

<b>Act Number</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Total Number of Committee Pages</b>	<b>Total Number of House Pages</b>	<b>Total Number of Senate Pages</b>
PA 71-693		523	21	1	1
<u>Committee Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 51-58</li> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 39-40</li> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 68-74</li> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 79-80</li> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 84</li> <li>• <i>Corrections, Welfare &amp; Human Institutions</i> 86</li> </ul>				<u>House Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5679</li> </ul>	<u>Senate Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2660-2662</li> </ul>

**H-120**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
1971**

**VOL. 14  
PART 13  
5555-6226**

Tuesday, June 8, 1971 125.

MBS

Calendar No. 1430, Senate Bill No. 523, An Act Defining Dependent Child for Purposes of Temporary Public Assistance.

MICHAEL COLUCCI, 88th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the committee's joint favorable report and passage of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark?

MICHAEL COLUCCI, 88th District:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, what this bill does is to protect the needy child under 18 years of age or who is under age 21 and is in full attendance at a secondary school, a technical school, a college or a state accredited job training program. This happens when the child has been deprived of his parental support or care by means of death. It's a good bill, Mr. Speaker, we urge its passage.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further remarks on the bill? If not, all those in favor indicate by saying aye, opposed? The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Page 28, Calendar No. 1658, Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1186, An Act Concerning Revenue Sources for the State of Connecticut, as amended by Senate Amendment Schedules "B", "C", "D" and "E".

ROLLIN METTLER, 96th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move for suspension for immediate considera-

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**SENATE**

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THE CHAIR:

The question is on passage. Will you remark further? If not all those in favor of passage signify by saying aye. AYE. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

The next item on page 7, Cal. 861, File 1213 Favorable report of the joint standing committee on Appropriation on S.B. 523, An Act Defining Dependent Child For Purposes of Temporary Public Assistance.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Houley.

SENATOR HOULEY:

Mr. President, I urge the, I move the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark?

SENATOR HOULEY:

Mr. President, again/<sup>the</sup>money that this particular measure will cost is in the large budget within the Welfare Department. It makes changes in the Section of the law of the 1969 Supplements. Clarifies the definition of a dependent child for the purposes of temporary public assistance. It makes the same word changes basically as S.B. 203. Except that it makes provisions for the payment of public assistance in a situation where there is partial or total unemployment. I urge passage.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on passage. Will you remark further?

Senator Gunther.

SENATOR GUNTHER:

Mr. President, I'd rise to oppose this bill. Actually under the new law, covering the full time attendance of the secondary school and college and that. This more or less constitutes another form of scholarship. And I believe that we're talking

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this term as to the broadening of the scholarship coverages and that sort of thing. And I do think that is could very well take and be another additional subsidy to these people under this particular change in the law.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Hammer.

SENATOR HAMMER:

Mr. President, I rise to support this bill. I think it is a very good step forward. It isn't exactly a step forward because we had it once before. I have had a number of people in my constituency who have been welfare ADC children. And they struggled unbelievably, to get an education, college education. And to have their welfare benefits cut off at the age of 18, is really unconscionable. I think its a very splendid bill. And I do support it.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Ciarlone.

SENATOR CIARLONE:

Mr. President, members of the circle. As Chairman of the Committee on Corrections, Welfare and Humane Institutions, I am very happy to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Hammer.

To make it very brief, I certainly want to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Hammer. In testimony in our committee, this was certainly an area that we felt legislation was necessary. We feel in discouraging children to stay in school at the age of 18 and up to 21 would certainly be a disservice to them. We felt it was a good step and we still think it is so. And I recommend passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Dowd.

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SENATOR DOWD:

Mr. President, I rise to support this measure also. It seems to me that we are spending millions of dollars to try to break the cycle of poverty. Through our poverty programs. And a variety of manpower programs. And it further seems to me Mr. President that the bill, the law of the state of Connecticut as it stands present a positive disincentive, to the youngsters to pursue their studies, and is counter productive. I would hope that this bill would pass.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Finney.

SENATOR FINNEY:

Mr. President, I am very glad this bill has come before this Senate and I agree with Senator Ciarlone that we put a lot of work in on this. And if we are ever to allow people to become self supporting the least we can do is to see that he gets an education. And I think this is a very important bill. And I hope it will pass.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Houley.

SENATOR HOULEY:

Mr. President, concluding I am delighted to announce for those who may not be aware of it, that the good Senator Finney, to my right has spent immeasurable time on this. She was very upset in the last session when we did in fact lower the age to 18. And after a very long of period of work, its paid off. And I am sure that we will pass this bill because of Senator Finney and people like her's concern for the welfare of young people.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? If not all those in favor of passage of the bill, signify by saying aye. AYE. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. The bill is passed.

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**CORRECTIONS,  
WELFARE  
AND  
HUMANE  
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Lawrence Morastike, Chief of Social Services (cont'd): considered at that time for adoptive parents. We had been in the process of identifying other families and there are more families than there are infants or young white infants to be considered as adoptive families. Subsequently, we placed this child in July of 1970 with an adoptive family and that child has been with that family since that time. In fact, the adoption has been finalized in Probate Court as we feel that there would be a definite conflict of jurisdiction and perhaps some constitutional questions if this bill were passed. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: Are there any other statements regarding this particular bill before we get into programs Commissioner?

Commissioner White: We have no more. I think we could go— we will be perfectly happy to go on the regular schedule and we have prepared statements for the committee.

Chairman Brown: Why don't you proceed? We would certainly appreciate your summarizing any prepared statements and make them available to the committee so that it can become a part of the record.

Commissioner White: Right, this can be done jointly with my staff. If you would like to proceed on this list Representative Brown I would be very happy we will comment as we see fit.

Chairman Brown: Right. I don't think they can hear you very much.

Commissioner White: If you would like to proceed on the list we will comment as we go.

Chairman Brown: Yes, I would like you to proceed with your list and we will comment and follow you. I think we could begin with #1 and that's #5003.

Commissioner White: We have no statement on that.

Chairman Brown: No statement on that. Why don't we go from that point.

Commissioner White: All right. #5006 — That's the same really — that's for the towns to take

Chairman Brown: Can you bring the microphone a little closer — because it's not picking up —

Commissioner White: This ... we would rather have this mixed with Senate Bill #523 which which is Senator Finney's and also Bill #202 and Senator Lieberman and #203 and Mr. Morastika will speak on this.

Lawrence Morastika, Chief of Social Services: We have prepared some estimates for the committee which we will share with you in relation to the assumption of this program again by the state. You will recall at one time that the State Welfare Department did administer this program and it was transferred to the towns by public action #720 in the last General Assembly. Our estimates are that if this program were assumed by the state completely,

Lawrence Morastika, Chief of Social Services: that there would be a total of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in savings for the towns. We would be able to pick up additional Federal reimbursement -- an -- a substantial amount of Federal reimbursement -- about a million dollars if this program were taken over by the State again. However, I do want to make one distinction and that is that at the present time the state does not share in the cost of administration as far as the towns are concerned. If the state assumes the administration of this program then, of course, there would be one hundred per cent assumption of administrative cost in the process. That's one reason why the total net savings to the towns is relatively small. Now, this program is an expensive one to administer. The case load must be much smaller than with other programs. There are Federal requirements for training and work that must be met which requires staffing and there are more frequent visits required by the Federal Government in other programs. Therefore, relatively speaking it's more expensive. In addition we are dealing with larger families so that the average cost per case is also higher. I believe the summary that we prepared at the request of Senator Oliver which we will share with you with summarize effectively for the committee the financial impact of this bill and we support the transfer back to the state of this program.

Chairman Brown: Thank you Mr. Morastika. Are there any other bills that you would care to comment on before we go to our public?

Commissioner White: We would like to go along if we may to #5007 which is the next one. We urge the rejection of this act I'd like Mr. Bauer to speak if he would please.

M. B. Bauer, Chief of the Bureau of Business Administration in the State Welfare Department and we have a prepared statement for the committee in regard to this proposed bill.

Passage of this bill could result in the loss of considerable revenue to the State of Connecticut. Revenues generated from the lien provisions currently in force were in excess of \$330,000 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1970. In addition, we anticipate a considerable increase in lien revenues when the impact of Section 17-83E, which was passed during the 1969 session, takes full effect. The provisions of 17-83e allows the State to make recovery to the extent of aid given to cases involving Aid to Dependent Children when the real property is liquidated.

In addition to the loss of revenue which would result from the passage of this bill, the lien provisions are not in our opinion demeaning. The Welfare Department renders service to the recipient by keeping the house in good repair, which protects the equity of said recipient in the property. We are also strengthening the family life of the AFDC recipient by keeping the family in the house, which is consistent with the goals of the AFDC Program.

The Agency, by virtue of the lien provisions currently in force, protect the recipient from foreclosure when possible. The Department also attempts to prevent subsequent attachments by constructors, furniture companies, etc., who attempt to foreclose with the intent of buying out prior

Lucy Hammer, Senator from the 12th District:

I want to speak very briefly Mr. Chairman on two bills -- Senate Bill #480 which incidentally was introduced by Senator Lieberman and myself and is so printed on the bill. I don't know what happened in the bulletin. It shows other people.

I want to speak in support of this bill -- strong support -- you will hear some more expert people on it and this bill revolves around the problem of disturbed children who are placed in foster homes where the foster parents cannot cope with them. They go from one home to another. The child is obviously marred and usually ends in an institution. I've had some personal experience with this and it is a tragic and traumatic experience for the child and for everyone concerned. The proposal here is to train a small number of foster parents and pay them a small salary so that hopefully the child could remain in one home and receiving understanding and effective care. It could be a very practical and economical program and I hope you will give it consideration. It represents savings to the state and savings, most especially, to these children.

I would like to speak also with great feeling about S. B. #523 which would restore the age limit under which a child can receive help under Aid to Dependent Children Program -- would restore to 21 -- if he's still full-time in school or college, rather than the 18 years of age which he -- which is called for now. I have had experience with this situation a number of time with my own constituents , and let me tell you that if a child whocis on welfare program awards manages to stay in school after 18 and particularly if that child manages to go to college, it represents a terrific struggle for that family and he should be helped for the sake of the child. But, there's more to it than that, for the sake of the state too and society. It is our policy to try to move welfare clients off the welfare rolls. This is the very best chance for a young person who has this much determination to try to get an education -- we should certainly help him for this two-fold good -- the child and society.

While I'm on my feet I want to speak very briefly about Bill #5262 which has to do with stepfathers. You know there's something quite wrong here in my opinion. Under the common law the stepparent is not responsible for the stepchildren and I can't quite see how we can write special law and say that because the children are on welfare he then becomes responsible. I do hope you will-- give serious consideration for this point of view. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: Senator Lieberman - any comments you have to make this morning?

Senator Lieberman: Thank you and I want to be brief -- in spite of the pile of papers that I have in front of me because I think that this morning is really the opportunity for the public to be heard by your committee, but, let me make a few general comments. I was not in the legislature as you know and perhaps it's unfair of me to criticize of

Senator Lieberman (cont'd):

particular act of the legislature, but, it does seem to me the repressive climate -- the climate of misunderstanding that exists in this state toward welfare resulted in the passage of an omnibus welfare act by the last legislature which probably should go down as a monument and one of the most tragically misguided and inhumane pieces of legislation that has ever been enacted in the state. This act was not only lacking in compassion and a sense of respect for human decency. It simply lacked common sense. And so it has gone counter in some instances. The rhetoric that people used against welfare. For instance, the incentive earnings bill -- we hear so often this common this common rhetoric of let's get the people off of welfare. Well, here's a bill -- program that was aimed at encouraging people to earn money -- to go out to work -- to help themselves in what the ceiling enacted by the legislature last year did to remove those incentives. I hope that in that area and all the other areas that your committee will lead the way in writing some -- righting some of the tragic wrongs that were committed in that act.

I want to mention a few other points briefly. One has to do with S. B. #480 - Concerning the training of special foster parents for special care. Senator Hammer spoke eloquently on the bill and I support it.

I feel the same way about the aid to cities that are now forced to bear an unfair burden in terms of welfare costs, a burden that necessitates increasing property taxes at the local level and that's most unfair system of taxation whether you are a property owner or tenant so I hope you take that burden off of the local government.

Incidentally, in regard to the omnibus welfare act, I'm unable to be here before your committee tomorrow but I wanted to say just in a sentence, that I hope that you will also right the wrong that were done in the eligibility requirements under the Title 19 Medicaid program. I -- the more I look at the income requirements that were set the more angry I get and I hope that you will change that system.

Finally, there are a whole series of bills that I've put in myself with other people including Senator Ciarlone that have to do with a change in the state's attitude toward foster parents -- recognizing the tremendously important service that foster parents do -- the tremendously positive results that their work can have on the people of tomorrow. <sup>SB</sup>I regret very much that the Welfare Department has opposed ~~Public Act~~ #729. This is a very difficult human area but let me just read the statement of purpose which we've put in. I am sure that Representatives of the Foster Parents for Progress and other groups here today will speak more eloquently on it but this bill aims to allow a child's foster parents a hearing before the welfare department to seek termination of the natural parents' rights where there has been only minimal contact between the natural parents and the child for four years or more. In many cases foster parents really become the natural parents of the child and this bill will allow that right to be asserted and would protect the human and emotional investment for both the child and foster parents that has gone into this family situation.

Senator Lieberman (cont'd):

You have a very difficult task before you. This is not an easy area in some ways because of the unpopularity of the field of welfare. You have a difficult job to do politically. But, I urge you as deeply as I can to do what it is necessary and what is right and I am confident that you will. Thank you.

Chairman Ciarlone:

Thank you Senator Lieberman. I'm sure that my committee is mindful of the shortcomings during the past 69th Assembly. I am very optimistic that some of those shortcomings will be corrected.

I would like to call Mr. and Mrs. Gertrude McCoil -- if I pronounce that properly. Will you please testify.

At this point I will turn this meeting back to Representative Other Brown.

Mrs. Gertrude McCall representing W. R. A. P. state-wide organization of welfare recipients are people and also Vice President of Hartford's Chapter of Welfare Mothers:

H. B. #5259 Mr. Chairman -- we strongly oppose this bill for the following reasons. It is very inadequate -- no provisions for emergencies. It's differences in rents and other costs does not allow sufficient standards. Before you can even think of a flat grant you must first think of a rent control commission or something like that. It also must have a provision for the rise in the cost of living. When the cost of living rises this grant must be increased. I don't see how we could reflect household needs if for a family of four the allowance would be \$300.00. I couldn't even begin to meet the needs of my two children with this amount of money. This applies to a large family.

H. B. #5260 -- The Welfare Work Incentive Program -- should be brought up to Federal regulations because the ceiling of 266-67 hurts many of our mothers and stops them from working because of the work incentive seal.

S. B. #736 is also the work incentive-- this we strongly support. This would give a chance to get completely off welfare and this ceiling price should never have been put on in the first place -- at least according to Federal regulations.

H. B. #5657 and 5684 which is welfare fraud -- why should we oppose it? Why should we be punished because if a worker forgets to enter in our records that we reported our working and wages -- this is an administration error -- not ours. Have you ever thought of why some people don't report employment? Consider the fact that the welfare allowance is inadequate in meeting the family's needs most of the time I should say -- what is the mother to do -- let the family starve -- become a prostitute or what have you. What would you do if it depended on your family to live?

Mrs. Gertrude McCall (cont'd):

H. B. #7048 — We need this bill because of the following reasons:

A Welfare plan under the present law does not have a right put rent in escrow with a legal representative when she has a complaint. Welfare will still pay the landlord even though he has violated a legal lease according to the bill that was passed last year. I know this because this personally has happened to me. Because I've always paid my rent up until now. I would have the right for my day in court if I was not a welfare recipient. Welfare just recently wanted to hold my whole damn check because of the problem with the landlord. What was my family and I/suppose to eat on — until I raised a little ruckus it — with some of my representatives and calling the Commissioner's office, etc.. I got my check in order to buy my food stamps — thank God.

Then I also have a few brief statements on some bills that were mentioned before.

On H. B. #5738 — S. B. #729 — we oppose this. Children should have a right later in life to keep what is rightfully theirs. Why should they have to be liable because the mother had to go on welfare — in the first place to bring them up?

On H. B. #5262 — we oppose very strongly. We feel the regular father should be held liable and not the stepfather. What opportunity does that give us to become married again and I also have a memo by a woman who was supposed to speak and had to leave.

Mrs. Alice Doyle, 336 Mountain Road — completely opposed to #5259 as disgracefully inadequate.

Chairman Brown: Thank you very much. I would also suggest it would be helpful to our committee and to the subcommittee that — Your — you're from the committee of ...

Mrs. McCall: Welfare Recipients are People — and I almost forgot two bills which are very important on foster children.

S. B. #523 to restore to the age of 21 we support.

S. B. #729 we support the foster parents rights. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: I would suggest that even at some subsequent time you may want to officially and in handwriting let us know what you fought and — for and against. May I also — it is my fair duty to tell you that it is 12:30. We must leave these chambers and so that as a result I am asking the members of the committee to continue to restrain themselves from any lengthy questions so that we can hear as many people as possible — because I'm sure the legislators will want to hear the people.

Secondly, will you please — since you are sitting at legislator's desks

Chairman Brown (cont'd):

there may be a lot of material on the desk — which may only be pertinent to legislators, I would hope that you would not disturb any of the material of the legislators.

The other thing, will you please also try to keep your remarks short, speak loud enough for our machine and make available any written statements to our secretary.

I would like now to call on Mr. Dick Seussman from the City of Hartford.

Dick Seussman;

I'm here today to speak as Chairman of Legislative Action Committee, a recently formed group by the Democratic party to work for passage of legislation that will benefit all our city's citizens. The particular bill I want to talk about is H. B. #6532 which states that it shall become the responsibility of the State Welfare Commissioner to administer and pay all Municipal Welfare Programs. This bill has been introduced by seven State Representatives from Hartford. It's supported by the Hartford City Council and the administration within the city of Hartford. The work of this committee has just begun and I will not be able to give all of the supporting information but I hope to get your permission to offer supplemental supporting material when our research is completed.

As you well know the present Welfare system in America is hardly a system at all today, but, a curious amalgam of national, state, and local programs. In Connecticut, the state is reimbursed by the Federal Government for fifty per cent of its welfare spending and then the state in turn reimburses the city for approximately seventy five per cent of its spending. This pattern is founded — based on an unstated and unfounded assumption that welfare is first a city problem because most people who receive aid live in the city. Then it's based on the assumption that it then becomes a state and then a national problem. We, in fact believe that welfare is primarily a national problem and given the present state organization — state and organization of the economy there will be at any time a certain percentage of our people who are not unwilling to work but who are unable to support themselves. Many of these people, especially those living on very low wages, or near starvation grants in the south come to states like Connecticut seeking a better life. Usually, they settle in cities where jobs opportunities seem greatest. Then after residing in the state for some time and seeking employment these people sometimes apply for welfare. At first under the city's general assistance program and later under the state's or Federally funded program.

It seems to me that the national government must ultimately assume the burden of this program. In the interim however, Connecticut should follow the leads of forty other states in taking over the funding of the entire welfare operation within the state. Most recently, Massachusetts did this. If Connecticut were to do so a great deal of administrative overlap and confusion would be eliminated. The quality of the assistance would be improved and Hartford as well as other cities would be relieved of

Dick Seussman (cont'd):

an enormous financial burden, although nowhere near the full bulk of that burden would fall on the state. The Hartford City Council in its excellent report contends that the state could have many of those welfare recipient on general assistance covered by Federal categories and that with the full use of existing Federal regulations and recent amendments to the Social Security Act, the state could take over the general assistance at far less than the present net cost to towns or even to Hartford alone. The Hartford City Council estimates that if the state were to administer both state and local assistance, increase Federal reimbursement and savings in state administrative costs would result in no increase cost to the state.

Chairman Brown:

Excuse me, Mr. Seussman, I was wondering how much near the end you are.

Mr. Seussman: I am just finishing up.

Chairman Brown: I would appreciate it if you would summarize your statement and make it available.

Mr. Seussman: Yes, the Legislative Action Committee does support H. B. #6532 and we will give you further supporting information. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: Thank you very much.

I believe the next person on the list is Dr. Elizabeth Penner of the Greater Hartford Community Council. I would also like to indicate that to expedite time if the others would take the microphone to my right and left, Eileen Greene and Alice P. Doyle -- I believe.

Elizabeth Penner, Greater Hartford Community Council:

I will leave with the clerk a complete list of the bills which we are supporting.

At this time I would like to discuss only four general issues. The first one is adequate grant levels -- flat grants. The second is subsidize adoption. The third one is one hundred per cent state reimbursement from Municipal Welfare payments. The fourth one is the repeal of the Public Act #730. The fifth one is the Welfare Department purchases service.

First, the adequate grant level -- the 5259 has been discussed at several times here today and I'd like to point out that that bill has two aspects -- a system of raising grant levels and keeping with the cost of living and a flat grant system of payment. I think it's useful to consider these two items separately. I want to talk about the cost of living for a moment.

In the last session of the legislature and earlier too, the Commissioner with the Cost of Living Commission has had responsibility for raising grant levels and keeping with the Cost of Living. These mechanisms have not been entirely successful. The source of funds for Welfare funds is not the Commission, nor Commissioner, but the Welfare Committee

Elizabeth Penner (cont'd):

or the Legislature Appropriations Committee. It's been difficult to discover who can deal with the problem of adequate grants -- the Legislature, The Cost of Living Commission or the Commissioner.

Now, H. B. #5259 -- makes a process of grant adjustment clear and mandatory -- authority is located in the Commissioner's office, the Federal Consumer Price Index is the base. However, the bill deals with fact that the appropriations come from the Legislature and legislative action. When making it possible for grants to be reduced proportionately, not only when the cost of living goes down, but when the appropriations are insufficient. It's this aspect of the bill to which we object. The actual grant level in this bill are based on the national income guidelines of last year which the Commissioner earlier this morning pointed out. The cost of living is now higher. Also, the Bureau of Labor Statistics stated that the cost of living in Connecticut is about nine per cent above the national average so that if we use national figures for our basis we will be underestimating the actual cost of living in this state. Any legislative which defines adequate grant levels must take these facts into account -- more data must be considered and I would support the Commissioner's suggestion that time be available to the Department of Welfare to study this issue.

Now, on flat grants, the flat grants are based in the bill on a family size. There's no emergency or special grant features with the specific exception of Medicaid. The grant covers all re-occurrent items in the budget. This plan eliminates the demeaning process of application for special grants for special need and also saves, as the Commissioner pointed out, the department costs and processing evaluating special grant applications. Flat grants can be a good thing if they are an adequate level and if there is a provision for emergency. The grant levels in this bill are not adequate and they do not provide for emergencies. We believe in the concept of flat grants -- urging that it be adopted with some of the following conditions. All new recipients be brought up to standards -- for clothes, appliances and furniture. The grant level be equal to one hundred per cent of the standards of health and decency. We oppose that portion authorizing grants to be lowered if the appropriations in the Welfare Department are inadequate. We do strongly endorse the intention of making clear the responsibility for determining grant levels. We therefore urge that the Commissioner have the responsibility to establishing the defined standards of health and decency and that the legislature have the responsibility of determining the per cent to be given to needy families. We unequivocally urge that the Legislature require the Commissioner to give one hundred per cent of the defined standards of health and decency. The Council favors flat grants but not at the expense of adequate grants.

Now, the next issue -- these are all much more brief -- subsidized adoption -- now this is S. B. #387 and has already been spoken to this morning and we support this -- the possibility of families adopting children on a subsidized adoption basis. We also support one hundred per cent reimbursement of the state for the municipal welfare payment. This is what the Commissioner this morning was referring to as the general assistance categories.

Elizabeth Penner (cont'd):

Under Four -- under the repeal of Public Act #730 we also agree that it is one of the most repressive welfare acts that has been passed and we would suggest that this -- that it be repealed. For example, there is H. B. #5006 and S. B. #523 which would aid to families of unemployed parents to be returned to the state which makes it possible for the state to be eligible for Federal reimbursement which has been mentioned this morning. That school children be eligible for aid 19 to 20 year old school children and it was also suggested that college children be eligible.

And then S. B. #94 -- increases from \$600 to \$1,000 the amount of allowable reserves for funeral for recipients of old age assistance -- aids to the blind and aids to the disabled.

One final thing that the Welfare Department should be we think empowered to purchase service from private agencies instead of having to provide these services. Thank you very much.

Chairman Brown: Thank you. May I reiterate that if you do have a written make it available to the secretary. Will you please summarize the statements rather than to read the statement because we will make the statement a part of the record.

Eileen Greene, Litchfield - President of Connecticut Child Welfare Association:

I'm speaking in favor of S. B. #387 and that's concerning subsidized adoptions. The Connecticut Child Welfare Association is strongly backing this bill to allow subsidized adoption in the state. This bill has meaning both in terms of bettering human lives and of saving the taxpayer's dollars. As to the meaning in terms of human lives -- it would give a child now committed to the Commissioner of Welfare -- a permanent home and give to the adopting parents the full satisfaction and complete responsibility of parenthood. In terms of savings to the taxpayer it would mean a short term subsidy to the adopting parents to provide for a special identifying need instead of the state supporting the same child with the same special need to the age of 18 or 21. I urge your favorable report of the Committee for this bill.

I'm also speaking for Bill #5003. This bill would repeal Section #1783 of the General Statutes. As it now stands public assistance is discontinued when a beneficiary is convicted of fraud. Unless they are blind or disabled most of the people considered here would be mothers. We would like to ask what would happen if a mother of a family is dropped from A. D. C. under these provisions. How can her children be fed, clothed and housed. Would they not suffer more than she would? This situation would be corrected with passage of Bill #5003.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.

Mrs. N. LeRoy from Madison (cont'd):

study we have consulted with several members of the Welfare Department, both in Connecticut and in other states, and both foster parents, psychologists and other professionals. We have studied the reports of other pilot projects. All reports and conversation substantiate our findings and most back this proposed bill. It is CCWA's help and the voice of Connecticut's children that salaried foster parents can be approved. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: We will have J. Cook and then Representative Beck.

Jean Cook, Middletown, Connecticut and I am prepared to speak in support of Bill #480.

As a member of the Federal Connecticut Chapter of CCWA and a taxpayer in the State of Connecticut who is mindful both of our current fiscal crisis and burgeoning welfare costs I urge you to seriously consider the bill before you. With natural families unable to care for them and foster families whose own experiences often do not equip them to handle the traumatic emotional experiences of the children in their care, today's foster children often find themselves in a hopeless situation. These foster children are desperately in need of foster parents who are selected to meet their individual needs, two - tain them in many areas of child development with emphasis on the needs of foster children and three adequately remunerated for the highly skilled job for which they are expected to do. Even this -- even though this pilot project calls for operating on a higher pay scale, it is still possible to save many thousands of dollars simply by keeping children out of institutions which are frequently non-curing, expensive ways of coping with the problem child, and placing them into homes designed to meet their needs. We believe that it is possible to substantially improve the quality of the services rendered to the foster child while at the same time reducing the long term cost of this care to the state. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: If you have a statement be sure that the secretary gets it. Representative Beck.

Representative Beck: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I very much appreciate your taking time just before your break and too in the public portion where the legislators are not supposed to speak. I have several bills. I'll summarize the statements with the committee.

Mrs. Janet Billy -

First and perhaps one of the most crucial bills the Connecticut Child Welfare bills is interested in is S. B. #523. Let me make one statement for all of these bills and say that I am Mrs. Janet Billy testifying before you today as the Connecticut Director of the Connecticut Child Welfare Association, a nonprofit statewide citizens committee whose sole concern for 52 years has been updating of services of all children of Connecticut. We owe allegiance to no state department, no agencies, inaudable ---

Combine S. B. INAUDABLE --- 203 and 523. These bills have been studied by the citizens of our association and I have authorized by the Board of Directors to make the following statement:

Mrs. Janet Billy (cont'd):

INAUDABLE -- Item #1 -- the continued eligibility under 21 years of age of a child under AFDC family if he is full time in school. Education is one of the only proven methods of breaking up the cycle of poverty. Children in AFDC families must be not only permitted but encouraged to attend school through high school and beyond if possible. To deny education to these children is to encourage yet another family to become a welfare family. Further it makes a mockery of our community colleges and the technical schools in the State of Connecticut that we're so proud of.

Now in my public speaking engagements I have been pretty frequently asked why the ineligibility of the child 19-21 would make him drop out of school. I'm prepared to answer questions on that -- they are technical questions and I presume the committee has that information at hand. If they do not I will be happy either at this time or at a later date to answer them.

The second item -- Reinstatement of the Unemployed Parent Program-- We feel it is essential to reinstate this program to arbitrarily set up a situation to which a man can better feed and clothe his family by deserting them is indeed a very expensive program. If he chooses not to desert under the very -- current law then his family will apply to their town of residence for general assistance which receives seventy five per cent in state funds and no Federal matching funds at all. At the risk of encouraging your displeasure I am going to tell you a very short story which vividly describes the situation we find ourselves in with the unemployed parent program.

It was described in a book by ??? in the early 1940's called the Triumph of Willy Pond. Willy was an undereducated, unemployed, husband and father of several children -- a no good. The family was destitute. They lived in a shack, frequently going through garbage pails for food, stealing and the children rarely attended school because they had no clothing. But one day it was discovered that Willy had tuberculosis. He was sent to a sanatorium. Then his family became eligible for public welfare. Suitable quarters were found, food was available and the children were clothed and they attended school. In about two years Willy recovered and welcomed home with great joy. Immediately Public Welfare was discontinued and shortly we find the family in its old shack, destitute, returning to the garbage pails, the children no longer attended the school. Now Connecticut changed that story to a happy ending in 1965. Rewrote the Willy Pond story-- INAUDABLE

And now in 1971 once again has the opportunity to make a happy end for that story.

In conclusion permit me to remind you that both of these items receive fifty to seventy five per cent matching funds. The continued eligibility of AFDC children in school full time and the aid to families of unemployed parents are fiscally sound, contributes to the development of healthy children whose chances of becoming productive adults are enhanced. We urge a favorable report on 202, 203, embodied in 523.

Mrs. Janet Billy (cont'd):

Bill #480 -- You have heard members from the citizens who have studied -- citizens from the Connecticut Child Welfare Association -- who have studied the matter of salaried foster parents. You have heard their research and their analysis and that is the bill before you #480.

As the executive director I feel it is my responsibility to add to their comments from my experience with public child welfare worker and my eight years of working with the Connecticut State Welfare Department and I should to address myself briefly to these aspects.

Why, in a time of financial crisis are we asking for money for a demonstration program? The answer is simple. We believe that in adopting the project we will save money. Two -- why were CCWA proposed and allowed to do this when administratively it already lies within the power of the Welfare Commissioner? This answer is not simple. Because it is rooted in attitudes -- for some reason the general public feels that it is wrong and sinful to make money by parents of children in their own homes. The same public seems to feel its okay to pay social workers, institutional aids, or cottage parents eighty to one hundred fifty dollars a week to work a 35 to 48 hour week. Those people have all the fringe benefits. They have sick leave and insurance. Foster parents work a 168 hours week at nineteen fifty a week and I'd have to pay twenty one dollars a week to board my dog in a kennel.

At that rate the Welfare Department cannot compel foster parents to attend training sessions or to invest themselves in the learning experience in order to give the informed love to troubled children, because current practices are frequently blurred and uneven regarding the supervision of foster homes. This bill requires orientation, training and regular experienced supervision. With this project the Welfare Commissioner can introduce a totally new concept in Connecticut. The training and salaried foster homes.

I'm convinced that there are many women in the labor market today who are working primarily to put money aside for their children's education and supplement their husband's income. I'm further convinced that many of these women who are educated would rather earn money while being a wife and mother than any other way. Our study shows that recruitment of salaried foster parents is not difficult and with the specialized training they truly can help these emotionally scarred children. These foster parents would be prepared professional employees, trained with job expectation. I'd like to remind you of one last thing.

Because protective services is more successful in this state than ever before, because we are able to lead children into homes longer than ever before and actually rehabilitate a home while a child is there, those children who are finally removed frequently are more troubled and more scarred than ever we placed when I began my career. I don't want to tell you how long ago that's been.

Mrs. Janet Billy (cont'd):

S. B. #483 -- INAUDIBLE --

The myth that welfare mothers divide up or trade children in order to quality for aid for dependent children cannot be documented. What is significant here is that under state law children must be placed in foster parents -- if one relative is unable by housing, energy or a variety of other reasons to take all of the children up for the example a diseased or disabled sister. I remind you there are no Federal matching funds for children in foster care. The two years that we have lived INAUDIBLE

We urge your favorable consideration of #483.

Subsidized adoption bill has been well covered. My comments I believe would be superfluous to the things that have been stated here.

Let me just say as EXECUTIVE Director of Connecticut Child Welfare Association we support subsidized adoption -- #387.

Now, One bill which we testify against -- #729 introduced by Foster Parents for Progress and that's concerning termination of parental rights.

We have not had the full bill before us. We have had only the Statement of Purpose and we testify on -- against it on this basis. The principles that are implied in the bill are sound. Foster parents should be considered as members of the team which make the decisions relating to children about which only the foster parents INAUDIBLE. There are children who have had only minimal contact with the parents for two or more years should be considered for terminating parental rights, however, to make this a law instead of a policy of the Welfare Department confuses the issue. The law clearly the Welfare Commissioner jurisdiction in these matters. If he is not discharging his duties in the best interest of the child there should be an investigation and the policy corrected. The matter of services under termination of parental rights lies firmly within the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court.

S. B. #729 - confuses and diffuses the law. Thank you.

Chairman Brown: Thank you very much. I see Senator Giarlone has returned. I propose that if we are to act as chairmen as toastmasters we must be experts on up and down.

Senator Ciarlone, Chairman: Thank you very much Representative Brown. Our next speaker is William Harris -- will you step down, identify himself and testify.

Mark Aronson, Attorney for Welfare Recipients are People:

I will briefly summarize our statement for a number of bills that are presently before the committee.

Mark Aronson (cont'd):

First in the area of Welfare Recovery and Fraud. We are opposed to H. B. 5257 and 5684 where substitutes to those bills suggested by Mr. Halsted.

The first section of that bill creates an automatic civil judgment against welfare recipients that are convicted of welfare fraud. This raises serious new questions and also questions of multiple jeopardy. The present Welfare Department interest in civil recovery are adequately provided for under Section 17 -82M of the 1969 Supplement.

We also are opposed to the increase in the criminal penalties for welfare fraud. The revisions suggested in these bills would raise the penalties those for larceny which means a welfare recipients could spend up to five years in prison. This is extremely disruptive of in particular the AFDC homes and places an extra burden upon the state to give special financial and maintenance attention to the children of the welfare recipients for the relative who has been placed in prison. The present sanction of six months is more than adequate to serve as a deterrent and as a punishment for welfare fraud. We support instead the principle embodied in #5003 which makes welfare fraud like any other criminal offense punishable only once.

We also are opposed to H. B. 5256 - which makes all causes of action assignable. This bill will work to the detriment particularly of the working exwelfare recipient for it would make workman's compensation plans assignable. This would mean that the worker who's been injured on the job and was a welfare recipient would be put in the position of losing his job and also would not have the monetary worth that might come out of his Workmans Compensation upon to -- upon which to live. This would mean that he would be thrust on the state again to taken care by some kind of assistance program.

We support H. B. #5007 -- which repeals the present lien provision. At present the administration of this program is extremely cumbersome and also costly. For most situations of categorical assistance benefits are really quite minimal. The present lien provision in particular jeopardizes the effective functioning of Section 235 of the Federal Housing Urban and Development Act which allows low income and recipient families to purchase homes on a one per cent mortgage interest basis. We therefore favor this bill and hope the committee would act in that regard.

We also are in favor of H. B. 6680 which calls for the reenactment of proper standards. This is a Statement of Purpose Bill. If I might just give a brief example. Present Welfare Department Standards only allow ninety three dollars per year for clothing allowance for an adult. This is the total amount allowed for both new and replacement clothing items and is totally inadequate.

We also support S. B. #483 which permits sisters and brothers of the same family to be placed the home of more than one relative. This is often necessary to insure healthy and decent living conditions

Mark Aronson (cont'd):

for the children of a large family. It also would bring Connecticut more into conformity with Federal law and regulations.

We are also supporting H. B. #6951 and S. B. #95 - to provide for reasonable visits -- visits only at reasonable times for members of the Welfare Department to recipient households. This apparently is the present state policy. The present statute also raises some question as to constitutionality under the recent James B. Wyman Decision that you are INAUDIBLE which does not permits visits at any time but only at reasonable times.

I'd like to quote that these are our positions on a number of bills. We also are going to be supporting the positions that will be shortly submitting to the committee by the attorneys of the welfare moms of New Haven and the attorneys for Meriden welfare rights. Thank you..

BEGINNING OF THIS TAPE #12 INAUDIBLE

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

The hospitals of the State of Connecticut support in principle the concept of transferred general assistance from state welfare departments to the State of Connecticut. This is not an area of prime concern to the hospitals but they do support it in principle on the theory that it will reduce the burdens to the town and cities in which many hospitals are located.

As a part of that and reviewing the bill before the committee, I think it's consistent for a hospital to take an opposing view to S. B. #737, which seems to take the contrary position to the concept of general assistance which we support.

Now, in particular in my review of the bills which are before you, I draw your attention to H. B. #7050 which seems in our judgment to probably do the best job of the bills which are before you, in that it not only deals with questions of fiscal response by the state on the one hundred per cent basis, but also seems to deal with the transfer of administrative responsibility which I think in our judgment is important. Thank you very much.

Chairman Ciarlone: We will now hear from Mr. William Clendennon, Attorney for the Moms Organization.

Mr. William Clendennon, New Haven Moms INAUDIBLE:

S. B. #427 is the work incentive program of Connecticut. This is the only bill which would allow Connecticut to cover the conformity with the Federal Law. If the recent conformity hearing INAUDIBLE -- In support.

We would also like to support S. B. #202, 203 and H. B. 5006 and 523. We submit also that these bills will save Connecticut money. What happened in 1969 was that the towns had to bear the burden that the state was bearing on the 19-20 years old children on the unemployed parents. By function -- returning these functions to the State Welfare Department we will be able to get the fifty percent matching money from

Mr. William Clendennon (cont'd):

the Federal Government. Now Members of the New Haven Moms are here today. They came up on a bus to testify to explain their individuals fact situations and how these bills affect them in their own personal lives.

I would like to add that S. B. 202 and 203 --legal guardians are included. By including them in the state program we are relieving a financial burden on the town and also providing to families the support of services which are necessary today. I thank you.

Chairman Ciarlone: Mr. David ? please come forth and identify yourself on the record.

David Lesser - Lawyer from New Haven also speaking on behalf of the New Haven Moms and the Fairhaven Neighborhood Corporation.

I would like to speak in regard to three bills. The first of these we support.... H. B. #5003. This bill would repeal the current statutory requirement that the Welfare Commissioner discontinue assistance to a person convicted of Welfare Fraud. Under the current law discontinuing the mother's share of aid harms the children most of all since the needs of the family have not changed. Discontinuing the mother's share of the family grant will mean there's insufficient aid to meet the need of the family..... particularly since the mother's already been punished by a Court of Law, termination of assistance would appear to be a double jeopardy type of punishment which most gravely harms the innocent victims -- the children.

The second bill we oppose -- H. B. 5262 requiring stepparents the support of stepchildren. Under the bill this legal duty would be so expensive -- with the natural parents duty toward his natural children. As has already been pointed out two years ago the General Assembly overwhelmingly rejected a similar bill. As has already been pointed out also this bill before has the same defects as that that was rejected in the last session. The bill would severely inhibit the marital prospects of divorced, widowed, unmarried mothers either on welfare or from lower economic classes. Secondly, the bill would encourage dissolution of those families which are already headed by stepfathers. I would like to point out that under current law under which there is no stepparent liability marriage of mothers -- re-marriage is encouraged. This results in acost savings to the state. Because if a welfare mother marries an employed individual, she is generally taken off the welfare rolls entirely. This means the state saves money, by a policy which encourages marriage. Putting obstacles in the way of remarriage will be INAUDIBLE and will end up in costing the state more money.

Finally, we are presenting to you our argument of Section 172<sup>F</sup> of the General Statutes. This should be repealed. That statute requires the Welfare Commissioner to make all rental payments to a Welfare Recipient's landlord in the case that his rent is more than ten days late. This arrangement continues for as long as the tenant remains in the premises. The major point to be made -- one which has already been made by the Representative of the Welfare Department, is that Section 17 2 <sup>F</sup> endangers

Robert Millander (cont'd):

Quite frankly, as the parent of a disturbed child, I couldn't afford to have him in High Meadows. I think I make a reasonably good income but I could not possibly support these monthly payments. I tried it but it doesn't work.

The bill as written -- ties a -- suggests that the fees be tied to the Humane Institutions or the State Hospital fee schedule. In looking over the situation since that time -- the time the bill was drafted -- I find that this still leaves a rather heavy load on the low and low middle income family so we would like to suggest and I would like to have the facts and figures and the substitute bill to present to you,, however, it isn't completed as yet and by your leave I would offer them within the coming week that we modify 6814 somewhat to utilize the fee schedule set up for the institutions for the retarded. This schedule which was very carefully drawn up seems to be the most equitable or most carefully planned and to have the least impact on the -- those who are least able to absorb the long term costs so with that I would thank you for your listening. I do have a fee schedule a part of it -- which I'll leave some copies and these will be included in the full package but it would give you an advance -- some sort of an appreciation of just what these run -- I'll quote one. Let's say -- at an \$15,000 level a four family -- four people in the family -- two parents and two children High Meadows would be now asking \$337.50 a month support and this is actually being paid by those who can't -- so it has excluded this particular state institution -- which is very good -- very comparable to the best in the country from all of those who are poor and cannot afford anything and the very rich who can afford the extra. Thank you.

Chairman Ciarlone: Thank you Mr. Millander. I would like the person to testify that is Dorothy T. Legais if I pronounce it correctly. Do we have a Dorothy T. Legais who is from Social Workers Organization? If not we will go to the next speaker. The next speaker is Katherine A. Evarts.

Katharine Evarts of Kent: A former legislator and a member of the State Board of the Connecticut Child Welfare Association:

The reason I'm here is because I feel so strongly about these bills. I'm going to cut down what I've written all I can and first speaking in favor of H. B. #483 which eliminates the clause in the present bill saying that only one family can be paid AFDC for children from any one family. I think this is terrible. You ought to have a good home for the children. If they're trying to force them in and crowd them where there isn't room for them you are ruining the life of the family that they are going into as well as not giving them any advantages. After having heard Jan Billy speak about this I leave it with what she has said.... for the rest of it.

I also want to speak for S. B. 523 which is the same as H. B. 202 and 203 and in the interest of the state as well as the interest of the children involved I feel that the passage of this bill amending the

Katharine Evarts (cont'd):

statute is very important. Forcing children of this age from 18 to 21 to give up their education which is what the statute as it now is amongst you is a real blow to their ambition to become self supporting citizens, and leaving them in the lurch in this way is almost sure to eventually involve the state a far greater expense than if they had been given the opportunity that other young people have to prepare themselves for life.

As I said I am here because I care a great deal about these things and as a citizen who is deeply worried about the lives of the children concerned and also about the enormous burden of expense and other troubles in store for the state if the greatest possible wisdom and understanding of the point of view of the children and their families is not brought to bear on these matters.

Actually, the -- being kind and considerate here is really a matter of enlightened self interest.

Chairman Ciarlone: Thank you. The next speaker should be Jack INAUDIBLE and if I could just take advantage of Mr. Sage's good nature I am going to call Doctor INAUDIBLE -- he has an appointment at the hospital and if you will defer Jack?

Jack Sage: I'll defer.

Chairman Ciarlone: Thank you kindly.

DOCTOR last name INAUDIBLE: I am appearing here for the Connecticut State Medical Society in favor of bill #903 which has to do with establishing the position a Deputy Commissioner of the Health Care within the Appropriate Department. Essentially, we of the state society are concerned citizens as well as professionals. We are deeply concerned with what has been going on with the delivery of health services to welfare beneficiaries. In essence it is a fragmented type of approach -- they are other state agencies also dealing with health care -- but essentially for the welfare beneficiary, we are concerned primarily because health is a right and there should be one standard -- one standard for you -- one standard for them. There is no differentiation. As such, at the present time regardless of whatever paper reorganization have taken place or are anticipated, essentially health should be and should stand above some of the other priorities of the Welfare Department has to do with. We are of the opinion that the Welfare Department primarily should identify those people who are eligible for welfare and then as separate health agency should control health care and it should not be mixed up with food, clothing, shelter and other problems that the Welfare Department has for Welfare beneficiaries. Primarily, a healthy citizen contributes to the community. He will not be a burden on society.

I have been Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee to the Welfare Commissioner in our experimental year of 1968-69 and as of July 1 have

Gail Coleman, Vice President of the New Haven Welfare Moms: and then the rent should go to the landlord directly and I can see this but when vendor payment goes directly to the landlord I can't fight him at all because I don't have the rent to hold back from him. If I can hold and I can fix up the apartment the way it is supposed to be fixed then I have something to go on.

I'd also like to talk on the Omnibus bill which was put in a couple a years ago which I thought was totally ridiculous. Our children have a hard enough time trying to make it in life. I hear so many times welfare breeds welfare -- well with that 19 you know they changed the age back from 21 back to 19 -- welfare breeds welfare because our kids can't go to school. They have to fight pretty hard trying to make it anyway to live in the slum conditions -- you know what schools are like and if they do make it and then the parents can't help them at all. If it was raised to 21 the parents can then give them some help they need.

The other thing is the unemployed parents. We know many people have talked about it. I just think that it is -- breaks up a family unit when a father cannot get on welfare and there's no way the mother and father taking care of the children so the father leaves the home and the mother gets on welfare and there's go the father -- there's no daddy in the home. With this program the unemployed parents can -- the father and mother can stay in the home and raise the children and still get help until he will get back to work or some other thing happens.

The last but not least is the flat grant which is stupid. Anybody can look at that -- I have one son and myself and we live in an apartment which costs \$140 a month with rent and they give you \$210 for a family of two. It's ridiculous. That leaves me \$70 to buy food and pay light, gas and telephone and clothes and anything else that I need -- beds, furniture of any kinds. There's no way possible that I could live on \$210 a month. The more children you have the worse it gets -- you know it's just ridiculous. I get more than that now so why should we want to -- the flat grant to come through.

That's all I have to say.

NEW SPEAKER -- no name:

I speak to you on behalf of the Connecticut Welfare Association and the Connecticut state representative to the National Welfare Rights and Vice Chairman of Waterbury Welfare Rights and as Chairman of Waterbury District Welfare Advisory Board.

We support S. B. #202, 523 or H. B. 5006. The reinstatement of unemployed parents. We feel that this caused many family break-ups -- being tossed from pillar to post -- from state welfare to city welfare a man gets tired -- he goes and leaves his family to go on State Welfare. His pride is gone so he just gives up everything. Along with this goes all hope of uniting this family again.

We also support S. B. 202, 203 and 523 -- Extension and Eligibility of Child up to age 21. Students who go to college or job training. We feel that this is one of the reasons why our teenagers are dropping out of school.

Patricia Burns (cont'd):

I'm waiting for my chance in court now because I'm determined that I'm not moving from where I'm at until I get my day in court so I can tell that man just what I think and I feel that bill should be taken out done over and -- or thrown in the trash where it should have been with the rest of the scrap where they got it all put together. Thank you.

Chairman Ciarlone: The next speaker is Eugenia Douglas. Is she in the audience? Is Eugenia Douglas in the audience please -- you can testify.

INAUDIBLE SECTION ~-

Chairman Ciarlone: Well we can take another speaker and go back to Eugenia Douglas. Since we still have a large number of speakers here we will continue to the next speaker. Elia Gattling did I pronounce that properly? Do we have an Elia Gattling in the audience?

Okay I'm sorry.

I am Eliza Gattling. I am from Waterbury and I'm also a welfare recipient. I'm also with the W. O. R. --

I am supporting the bill S. B. 202 and 523. Supporting our children's extension to eligibility to stay or stay up until age 21 if in school, or any school program or in college or job training. I think we should encourage our children to stay in school and give them all the encouragement we can so they will make better citizens of themselves and face this problem. I am also facing a problem myself. I have a daughter of 18 years old which will be 19 years old in April. She is in college now. She's also an A student. I would like very much for her to stay in school and not to be a drop out which means that I know other parents are facing the same problems for if she should have to drop out she might have other problems and get discouraged and fall in some bad habits, drug or something else. I think we should support this bill and help the children to stay in school and help them to be better citizens so where they can get better jobs and will not become welfare recipients and can do better for themselves.

Chairman Ciarlone: Thank you for your comments. The next speaker is Deborah Peel? Is there a Deborah Peel here?

Deborah Peel, Waterbury, Connecticut -- Welfare Right Organization:

I'm speaking on Stepfather Liability and opposing bill #5262 which makes the stepparent liable for support. Why should the stepfather be responsible for children that aren't his. The stepfather -- fathers have their own children are having a hard enough time trying to meet the needs of their own family. Why should the welfare mothers suffer? Don't we have the right to get married? Aren't we entitled to get out of this hole that we are already in? If we weren't married and we have children and we kept having children workers would come to our homes, they will say why don't you do something about it -- you know well you