st)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my support to this bill. This again has been a long-standing plank in the Republican platform and we are delighted to see it here. It is a good bill, and a very-well drafted bill.

THE SPEAKER:

The gentleman from the 113th.

MR. WEBBER: (113th)

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to appear redundant, but this is obviously a tremendous piece of legislation, something that I am sure we will adopt enthusiastically, but I want to point out that if it does nothing else, it will separate those youngsters of ours who are sent to the Juvenile Court who might have a behavioural problem, when in reality it might be a problem of mental illness, a department in an area in our state I am ashamed to admit has up to this point been pitifully inadequate. This bill is endorsed by all of the New Haven Mental Health Associations, and all of the societies and groups in New Haven as they address themselves to children. It is a great piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and I shall be proud to be a member of this Assembly that will have passed this kind of legislation.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further on the bill? The gentleman from the 1st.

MR. KENNELLY: (1st)

Mr. Speaker, I was delighted to hear the gentleman from the far

Saturday, May 31, 1969

243

mec

side of the aisle indicate they are strongly in support of this bill, although I can't quite recall that it was in their Appropriations Act that was submitted as House Amendment Schedule "B" to our Appropriation Bill, and it seems to me that if they were as enthusiastic about the matter Thursday as they are today, it would kind of ring a better bell with me.

THE SPEAKER:

I did not know we were reconsidering the budget. Will you remark further? The gentleman from the 141st.

MR. MCKINNEY: (141st)

Mr. Speaker, I was just about to ask the gentleman from the 1st if he would like to move for reconsideration. We would be delighted to start all over again.

THE SPEAKER:

I suggest we continue with this bill. Will you remark further? The gentleman from the 157th.

MR. BINCHAM: (157th)

Mr. Speaker, this is an excellent bill, and has many great features in it. A few of the features which the bill has is that it provides a great variety of State and community facilities. It improves the diagnosing and evaluation of childrens' problems, disciplining and rehabilitation of children, and treating and caring for troubled children. It breaks down the insulation of youth correctional and servicing agencies. One of the greatest features of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is the voluntary admissions department. As we all know, there are many Juvenile Probation Officers, many Juvenile Court Judges, many policemen in the Youth Bureaus, who know that children are headed for trouble, and it is a sad thing that

Saturday, May 31, 1969

244

mec

we should wait until that child gets into trouble before he can receive the care and treatment of an agency such as this. This bill will correct this very serious problem which we have in the state of Connecticut. This voluntary admission department is certainly an advance, a milestone in the correcting of children's problems. Further, this bill will help us to correct and evaluate the sixteen and seventeen-year old children which have been neglected in the past under the past Juvenile Court Act. Mr. Speaker, I must agree with my brothers on the other side that this is an excellently drafted bill, and is a bill which we certainly need and it should pass. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER:

The gentleman from the 25th.

MR. ARGAZZI: (25th)

Mr. Speaker, I think the real significance of this bill is realized when one has to do some work in the Juvenile Court in our state. So many times young delinquents whom I represent have been sent to institutions which are totally unsuited and incapable of meeting their needs. It is a most frustrating situation which has existed up to this time. This bill here will give us a new program, new facilities, and the new services that we so desperately need to tailor our programs to meet the needs of the individual delinquents. I think it is a wonderful piece of legislation. I know the Judges are wholly in favor of it, and I would like to add my compliments to the people who are responsible for drafting it.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further before we vote? Representative Ryan from the 101st.

Saturday, May 31, 1969

245

MRS. RYAN: (101st)

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to support this bill. I have heard the words "diagnosing and treatment" - it would help in "diagnosing and treatment." For the benefit of the House, I would like to go back and say in 1961 Session when we visited Norwich Hospital and found children who were with seriously psychotic adults in locked wards, it was one of the most shocking experiences that I think I have ever had. We came back and fought to have at least a childrens' unit for the emotionally disturbed child. The increase in emotional disturbance in children today is enormous. I am sure the Commission which has drawn up this bill has recognized this. I am afraid we have to go further. We will have a Youth Commission which will be just great, but where are we going to put the children? Where are we going to put the children after the diagnosis has been made? Right now the Juvenile Court has to put children in Southbury where they do not belong. We do not have enough room in Southbury for the mentally retarded because the Judges are referring these children to Southbury. I think that we have got to go further. We have got to recognize the fact that emotional disturbance among children is growing in leaps and bounds. We have got to have places for them. We have done something. We have started at Connecticut Valley Hospital. There will be a unit there. We do have an excellent unit in Hamden. It is limited in scope as to the number of children and the kind of children which can be handled there. So I would just hope, that if I never come back again, that this is the second beginning. The first was getting the children out of institutions with seriously psychotic adults, and this is a second step, and I hope we will go further.

mec

Saturday, May 31, 1969

246

mec

THE SPEAKER:

The gentleman from the 52nd.

MR. O'NEILL: (52nd)

Mr. Speaker, I rise in whole-hearted support of this bill, and I can think of a tragedy which occurred in the 52nd District, my district, a little over a year ago. Since that time I have had a phone call two or three times per week from the mother of a boy that had no place to go, a boy the mother knew something was wrong with, but she got no advice from anyone, and the end result of this situation was that this boy killed a 14 year-old girl. Mr. Speaker, perhaps if this Commission was in action at that time, or there was a place to go, this tragedy, and I am sure many other tragedies similar, would have not happened in the state of Connecticut.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further before we vote? The gentleman from the 99th.

MR. EARLE; (99th)

Mr. Speaker, I too endorse this legislation, and I might say to the gentleman from the 1st that this Department was very seriously considered, and I had many conversations with Dr. Marsh about this subject, and I read his report. It became a matter of what we could do with the limited personnel resources we had available to us, and rather than do it in a fashion which would not do credit to these young people who need help, we just could not come up with a workable scheme. Believe me, I investigated the Federal funding of this. I investigated all avenues, and as I say, we had many conversations with Dr. Marsh in this vein. It was impossible at that time for us to do anything, and I am most happy to endorse this, since basically it

Saturday, May 31, 1969

247

mec

isn't going to cost a great deal of money. What you are talking about here is nothing. You are going to be transferring people from one Department to another. You are not talking about large appropriations. Let's not get into that area. We would like to have done it. If I had your resources available, I would have had it too, but unfortunately I will get there, but right now I did not have it. I am glad right at the moment that we have this.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further before we vote? The gentleman from the 62nd.

MR. BERBERICH: (62nd)

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill, and basically, the reason for rising is on two particular cases I have represented quite a few juveniles in Juvenile Court, and I think if you represented a child who is charged with attempted murder, age 13, and you represented a child who spent an entire night with some adult male, age 13, you go home that night and sit down at the table and you look across at your daughter who is age 13, you realize the significance of this bill.

THE SPEAKER:

Will you remark further before we vote? The gentleman from the 130th.

MR. MERLY: (130th)

Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendous piece of legislation which the people in my District, as well as throughout the state, will welcome. I think in the long run it may be one of the most important pieces of legislation we pass. It will help solve the narcotics problem and the increase

Saturday, May 31, 1969

248

mec

in crime rate because we are getting at these problem children at a time when we can help them.

THE SPEAKER:

Are we ready to vote? All those in favor indicate by saying Aye. Those opposed? The bill is PASSED.

THE CLERK:

Page 15. Calendar 1329. House Bill No. 5616. An Act concerning Retirement of Certain Employees of the State Police and Correctional Institutions and Correctional Centers. To be reconsidered.

THE SPEAKER:

The Clerk has directed the attention of the House to Calendar 1329, which is House Bill No. 5616, File 1454, the first item on page 15. Debate was begun earlier. An Amendment was offered. It was then passed temporarily. The gentleman from the 1st.

MR. KENNELLY: (1st)

Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that I requested that the matter be passed retaining at the time. At this time I would like to withdraw my motion for passed retaining unless there is objection from any one member.

THE SPEAKER:

Is there any objection?

MR. KENNELLY: (1st)

Then I would withdraw my motion that the matter be passed retaining, and I ask the Clerk to call the matter.

THE CLERK:

Calendar 1329. House Bill No. 5616. An Act concerning Retirement of Certain Employees of the State Police and Correctional Institutions and

JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS

PUBLIC WELFARE
HUMANE INSTITUTIONS

1969

TUESDAY

MARCH 4, 1969

WE also have in Danbury a group called Day Tard. A group to aid the retarded who are parents and friends of the retarded and they do a tremendous amount of work in this area and this bill will enable them to work in conjunction with the state in this center to be built in the Bridgewater area. Thank you.

Edith B. Cook: I am from the Child Welfare Association. About group homes the association supports this wholeheartedly and I do not want to go over any of the arguments that the other speakers have brought up, I know you haven't time but you may remember that in Waterbury a short time ago there were a group of girls who were living in a kind of hotel or boarding house and the newspapers and the citizens of Waterbury got into a terrific stew about it but the community had no cure for this and this was because it was impossible to find the proper kind of foster home or institution for these girls and I do happen to know also that two sisters that are living in an apartment in New Haven and they have no supervision they are in their late teens and this is not the most desirable way to bring them up and I hope very much that you will consider this and maybe it is expensive but the welfare department is paying for these youngsters anyway and I feel that the department itself and the youngsters and all of us will be much happier if they happen to be brought up in a little better situation.

Chairma Dupont; Any other speakers on 6341? 6344?

Mr. McKay: I am here for the greater Hartford Community Council and I will try to do this as quickly as possible as there are other speakers on this. I think that this is one of the most important areas for concern for this committee. This is for the establishment of a department of youth services. We are in favor of the concept. There are four bills coming in before the committees. Bill 161 which would strengthen the Youth Commission. Bill 387 which would put the Youth Commission under the department of Community Affairs. Bill 6251 which would also strengthen the present Youth Commission and 6715 which is the bill being submitted by the Commission of Criminal Justice for a Youth Authority in the state. I hope the committee has this. We want to see a department of Children and Youth in the State. We would suggest that the various parties and interest get together. We feel and I am not only speaking for the Community Council, I am also speaking personally now as a former Juvenile court official as a trustee of a school for boys. We would like to see this put under one umbrella with seed money to begin with. We feel that Dr. Marsh's report and Wayne Musies report can be put together and they have discussed this among themselves, put together under one umbrella and with an appointment of a Youth Commissioner and seed money to get it started. I know you cannot underwrite a new department in this time and age.

It is necessary and all of us that have been in the youth field for years feel that this is essential in this session. I think it is one of the positive and productive things that could come out of this session. All they are suggesting is that the parties get together and do this under an umbrella and if you look at Dr. Marsh's report he mentions 4 or 5 specific areas. We would suggest that if the Commissioner gets in there should be money to get this started in this state. I thought I would draw your attention to the four bills and suggest that they put them together under one umbrella.

Frank Culp: I am the Consultant for the State Commission on Youth services and I would like to second what Mr. McKay has said. The commission would like to have these bills considered as a package rather than individually.

Ellis Tucker: Mr. Chairman I am superintendent of schools in Hartford. I am speaking also as the legislative chairman of the Connecticut Association of Personal administrators. I would like to second the remarks that has been made by the preceding two speakers in regard to 6344. In a sense I think in addressing oneself to this particular bill. It is like addressing yourself to an iceberg because what you see here is a statement of intent the rest of the iceberg is really contained in something like the report already cited by the Governors Committee. In this report I know that there is a recommendation for legislation to create a department of services for children and youth being prepared and submitted to the general assembly, I know that bill is not before you today and I don't know if that bill will be. I am hopeful that it will be. If this comes into being I would make a prediction that there will be several phases involved obviously the first phase is simply to begin the planning process, but once this has been done and once there are certain services that are recommended it will become obvious in this state as early stated by a previous speaker in regard to a specific building that the state of Connecticut has not met its responsibility to Youth for a good many years. As a result of this we are faced by a situation cited by the earlier speaker where there are two institutions at present for youngsters who are emotionally disturbed so that there is not in this state facilities to take care of the needs which means that to have this particular group in operations to study the problems of youth and to begin to decide that there are more things needed to work with. It is a long term process and when we mention the word expensive I realize---- but in time I would think we began to worry about the problems of youth and we are willing to spend money of incarceration and for treatment of youngsters to eliminate the problems in the first place. Thank You.

Rep. Trues: Dr. Tucker you would believe that 6277, the functions of that should be taken out of education and incorporated in this?

S-74

CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS
1969

VOL. 13

PART 7

3074-3658

able report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR PICKETT:

Mr. President, two years ago we passed the probate bill in which we amended the probate fees charged by the various probate courts of the state. At that time, because of lack of experience as to how much money was needed to fund the pension fund in order charges within this same work, it was necessary for us to amend the fees upward, now that we have had a full years experience with these fees and we can now better guess how much money will be coming in annually from the various probate courts.

We have determined that the probate fees in certain areas should be lowered because they were in fact too high. Accordingly, this bill does just that.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the passage of this bill. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1378, File No. 1403. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations on Substitute House Bill No. 6715. An Act concerning the Creation of a Department of Children and Youth Services.

SENATOR PICKETT:

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of the Committees favor-

able report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question now is on the passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR PICKETT:

Mr. President, this bill creates a Department of Children and Youth Services. Within the department will be the Long Lane School and the Connecticut School for Boys and such other facilities as may be established or contracted for by the department.

The department will be organized in three divisions which will give an indication for the purpose of the department. First, a division of the evaluation and placement. Second, the division of institutions and thirdly, the division of community services to assist in municipalities and private agencies to establish, expand and improve their community facilities and programs for children.

The children effected by the department will come from three sources. From the Juvenile Court, from the Department of Corrections and by voluntary admissions. The third source, is rather revolutionary and might be compared to the voluntary admission in the mental hospitals and children who are having problems can voluntarily admit themselves to the program.

This is an excellent bill and in fact, in all the measures of this session have been evaluated, I believe that this bill certainly will be among the first.

In my mind Mr. President, this bill represents more than the consensus of the report of the three commissions. It improves

June 3, 1969

their recommendations and without doubt the finest bills which we will be called upon to pass in this session of this legislature. Mr. President, truly, this is an excellent bill and I'm proud to move its passage.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further. Senator Hull from the 24th District.

SENATOR HULL:

Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from the 14th.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Schaffer, the Senator from the 24th yields.

SENATOR SCHAFFER:

Mr. President, I rise to support this bill and I would like to pay particular tribute to Dr. Larmarch of the Connecticut Department of Mental Health who chaired the Governor's study committee on problems of youthful wards of the state.

This is a bill, I think, marks an important beginning for the state of Connecticut in terms of an initial focusing on the problems of some of our youths. Attention to youth services in Connecticut is long overdue and it is time that we begun to devote both time, money and energy to some of these problems. I think its an excellent bill and the Judiciary Committee should be complimented in bringing it out and I hope that it marks a beginning for which may ultimately become a special department for youth services.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hull from the 24th District.

Page 33

June 3, 1969

SENATOR HULL:

Mr. President, on behalf of the minority I am glad to give strong support to this bill and it will certainly put Connecticut in the fore front of measures designed to headoff youthful delinquency before it occurs.

THE CHAIR:

Any further remarks on this bill. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The aye's have it and the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1386, File No. 1410. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Cities and Boroughs on House Bill No. 8689. An Act concerning Clarification and Expansion of the Power of the Town of South Windsor Relating to Its Sewerage System to Exempt such Town from Certain Provisions of Section 7-253.

SENATOR PALMER:

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of the Committees favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR PALMER:

Mr. President, this bill will permit the Town of South Windsor to pay for its sewerage system by making assessments of service charges or connection charges. It gives them the right to lien properties involved and in some instances, to defer the collection of this assessment. Its a good bill.