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**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
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**SELECT
COMMITTEE
ON CHILDREN
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2011

In regards to the presumptive eligibility how do you perceive that happening? I'm -- I'm envisioning that we -- we have probably -- not a waiting list, but we have several people that also will be applying for child care and what would trigger the case worker to provide that presumptive eligibility? Would it be the client being unemployed, would that be the trigger?

ELAINE ZIMMERMAN: I think the trigger would need to be -- yes --yes. So I'm working and suddenly I'm not, so that would be the trigger, yes. And we can sit down with DSS to learn what -- they might need some tinkering in the proposed language that we're offering, to help with that because we certainly don't want to burden them but we want to help.

REP. URBAN: Okay. Thank you.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments for Elaine?

Seeing none, thank you for your testimony, Elaine.

ELAINE ZIMMERMAN: Thank you.

SENATOR GERRATANA: And next up is Barbara Claire, from DCF, on House Bill 1043.

Welcome Barbara.

BARBARA CLAIRE: Thank you.

And good morning, Senator Gerratana, welcome, Representative Urban, Representative Wood and members of the Select Committee on Children; I am Barbara Claire the Legal Director for the Department of Children and Families. And I'm

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here to testify in support of Senate Bill 1043,
AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO RECORDS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

This proposal is part of DCF legislative package
this year and we thank this committee for raising
the bill.

I'd also like to introduce William Rivera, he's
our -- oh, he's right here, all right, the
Director of DCF's Office of Multi-Cultural
Affairs and our Human Trafficking in Children
Team Leader. Bill is available to answer any
questions that you may have regarding Senate Bill
1044, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT
INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR
PROSTITUTION.

But with respect to Bill 1043, this bill revises,
updates and reorganizes section 17a-28 of the
general statutes which is DCF's confidential
records law. In general, DCF cannot disclose
information created or obtained in connection
with its child protection activities or other
activities related to a child while that child is
in DCF's care or custody without either obtaining
permission from the subject of the record or from
an authorized representative or unless we have
legal authorization and statute to do so without
the subject's consent.

Existing law specifies a number of officials and
entities to whom DCF must disclose information
that would otherwise be confidential and in most
cases states the limited use the recipients can
make of the information. The current statute
also lists people and entities to whom DCF may
share information when the Commissioner or her
designee determines disclosure to be in the best
interest of the person who is the subject of the
record.

And I would just like to add that we worked for several years with other state agencies, with the Judicial Branch and with the Advocate Community to come up with a bill that we think properly balances the need for confidentiality versus the efficiency of disclosing other information to other agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony. I'll be happy to answer any questions that you have. And as I said, Mr. Rivera is also here for Bill 1044.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions or comments? If we could -- from what I understand on these new required disclosures that has been worked out with all entities?

BARBARA CLAIRE: It has.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Okay. And I know you said that, I just wanted to be sure that we're -- because sometimes we have people -- we get push back that we don't expect later on.

BARBARA CLAIRE: Right.

SENATOR GERRATANA: So if it's been all worked out that's --

BARBARA CLAIRE: Right. As far as I know, all interested parties are in agreement as far as I know.

REP. URBAN: Okay. Thank you for that.

And then on, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE AND NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION, you know my cochair and I were just sitting here saying are we doing -- aren't we

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doing this? Is this -- tell me where we stand on this particular issue if you would.

WILLIAM RIVERA: Well sometimes it's not consistently applied so it really depends on the discretion of the law enforcement officer. There are so many variables under the previous law that would allow them to have a host of options from taking the child home, releasing the child on their own recognizance, taking them to detention so many cases it really depends on the arresting officer so it's not happening consistently. And we reviewed records through the hotline for law enforcement referrals through the hotline to see if any one specific called that we arrested the child who was 16 or 17 years old, for prostitution. And we had no reports by a law enforcement body making a report as such.

REP. URBAN: Thank you; that clarifies it. And I think my cochair has a question.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Yes, thank you, Mr. Rivera. Just to get me up to date, I apologize but what's the definition of a minor now, in statute? Do you know? I'm sorry, I don't mean to--

BARBARA CLAIRE: It's under 18 unless the child is -- is in DCF care and then we investigate if they're under 21.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Okay. Under 18, so 18 is now considered majority age?

BARBARA CLAIRE: Yes.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Okay. And only if a child -- I'm sorry, you --

BARBARA CLAIRE: If the child is in our custody, say the child is in a group home and she runs away and then is trafficked, if she's under 21 and

she's in our care then we will investigate that as well.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Okay, good. Thank you so much.

Representative Candelaria.

REP. CANDELARIA: Thank you.

Thank you for your testimony. Regarding -- with requiring an investigation done on abuse and neglect, in your testimony you talk about 65 cases that you've dealt with that involves minors and state trafficking activity. Can you tell me a little bit about that? How we -- how have we handled that and how did you get involved, was it referral from the police department or how did you come about getting involved in the specific cases?

WILLIAM RIVERA: That's a good question and it's a combination of law enforcement officers calling in, whether it's local or federal or state police contacting the hotline. In some cases it's been a preliminary -- before the hotline gets called -- they actually respond a notification to be ready, that a raid is going to take place. Most of these children though are children who are already involved in -- with the department in one form or another, criminal justice, committed kids, family service needs kids and while they were on some type of runaway status from either foster care -- mostly foster care residential group homes very specifically were lured by pimps and the prostituted during that period and then came back through the -- to the residential centers or foster care and we discovered through the worker interviewing them or other indicators that then had actually been prostituted while on AWOL status.

REP. CANDELARIA: I just have a hard issue with this seeing a youth being prostituted. And you don't have -- I don't know if you can provide me more details but have there been any prosecution of the pimps or anything like that? I'm -- I'm just curious about that.

WILLIAM RIVERA: There are several cases that have been prosecuted but not using out statutes. All of the cases involving our kids right now that are being prosecuted are being prosecuted by the FBI and other task force working together. We have some pretty strong laws that have emerged since 2004 here that have been passed but all of the cases are actually being prosecuted federally right now.

REP. CANDELARIA: Thank you so much.

Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Any other questions or comments? Thank you for your testimony.

BARBARA CLAIRE: Thank you very much.

REP. URBAN: And with that we will move to the public portion of the hearing. And first on our list is Stacey Violante-Cote, Center for Children's Advocacy. Welcome counselor.

STACEY VIOLANTE-COTE: (Inaudible)

REP. URBAN: Thank you, Stacey for your testimony. Are there any -- Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: Thank you, Madam Chair and thank you for your testimony.

I had a question on the static you mentioned, that within 48 hours of living home one in three

teens will be lured into prostitution. Where does that statistic come from?

STACEY VIOLANTE-COTE: (Inaudible)

REP. WOOD: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Senator.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you so much for your testimony and I'm going to ask a basic question. When a child runs away from home or becomes -- or is homeless, what kinds of supports and services are available for this child? I know it's probably a big question but maybe you could help me here.

STACEY VIOLANET-COTE: (Inaudible)

SENATOR GERRATANA: I've just been enlightened; this is called Kids in Crisis. And I was just going to ask, what kind of entities are these? Are these specific entities, public, quasi-public, private entities that provide shelter for run-aways -- for homeless children?

STACEY VIOLANET-COTE: (Inaudible)

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you, Attorney Cote.

REP. URBAN: Representative Fawcett.

REP. FAWCETT: Thank you, Representative Urban.

I think I have a question along a similar track because -- like the Senator. Welcome Senator, by the way, it's very nice to see you here.

I am just trying to understand sort of the process. So if a youth runs away and they fall into prostitution and then through the process I am assuming they get caught by police and then

they're referred to DCF. Is that -- that's what you're saying, that they would be referred to DCF? But wouldn't -- my question is wouldn't it be then DCF's responsibility to return those children or youths back home because there is -- if there's no case or no back story on prior problems with their home wouldn't they -- wouldn't it just be the state's responsibility legally to return them home? And if -- if they're running away from their home there's clearly a reason but wouldn't we be then legally responsible to return them home into an environment that they would likely just run away again?

STACEY VIOLANET-COTE: (Inaudible)

REP. FAWCETT: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Are there any other questions, comments? Thank you for your testimony.

STACEY VIOLANET-COTE: (Inaudible)

REP. URBAN: Next on our list is Mallory Ham and Roberto Ceja; Center for Youth Leadership. And if I messed up your name I apologize.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Welcome.

MALLORY HAM: Good morning, Representative Urban, Senator Gerrantana and members of the committee.

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We have a special greeting for Representative Wood, who is from our district in Norwalk.

My name is Mallory Ham and I'm a member of the Center for Youth Leadership, which is based at Brein McMahon High School. Joining me is Roberto Ceja, who is also a member of the Center.

Ten months ago we were proud to be among a handful of people who were asked to attend the bill signing ceremony for the Safe Harbor Act for Exploited Children. Today, on behalf of the 226 student activists as the Center for Youth Leadership, we are here to urge you to support the Senate Bill, 1044, which would require the Department of Children and Families to conduct abuse or neglect investigations of children and teens arrested for prostitution.

Although I have never been trafficked, nor have any of my friends, we do know students at our school who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home and/or experienced sexual abuse at home. All of which are huge red flags for teenagers who are lured into prostitution.

We have also volunteered with runaway and throwaway teens in two safe houses in Fairfield County. We raise awareness of human trafficking and child prostitution in Connecticut by leading two public awareness activities a month in lower Fairfield County. We piloted an eight-week trafficking curriculum at our school with Love 146, an advocacy group in New Haven. Love 146 will return to our school in the spring, and we are working with the group to introduce the curriculum to other high schools in Fairfield County. And in the coming weeks we will start an outreach project that will take us to truck stops along I-95 to educate truckers about trafficking.

While we are pleased with the passage of the safe harbor legislation, we were haunted by several questions, not the least of which is one addressed by Senate Bill 1044. Granted, there are a ton of questions about this issue. For example, how many beds are available in Connecticut for teens who have been trafficked? Which staff, at which state agency have been trained to address the unique needs of these

teens? And are attempts made to reunify the teens with their families?

But the question that is raised most often by our members is, who is being held responsible for the circumstances that lead teens my age to hit the streets in the first place? In fact, our members raised it again just two weeks ago with news that two men from our hometown of Norwalk were arrested for transporting girls across state lines for the purpose of prostitution. They took two girls from Norwalk to Bridgeport; Bridgeport to Hartford; Hartford back to Norwalk and eventually into Massachusetts.

We know that confidentiality laws prohibit the general public from knowing much about these teens, but don't you ever wonder what happens to them after they've been detained by the police for prostitution?

ROBERTO CEJA: We know from the Center of Children's Advocacy that among these teens are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students who have been kicked out of their homes after "coming out", adolescent boys who are not allowed into family homeless shelters, teens who are victims of child sex abuse and trafficking, teens like me and Mallory. Sure, some are running from themselves but more often than not they are running from homes that are violent and indifferent to their needs.

According to the National Incidence Studies of Children, one out of every three runaway or throwaway teens is lured into prostitution within 48 hours of hitting the streets; one out of every three. We're talking about teens as young as 13, which the University of Pennsylvania and Shared Hope International say is the average age for entry into prostitution in America.

We are talking about a group of teens that is all but invisible to the general public. It's almost like they've become refugees from their own families and the state agencies that should be caring for them, a class of people that no one is responsible for, that no one is being held accountable for. This has to stop.

That's why Senate Bill 1044 is so important. We know that a lot is asked of the police departments and the Department of Children and Families but we think this is a no-brainer. An immediate report to DCF by the police about a teen who has been detained for prostitution, followed by a DCF investigation within 24 hours of receiving the police report could prevent serious harm to the teen, reveal important clues to the teens' actions, pave the way for immediate medical and emotional care and lead to holding someone responsible for the circumstances that led to the teens' working the streets.

We know the Governor has complicated things by cutting \$1 million for homeless youth services from DCF's budget, funding that we believe should be restored immediately. But we still urge you to support Senate Bill 1044, And to work with the police department, the Department of Children and Families, the Center for Children's Advocacy, Love 146 and other groups to identify a strategy that addresses the abuse and neglect experienced by teens who make up one of Connecticut's more invisible groups of people.

Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Thank you very much for your testimony and as always we are absolutely thrilled to have you in front of this committee. You have done a tremendous job in so many areas. And I think -- whenever we see you we know that there is hope for the future. You guys just do amazing work

and I think we have one more to hear from you.
So we're looking forward to it.

Are there any questions or comments?
Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would concur;
you guys are poised, you're thoughtful, you're
committed to this and it's truly inspiring.
Thank you very much. And very well written, very
well done. Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Senator.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mallory and Roberto, it's nice to meet you and
hear from you. Your testimony is very eloquent
and I appreciate it. I do have one question.
How many Centers for Youth Leadership are there
in the state? Are there a number of them or --

ROBERTO CEJA: Our Center for Youth Leadership is one
big organization in lower Fairfield County and it
involves many number of groups; one in Greenwich,
Stamford and Norwalk. So there's many different
groups in different schools in lower Fairfield
County.

MALLORY HAM: We have two branches out of Brein
McMahon and a branch out of Stamford High and
Greenwich High.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Excellent. Thank you so much for
that.

REP. URBAN: Any other questions or comments? Seeing
none, again you are always impressing our
committee and we hope you'll continue to come
back.

And now we look forward to listening I believe to one of your colleagues, Nicole von Oy.

NICOLE VON OY: Good morning. It's hard to come after that they're so amazing.

Good morning, Senator Gerratana, and Representative Urban, Representative Fawcett and members of the Select Committee on Children.

My name is Nicole von Oy; I am from Love 146 a nonprofit organization here in Connecticut that combats child sex slavery and exploitation. I'm here in support of Senate Bill 1044, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION. I want to thank you for calling this hearing today.

Although it is difficult to accurately depict the number of children trafficked with certainty, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates that at least 100,000 American children each year are the victims of commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking. The average age of entry is 12 -14 years old. These children are commodities for sale. They are trafficked, moved from city to city for the financial gain of those who use, abuse and control them. These children are victims of modern day slavery. They lack the ability to walk away. These children need to be rescued and restored.

I wear a few hats at Love 146; one is to train adults working with youth service providers and agencies looking for more information on the issue. I have trained many adults as well as some DCF and law enforcement groups late last year. One of my other roles within Love 146, is working with adolescent girls and boys in different settings, like group homes, residential

facilities, communities and schools. We utilize two curriculums; one specifically called, My Life, My Choice, which is strictly for adolescent girls in group homes and residential facilities. And then Tell Your Friends, which is the program that piloted at Brein McMahon High School last year. Specifically these curriculums educate students and these girls giving them tools and knowledge to keep themselves safe our in the community and recognize signs of sexual exploitation of children.

In a few of the homes I facilitated in I came across girls who were willing to share their stories with me who at one point were involved in prostitution because they were looking for someone to love them. They were lured, they were coerced or forced into it or put into it by their family members. These girls didn't want to be involved, they didn't ask for this life as much as people may have thought they might want to be in it.

For the past three years, DCF has been very diligent and very -- may I finish?

REP. URBAN: If you could just wind it up, go ahead.

NICOLE VON OY: For the past three years DCF have been very diligent and very responsive to the issue of sexual exploitation of children. They have developed protocols to work with victims and have developed trainings to educate their social workers on the issue. In most part, because of DCF's trainings, at least 52 victims have been identified here in Connecticut.

It is important to ensure that law enforcement begin to make these referrals so services can be provided. It is important that law enforcement make DCF their first point of contact so they immediately can investigate a case of a child who

had been arrested for prostitution and more rapidly provide them with services that they need to begin the restoration process.

Thank you. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony and it's great that you're partnering with Youth Leadership Guys.

Are there any questions or comments?
Representative Candelaria.

REP. CANDELARIA: Thank you for your testimony.

I just have a quick question probably -- you may not know the answer but, is there a hot line --

NICOLE VON OY: Yes, there is --

REP. CANDELARIA: -- that they can call.

NICOLE VON OY: There is a national hotline which is for trafficking --

REP. CANDELARIA: Right.

NICOLE VON OY: -- but specifically for kids to call, there's not.

REP. CANDELARIA: Nothing?

NICOLE VON OY: There is Children of the Night, which is out in California but it's out in California.

REP. CANDELARIA: Can you tell us what is that; Children of the Night?

NICOLE VON OY: Children of the Night, is a specific organization that works with kids who've been trafficked.

REP. CANDELARIA: Because I've been hearing from a lot of testimony that a lot of these children that get trafficked or get exploited are children that are less -- that they're actually coming out, they're rejected from their families, they become homeless. That what I'm hearing based on a lot of the testimony and I'm wondering if we have nothing out there for them where they can actually call before they are coming out of the close so that they can get the support that they actually need from some state agency. It could be DCF -- any state agency. I'm not sure specifically which one but I'm seeing that there's a disconnect and it's something that we need to start working on.

NICOLE VON OY: Uh-huh.

REP. CANDELARIA: Because if they have the support services right behind them and they'll come out we can -- I think we can avoid a lot of the problems that that will face once they -- if they were rejected by the family.

NICOLE VON OY: Yeah.

REP. CANDELARIA: Because of ignorance. So thank you so much for your testimony.

NICOLE VON OY: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Any other questions or comments? Seeing none; thank you for your testimony.

NICOLE VON OY: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Next on our list is Lisa Levy; The Greater Hartford Legal Assistance. Welcome, Lisa.

LISA LEVY: (Inaudible)

CHRISTINE BANKS: Good morning. I would like to thank Representative Urban, Senator Gerratana, Representative Fawcett and the members of the Select Committee on Children for this opportunity to express my thoughts regarding Senate Bill 1044. My name is Christine Banks and I am an Advanced Standing Graduate Student at the University of Connecticut's School of Social Work as well as in intern at the National Association of Social Workers Connecticut's Chapter. Today I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill number 1044; AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION.

As a master's lever social work student whose concentration of study is policy practice, I am very much interested in the formulation and implementation of policies meant to be beneficial to children and adolescents. They make up the segment of our citizenship that is most vulnerable to abuse and neglect as well as personal criminal exploitation. I strongly believe the raising of this bill is a blatant indication that this population is being victimized by one of the world's oldest illegal profession, prostitution. This type of exploitation is a tragedy and should not continue to be an experience that impacts the lives of our youth. As concerned and responsible adults, we all have a moral obligation to do everything within our powers to correct this wrong that is being committed against our children and adolescents.

I agree with the testimonies that have been given by previous individuals in regards to the description of those that are impacted by this act. Also the statistics and the reasons for it, so I will go on to say that it is the complexity

surrounding those phenomenon of youth prostitution that makes the intervention of the Department of Children and Families so necessary for this population. The services that will be made available through DCF are critical for these children and adolescents; it will provide them with the resources they will need to reclaim their young lives. DCF will be able to provide them with a sense of permanency and safety, individual case management, medical services and substance abuse treatment, counseling and therapeutic services as well as educational services. Also, in some instances DCF will be able to successfully facilitate the reunification of youth with their families.

While at my field placement, I was able to speak with a DCF worker regarding the bill; she was adamant in her response. She stated that these children and adolescents are under the legal age of self-consent and most assuredly must be referred to DCF so that appropriate assessments and intervention plans can be implemented in an effort to get them back on the right track in life.

I urge the committee to vote in favor of Senate Bill number 1044 in an effort to reduce and/or eliminate the number of youths being arrested for prostitution here in the State of Connecticut. By saying yes to this bill you re boldly proclaiming to the youth of Connecticut that their lives are valued and the outcomes of their futures are essential to the well-being and success of the state.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony it's particularly interesting because you're in the -- the graduate field right now going forward with it, so thank you.

Do you have any questions or comments?
Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick comment, great testimony, thank you very much.

CHRISTINE BANKS: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Next on our list, Alexandra Quig. Thank Alexandra.

ALEXANDRA QUIG: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: And welcome.

ALEXANDRA QUIG: Good morning, Representative Urban and Senator Gerratana and the members of the committee. My name is Alexandra Quig and I'm an Advanced Standing M.S.W. student at the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work. I have a concentration in Policy Practice and a substantive area of focus on women and children in families. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

I am here in support of Raised Senate Bill 1044,
AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT
INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTH ARRESTED FOR
PROSTITUTION.

I feel that this is an exceptionally important issue. Before I started graduate school I interned at a domestic and sexual violence agency. On a daily basis I worked directly with both young women and men who had been victims of sexual exploitation and prostitution, many of which were recent immigrants to the United States. Many of these children were still young enough to be required to go to school but instead were forced into a lifestyle that was not a

choice. By the time I began working with these young adults my agency was the first service provider that they had come into contact with, but the majority were already involved in the criminal justice system.

As mentioned earlier there are a variety of reasons why youth become involved with prostitution. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children had developed a report which highlights the major components as to why youths may become involved, such as running away from home, being forced out of their homes, are abducted or are escaping physical or sexual abuse. Involvement in prostitution is a serious problem due to the repeated victimization, multiple sexual partners, exposure to diseases, general neglect and exposure to repeated violence.

Prostitution is a crime under Connecticut law and so is child abuse. The youth who are arrested for prostitution need much needed services but also an investigation in to why they are involved with prostitution and the abuse and neglect that they have suffered. The Department of Children and Families is the only one I feel that can do an accurate assessment and help these youth with much needed access to services.

I realize in these tough economic times that Connecticut is facing, additional case loads and services will require DCF to increase spending and potentially more staff will need to be hired. There is evidence with the right kind of services many of these youth can break free from prostitution and the abuse they have suffered. But can there really be a price on the safety and well-being of our nation's children, regardless of why they need help?

Thank you for your time and consideration on this bill.

REP. URBAN: And again it's very nice to have a graduate student working in the field and with us today; so thank you for your testimony.

Any other questions or comments? Then Alexandra, thank you very much.

ALEXANDRA QUIG: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Next on our list is Ben Daigle;
Connecticut Association for Community Action.

BEN DAIGLE: Good morning. As stated, my name is Ben Daigle, I'm the Public Policy Director with the Connecticut Association for Community Action. I'm here to present the testimony of Edith Pollock Karsky, our Executive Director.

Ms. Karsky is the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Community Action which is the state association for Connecticut's 12 Community Action Agencies. CAA's as you are likely aware, are the not for profit agencies designated by the state and federal governments as their official partners in helping families to avoid financial crisis and empowering them with job training, child care and other vital supports to regain their financial footing if they do experience poverty. We administer benefit programs to more than 300,000 people annually, empowering families and strengthening communities in every Connecticut city and town.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Raised Bill number 6430, AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN AND THE RECESSION, and in support of adding provisions to the bill and keeping with the General Assembly's commitment and specifically this committee's commitment, to

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony.

And next up is Dominique Shabazz. Welcome Dominique.

DOMINQUE SHABAZZ: Good morning. My name is Dominique Shabazz; I am a graduate student at the UConn School of Social Work and the Policy and Practice Method with a (inaudible) area in Women Children and Families.

I'm here --

REP. BETTS: Dominique --

DOMINQUE SHABAZZ: Excuses me?

REP. BETTS: -- Dominique, could you just speak a little bit louder so I could hear you? Thanks.

DOMINQUE SHABAZZ: I am here to speak on Bill 1044, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION. I am in support of this bill and I have been a part of a work group since September of last year that has worked diligently to understand the victims and their needs. We have found studies that reported many of the victims have history of child abuse and neglect and this number increases as the children in care or custody of DCF. It's very appropriate and necessary to advocate the responsibilities to DCF because of the services that they're able to provide. I think that investigating these children as victims before criminalizing them is a more appropriate action. This will reduce the re-traumatization for the child victims and address underlying issues and begin the healing process in many of these children.

That's all.

REP. URBAN: Thank you. And again we're very thrilled to have a graduate student here today to talk to us about this.

Are there any questions or comments?

Seeing none, thank you.

DOMINQUE SHABAZZ: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: And next on our list is Sheila Matthews.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Hi, committee members, Senator; I'm Sheila Matthews. I a representative of the Able Child, A National Non-Profit Parent Organization, and I'm here to oppose Senate Bill 1043, AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO RECORDS -- the way it's written, I have strong concerns. The Department of Children and Family Services is the largest budget in all of the State of Connecticut and it is really right now very corrupt in its practices.

I represent parents whose children have been raped within the Department, in foster care and also I just attended the pharmacy report of the providers that was done by the behavioral vendors and what we're seeing is a large increase of psychiatric drug prescribing to children.

Of label these drugs are not approved for use in children. I have strong concerns regarding the safety that the state is providing children within state care already. And the access to the records needs to be done -- broad based to parents who have lost custody to the state so they can bring the records to nonprofit organizations that are not tied up in a whole network of the state. That they can have an agency such as myself and access to attorneys to

pursue charges against the state, so I have a real concern the way this bill is written.

Also it's really great, 1044 -- you know, however increasing the budget for DCF to -- to include more children in their net, I have a big problem with. My concern is hiding behind good intentions of trafficking children when the state has a -- in the pharmacy report, has a retention rate of 14 percent and has beds that are -- are -- children that are not being released from state care. These parents are fighting to get their children back.

I have a problem with the hotline that DCF uses; it's unconstitutional. I like the language that the workers are provided in the -- and the attorney -- you know, we're asking for the same language for parents -- you know, protection. You know, innocence before being told that they're abusive to their -- to their children for educational neglect. You know, I think that the onus on the state is to clean up your agency before you start increasing the budget and look at some of the practices you have here within the state.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony. Are you in favor of the changes that were presented to us by Lisa Levy on that -- on 1043?

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Regarding the workers?

REP. URBAN: On -- on Senate Bill 1043, on the access to the records?

SHEILA MATTHEWS: I'm -- I'm against it based on the fact that it's not broad based for the parents. And it's -- like on the first sentence, it says a parent whose parental right has not been terminated or current guardian of an individual described. What is your -- your read on that?

REP. URBAN: I'm not sure where she is. Well so you have -- you have a problem with the -- with the entire bill?

SHEILA MATTHEWS: I do, as it's written I think that it really needs to take into consideration that children are being abused within state care and I see no protection, no legal avenue for these parents to -- to fight the state or -- you know, obviously you're here to provide the best care, however you've hired behavioral health vendors that are actually abusing the kids within your state. And there's no watchdog, the child advocate is actually working for the state so you have a lot of conflict of interest here. So I am against it as it is written.

REP. URBAN: Okay; thank you for your testimony. Are there any other questions or comments?
Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for your testimony.

REP. URBAN: Did she have a question? No.

REP. WOOD: Yes, I do have some questions.

REP. URBAN: Oh.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Okay, sure.

REP. WOOD: Can you tell me about Able Child?

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Sure, we're a national nonprofit parent organization. I'm a founder -- one of the founders. I'm a mom. My son was told that he needed to be placed on psychiatric drugs by the school. I was told I had no other alternative so I started this agency -- well it's a nonprofit organization, and I support parents throughout

000907
Pg 2 line 10
Pg 2 line 16

William Rivera took questions
for Barbara Claire.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



Public Hearing Testimony
Select Committee on Children
March 1, 2011

**S.B. No. 1043 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO THE RECORDS
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

The Department of Children and Families supports SB 1043, An Act Concerning Access to the Records of the Department of Children and Families. This bill is part of DCF's legislative package this year and we thank the Committee for raising the bill.

Summary

This bill revises, updates, and reorganizes section 17a-28 of the general statutes, DCF's confidential records law. In general, DCF cannot disclose information created or obtained in connection with its child protection activities or other activities related to a child while that child is in its care or custody without (1) obtaining permission from the subject of the record or an authorized representative, or (2) legal authorization to do so without the subject's consent. Existing law specifies a number of officials and entities to whom DCF must disclose information that would otherwise be confidential and, in most cases, states the limited use the recipients can make of the information. The current statute also lists people and entities with whom DCF may share information when the Commissioner or her designee determines disclosure to be in the best interests of the person who is the subject of the record.

One purpose of this bill is to reorganize the statute for clarity and ease of application to real life events. This has been done by placing all of the mandatory disclosure sections together in subsection (g), and all of the discretionary disclosures together in subsection (h). Another purpose of this bill is to update the list of officials and entities to whom records shall or may be released. These updates amend language that has unnecessarily restricted the Department from sharing information with other state agencies and service providers, with resulting inefficient delivery of services to families. The proposed language also permits some additional limited disclosure of information to law enforcement and other entities in order ensure the safety and well-being of children.

SB1044

New Required Disclosures

Under the bill, the following are individuals or entities that DCF *must* disclose records to without the subject's consent, which are not permitted under current law:

- the Child Advocate or the Child Advocate's designee;
- foster or prospective adoptive parents, but only records relating to social, medical, psychological, or educational needs of children currently placed with them or

being considered for placement, and so long as no information that identifies biological parents is disclosed without their consent;

- employees of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, for the purpose of treatment planning for young adults who have transitioned from DCF care;
- legal counsel representing DCF during the course of a legal proceeding involving the department or a DCF employee; and
- specifies the circumstances for sharing information with Superior Court judges when they are determining the appropriate disposition of a child convicted as delinquent or a child who is a member of a family with service needs, or a judge of the Superior Court in a criminal prosecution for purposes of in-camera inspection if: (1) the court has ordered that it be given the record, or (2) a party to the proceeding has subpoenaed the record.

New Discretionary Disclosures

The following are individuals or entities that DCF *is permitted to* disclose records to without the subject's consent, which are not permitted under current law:

- individuals or agencies under contract with DCF, for the purpose of identifying and assessing potential placements for the child who is the subject of the record, so long as no information that identifies biological parents is disclosed without their consent;
- Courts or public agencies in other states and federally recognized Indian tribes which are responsible for child protection or provide services to families involved in the child welfare system.
- individuals DCF interviews in abuse and neglect investigations who are not otherwise entitled to this information, but disclosure is limited to: (1) the general nature of the allegations, (2) the child's identity, and (3) the information necessary to further the course of the investigation;
- people attempting to locate a missing parent or child, but disclosure is limited to information that assists them in doing so;
- courts of competent jurisdiction, when a DCF employee has been subpoenaed to testify about the record's contents; and
- people not employed by DCF who arrange, perform, or assist in performing functions or activities on DCF's behalf, including data analysis, processing or administration, utilization reviews, quality assurance, practice management, consultation, data aggregation and accreditation services

Disclosure When Incident Has Been Publicized.

Under current law, when an incident of abuse or neglect has been made public, or the DCF Commissioner reasonably believes this will occur, the Commissioner can publicly disclose whether DCF received a complaint and provide a general description of actions taken by the agency, so long as the Commissioner does not disclose personally identifying information about (1) the victim or family, or (2) the suspected abuser unless that person has been arrested for the underlying conduct. The bill adds a provision

allowing DCF to confirm or deny the accuracy of information that has been made public and generally describe the case's current legal status.

Conclusion

The Department believes that this bill continues to protect the important confidentiality rights of the children and families we serve while allowing some appropriate discretion to share information when necessary, particularly for purposes of treatment planning and provision of services when clients are receiving services from multiple agencies.

<p>S.B. No. 1044 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION</p>
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The Department of Children and Families supports SB 1044 An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youths Arrested for Prostitution.

Over the past two years, the Department has become aware of over 65 cases of youth involved in domestic minor sex trafficking activity. Most of these cases involve youth in the care or custody of DCF. Sadly, children in our care can be prime victims for this type of activity.

The Department has been training staff, administrators and providers in this area for over a year but we also need to begin teaching our youth skills for recognizing and avoiding these very real dangers. We in Connecticut and a few other states are trying to be proactive by recognizing the depth of this problem while undoing what has been a historical non-reaction to these youth and their crises.

Select Committee on Children

PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Testimony of Carolyn Signorelli
Chief Child Protection Attorney
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Hartford, CT 06106
860-566-1341
Fax: 860-566-1349
carolyn.signorelli@jud.ct.gov

SB No. 1044: Support w/ change

Good Morning Senator Musto, Representative Urban and esteemed Committee Members. My name is Carolyn Signorelli, Chief Child Protection Attorney for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony regarding Senate Bill 1044, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION.

I support this legislation, however in order to make the language consistent with the Department's use of its Differential Response System (DRS), I suggest the language in lines 29-31 be changed from "Not later than twenty-four hours after receiving such report, the department shall commence a child abuse or neglect investigation" to "The Department is required to accept the referral."

With this change, the Department has the option of referring the family to its DRS track if it deems appropriate, as opposed to commencing their traditional investigation. The goal of this legislation, providing access to services for youths who are victims of prostitution, would still be achieved.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Signorelli

**Testimony of Alexandra Quig
M.S.W Student**

**Select Committee on Children
March 1, 2011**

In support of Raised S.B. No. 1044 An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youths Arrested for Prostitution

Good morning Representative Urban, and members of the Committee on Children My name is Alexandra Quig, and I am an M S W student at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, with a concentration in Policy Practice and a substantive area of focus on women and children in families Thank you for the opportunity to testify today

I am here in support of Raised S.B. 1044 An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youth Arrested for Prostitution.

I feel that this is an exceptionally important issue. Before I started graduate school I interned at a domestic & sexual violence agency On a daily bases I worked directly with both young women and men who had been victims of sexual exploitation/prostitution, many of which were recent immigrants to the United States Many of these children were still young enough to be required to go to school but instead were forced into a lifestyle that was not a choice. By the time I began to work with these young adults my agency was the first service provider that they had come into contact with, but the majority were already involved in the criminal justice system

There are a variety of reasons why youth become involved with prostitution The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (2002) has developed a report which highlights the major components as to why youths may become involved, such as, running away from home, being forced out of their homes, are abducted, or are escaping physical or sexual abuse Involvement in prostitution is a serious problem due to the repeated victimization, multiple sexual partners, exposure to diseases, general neglect, and exposure to repeated violence

Prostitution is a crime under Connecticut law and so is child abuse The youth who are arrested for prostitution need much needed services but also an investigation in to why they are involved with prostitution and the abuse and neglect they have suffered The Department of Children and Families is the only one I feel that can do an accurate assessment and help these youth with much needed access to services

I realize in these tough economic times that Connecticut is facing, additional case loads and services will require DCF to increase spending and potentially more staff will need to be hired There is evidence with the right kind of services many of these youth can break free from prostitution and the abuse they have suffered But can there really be a price on the safety and well being of our nation's children, regardless of why they need help?

Thank you for your time and consideration on this bill

Alexandra Quig
alexandra quig@uconn.edu
(302)593-1290

Select Committee On Children
Public Hearing
Tuesday, March 1, 2011
S.B. No.1044

Good Morning, I would like to thank Rep. Urban, Sen. Musto, Rep. Fawcett, and the members of the Select Committee on Children for this opportunity to express my thoughts regarding S.B. No.1044. My name is Christine Banks and I am an Advanced Standing Graduate Student at the University of Connecticut's School of Social Work, as well as an intern at the National Association of Social Workers Connecticut's Chapter. Today I am here to testify in support of S.B. No.1044; An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youths Arrested for Prostitution.

As a master's level social work student whose concentration of study is policy practice, I am very much interested in the formulation and implementation of policies meant to be beneficial to children and adolescents. They make up the segment of our citizenship that is most vulnerable to abuse and neglect as well as personal criminal exploitation. I strongly believe the raising of this bill is a blatant indication that this population is being victimized by one of the world's oldest illegal profession, prostitution. This type of exploitation is a tragedy and should not continue to be an experience that impacts the lives of our youth. As concerned and responsible adults, we all have a moral obligation to do everything within our powers to correct this wrong that is being committed against our children and adolescents.

Youth prostitution is a complex phenomenon. It involves the performance of both "coerced and voluntary" sexual favors in exchange for money or things of value. Most often these children and adolescents are victims of physical and sexual abuse that occurred within their homes from family members and other close acquaintances. In their attempt to escape the abuse and or neglect these youth believe their only alternative is to runaway. To flee from their families only to realize they do not have any where safe and secure to run to. Once on the streets, with no meaningful way of supporting themselves because they are underage, uneducated, unskilled and ultimately unemployable they turn to what they think is their only solution; prostitution as a mean of existence and survival. The level of youth involvement in prostitution spans across a wide spectrum. This behavior can be found in youth who are members of gangs, addicted to drugs as well as those who have been abandoned and thrown away by their families.

It is the complexity surrounding the phenomenon of youth prostitution that makes the intervention of the Department of Children and Families so necessary for this population. The services that will be made available through DCF are critical for these children and adolescents; it will provide them with the resources they will need to reclaim their young lives. DCF will be able to provide them with a sense of permanency and safety, individual case management, medical services and substance abuse treatment, counseling and therapeutic services as well as educational services. Also, in some instances DCF will be able to successfully facilitate the reunification of youth with their families.

While at my field placement, I was able to speak with a DCF worker regarding the bill. She was adamant in her response. She stated that these children and adolescents are under the

legal age of self-consent, and most assuredly must be referred to DCF so that appropriate assessments' and intervention plans can be implemented in an effort to get them back on the right track in life.

I urge the committee to vote in favor of S.B. No. 1044 in an effort to reduce and or eliminate the number of youths being arrested for prostitution here in the State of Connecticut. The investigations conducted by DCF can be the states measuring instrument that can shed some light on the reasons youths are choosing to participate in such an undesirable behavior. By saying yes to this bill you are boldly proclaiming to the youth of Connecticut that their lives are valued and the outcomes of their futures are essential to the well being and success of the state.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Mallory Ham pg 3 line 22
Roberto Ceja pg 3 line 23

Center for Youth Leadership

Why wait for someone else to make a difference?

Select Committee on Children Testimony, March 1, 2011

SB 1044: An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youth Arrested for Prostitution

Good morning Representative Urban, Senator Musto and members of the committee. We have a special greeting for Representative Wood, who is from our district in Norwalk.

My name is Mallory Ham and I am a member of the Center for Youth Leadership, which is based at Brien McMahon High School. Joining me is Roberto Ceja, who is also a member of the Center.

Ten months ago, we were proud to be among a handful of people who were asked to attend the bill signing ceremony for the *Safe Harbor Act for Exploited Children*. Today, on behalf of the 226 student activists at the Center for Youth Leadership, we are here to urge you to support of SB 1044, which would require the Department of Children and Families to conduct abuse or neglect investigations of children and teens arrested for prostitution.

Although I have never been trafficked, nor have any of my friends, we do know students at our school who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home and/or experienced sexual abuse at home, all of which are huge red flags for teenagers who are lured into prostitution.

We have also volunteered with runaway and throwaway teens in two safe houses in Fairfield County. We raise awareness of human trafficking and child prostitution in Connecticut by leading two public awareness activities a month in lower Fairfield County. We piloted an eight-week trafficking curriculum at our school with Love 146, an advocacy group in New Haven. Love 146 will return to our school in the spring, and we are working with the group to introduce the curriculum to other high schools in Fairfield County. And in the coming weeks we will start an outreach project that will take us to truck stops along I-95 to educate truckers about trafficking.

While we were pleased with the passage of the safe harbor legislation, we were haunted by several questions, not the least of which is the one addressed by SB 1044. Granted, there are a ton of questions: *How many beds are available in Connecticut for teens who have been trafficked? Which staff at which state agency have been trained to address the unique needs of these teens? And are attempts made to reunify the teens with their families?*

But the question that is raised most often by our members is: *Who is being held responsible for the circumstances that lead teens my age to hit the streets in the first place?* In fact, our members raised it again just two weeks ago with news that two men from our hometown of Norwalk were arrested for transporting girls across state lines for the purpose of prostitution. They took two girls from Norwalk to Bridgeport; Bridgeport to Hartford; Hartford back to Norwalk; and eventually into Massachusetts.

We know that confidentiality laws prohibit the general public from knowing much about these teens, but don't you ever wonder what happens to them after they've been detained by the police for prostitution? We know from the Center for Children's Advocacy that among these teens are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students who have been kicked out of their homes after "coming out"; adolescent boys who are not allowed into family homeless shelters; teens who are victims of child sex abuse and trafficking; teens like me and Roberto. Sure, some are running from themselves, but more often than not they are running from homes that are violent and indifferent to their needs.

According to the National Incidence Studies of Children, one out of every three runaway or throwaway teens is lured into prostitution within 48 hours of hitting the streets. One out of every three. We're talking about teens as young as thirteen, which the University of Pennsylvania and Shared Hope International say is the average age for entry into prostitution in America.

We are talking about a group of teens that is all but invisible to the general public. It's almost like they've become refugees from their own families and the state agencies that should be caring for them; a class of people that no one is responsible for; that no one is being held accountable for. This has to stop.

That's why SB 1044 is so important. We know that a lot is asked of the Department of Children and Families, but we think this is a no-brainer. A DCF investigation within 24 hours of receiving a police report that a teen has been detained for prostitution could reveal important clues to the teens' actions. It could even lead to holding someone responsible for the circumstances that led to the teens' working the streets.

We know the governor has complicated things by cutting \$1 million for homeless youth services from DCF's budget; funding that we believe should be restored immediately. But we still urge you to support SB 1044, and to work with the Department of Children and Families, the Center for Children's Advocacy, Love 146 and other groups to identify a strategy that addresses the abuse and neglect experienced by teens from one of Connecticut's more invisible groups of people.

Thank you very much.

~ ~ ~

Center for Youth Leadership at Brien McMahon High School
300 Highland Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut 06854
203.852.9488 and www.qocyl.org

Good Afternoon Senator Musto, Representative Urban, Representative Fawcett and members of the Select Committee on Children:

My name is Nicole von Dy. I am from Love146, a non-profit organization here in CT that combats child sex slavery & exploitation. I am here in support of S.B. 1044 "AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION". I want to thank you for calling this hearing on such an important issue.

Although it is difficult to accurately depict the numbers of children trafficked with certainty, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children estimates that at least 100,000 American children each year are the victims of commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking. The average age of entry is 12-14 years old. These children are commodities for sale. They are trafficked, moved from city to city for the financial gain of those who use, abuse and control them. These children are victims of modern day slavery. They lack the ability to walk away. These children need to be rescued and restored.

I wear a few hats at Love146. One is to train adults working with youth, service providers and agencies looking for more information on the issue. I have trained many adults as well as a group of law enforcement late last year. One of my other roles within Love146 is working with adolescent girls and boys in different settings, i.e. group homes, residential facilities, communities and schools. Specifically, one curriculum we utilize is called My Life, My Choice. With this curricula, I work with adolescent girls in group homes and residential facilities educating them and giving them tools to keep themselves safe out in the community and recognize signs of sexual exploitation of children.

In a few of the homes I facilitated in, I came across girls who were willing to share their stories with me who at one point were involved in prostitution/human trafficking because they were looking for someone to love them; they were lured, coerced, or forced into it or put into it by their parents. These girls didn't want to be involved, as much as people may have thought they did.

For the past three years, DCF has been very diligent and very responsive to the issue of sexual exploitation of children. They have developed protocols to work with victims and have developed trainings to educate their social workers on the issue. In most part, because of DCF's trainings, at least 52 victims have been identified here in CT (Personal Communication, William Rivera, DCF). This is just brushing the surface. There are many more out there in need of services and need to be given the help they deserve to live a meaningful and productive life.

It is important to ensure that law enforcement begin to make these referrals so services can be provided. It is important that law enforcement make DCF their first point of so they can immediately investigate a case of a child who has been arrested for prostitution and more rapidly provide them with services that they need to begin the restoration process.

Thank you.

Center for Children's Advocacy

University of Connecticut School of Law, 65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 1044,
AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO
CONDUCT ABUSE OR NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS OF YOUTHS ARRESTED
FOR PROSTITUTION
AND
RAISED BILL NO. 1045, AN ACT PROVIDING HOMELESS YOUTHS AND
EMANCIPATED MINORS ACCESS TO BIRTH CERTIFICATES**

March 1, 2011

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Center for Children's Advocacy, a private, non-profit legal organization based at the University of Connecticut School of Law. The Center provides holistic legal services for poor children in Connecticut's communities through individual representation and systemic advocacy. I am an attorney at the Center and the Director of the Center's Teen Legal Advocacy Clinic, which provides legal services to teens throughout the state. In addition, I am the Chair of the Connecticut Team on Runaway and Homeless Youth,¹ a statewide group of professionals interested in improving access to services and supports for runaway and homeless youth in the state of Connecticut. The Team is comprised of state agencies including the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Court Support Services Division, and the State Department of Education, as well as private providers throughout the state including The Center for Children's Advocacy, The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, RYASAP, CT Coalition to End Homelessness, True Colors, Kids in Crisis as well as others.



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I am testifying today to urge you to support Raised Bill No. 1044, "An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youth Arrested for Prostitution" and Raised Bill No. 1045, "An Act Providing Homeless Youths And Emancipated Minors Access to Birth Certificates." By all accounts, the number of homeless youth has increased in CT. (Please see attached data.) The Center is supporting these bills because we believe they will improve Connecticut's ability to provide supports and services to this *invisible* population. We also hear the stories from youth who are living on their own about the obstacles they face and we believe these bills will help remove some of those obstacles.

¹ The Connecticut Team on Runaway and Homeless Youth was convened in the summer of 2008 in response to a request by the American Bar Association's Committee on Homelessness and Poverty as well as the National Network for Youth that each state bring together advocates to affect systemic change on behalf of runaway and homeless youth.

Raised Bill No. 1044, "An Act Requiring the Department of Children and Families to Conduct Abuse or Neglect Investigations of Youth Arrested for Prostitution."

What we know is that within 48 hours of leaving their home 1 in 3 teens will be lured into prostitution.² This is a very real threat. Because we know that homeless youth are targets to be lured into the life of prostitution (also called domestic minor sex trafficking), it is important that we have a mechanism for ensuring that these youth get access to critical supports and services. The first point of contact to access this help is through law enforcement with a referral to DCF. Law enforcement is the most likely entity to come into contact with these victims and DCF is best suited to provide help to these victims.

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth states that parental abuse and neglect is a primary cause of homelessness among unaccompanied youth (homeless youth who are on their own).³ The National Network for Youth estimates that according to studies of a homeless youth sample, 33% had been in foster care, 51% had been physically abused, and 60% of girls and 23% of boys had been sexually abused.⁴

Through our work with DCF on the CT Team on Runaway and Homeless Youth, we understand that DCF has identified 65 cases of youth involved in domestic minor sex trafficking. Many of these involve youth already known to DCF. This bill would help to encourage the reporting of those not already involved with DCF, those who have gone without any supports and services.

Raised Bill No. 1044 is modeled after a successful Illinois bill which requires child welfare involvement for anyone under 18 years old who is suspected of prostitution.⁵ It would make very clear that 16 and 17 year olds who are involved in prostitution need access to supports and services. **Please support Raised Bill No. 1044.**

Raised Bill No. 1045, "An Act Providing Homeless Youths And Emancipated Minors Access to Birth Certificates."

This bill would remove one of the many obstacles faced by unaccompanied homeless youth who are attempting to find work and move out of homelessness. I get the calls from youth who are on their own and cannot get copies of their birth certificates in order to get work, get a Connecticut Identification Card, sign up for food stamps or cash assistance, or become involved in a job training opportunity. Providers for homeless youth also tell us that this is an obstacle in referring youth for needed services.

² The Salvation Army- STOP IT Initiative Against Human Trafficking citing the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, <http://www.usc.salvationarmy.org/usc/www.usc.stopit.nsf/vw-text-index/954dc06d95b9cad8862573d200680763?opendocument>.

³ "Using What We Know: Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth." 39, Julianelle, Patricia, The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, February 2008, available at http://www.naehcy.org/dl/uwwk_youth.pdf.

⁴ "Unaccompanied Youth: Fast Facts" National Network for Youth, citing YouthCare, Inc., 1998, available at http://www.nn4youth.org/media/factsheets/FactSheet_Unacompanied_Youth.pdf.

⁵ Illinois Legislative Service, 2010 Legislative Session, HB 6462 section 10, "An Act Concerning Criminal Law."

H – 1120

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL.54
PART 29
9635 – 9973**

pt/tj/lxe/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

648
June 8, 2011

The bill is passed. Clerk, please call Calendar
602.

THE CLERK:

On page 29, Calendar 602, substitute for Senate
bill Number 1044, AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO BE NOTIFIED WHEN A YOUTH IS
ARRESTED FOR PROSTITUTION. Favorable report of the
Committee on Human Services.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Mr. Speaker, I move the -- the -- acceptance of
the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of
the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Question is on acceptance and passage. Will you
remark?

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Yes, Mr. Speaker. This (inaudible) to arrest a
16 or 17 year old to report alleged child abuse. I
urge passage.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

pt/tj/lxe/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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June 8, 2011

Remark further? Remark further? Representative
Wood. Representative.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 6988, Senate "A", offered by Senator
Gerratana, Urban, Fasano.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Any objection to summarization? Representative,
you may proceed.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Question is on adoption. Remark further? All
those in favor of the amendment, please signify by
saying Aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment
is adopted. Remark further on the bill as amended?
If not, staff and guests come to the Well of the
House, members take your seats, the machine will be
open.

THE CLERK:

pt/tj/lxe/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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June 8, 2011

The House of Representatives is voting by roll
call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by
roll call. Members to the Chamber.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the members voted? If all the members
have voted, please check the roll call board. If all
members have voted, the machine will be locked, Clerk
please take a tally. Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill Number 1044, as amended by Senate
"A", in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number voting	145
Necessary for passage	73
Those voting Yea	145
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	6

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill is passed.

Representative Butler. Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72nd):

In the affirmative, please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The transcript will note that Representative
Butler would be voting in the affirmative.

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL. 54
PART 15
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Committee, Mr. President, Calendar page 35,
Calendar 236, Senate Bill 371.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk,

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 44, Calendar Number 398, File
Number 10 -- correction, File Number 640 and 811,
substitute for Senate Bill 1044, AN ACT REQUIRING
THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO BE
NOTIFIED WHEN A YOUTH IS ARRESTED FOR
PROSTITUTION, Favorable Report of the Committee
on Children, Judiciary and Human Services. Clerk
is in possession of amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gerratana.

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I move acceptance of the
Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of
the bill.

THE CHAIR:

On acceptance of passage, will you remark?

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Yes. Thank you, Mr. President, I will.

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The bill before us comes from the Committee on Children. It, of course, requires that law enforcement officers, who arrest a 16 or 17 year old on prostitute charges that they -- that that incident be immediately reported to the Department of Children and Families, as alleged child abuse or neglect.

I understand that last year there was legislation that was enacted called the Safe Harbor Legislation. I understand, too, that Senator Kane and Senator Musto worked on the legislation. This is in addition to it. It came to us on the Children's Committee through Senator Musto.

Mr. President, I have at this time an amendment. If the Clerk would please call the amendment, I'd be allowed to summarize?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. If you'd give a LCO number, please?

SENATOR GERRATANA:

I'm sorry. The LCO Number is 6988.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

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THE CLERK:

LCO 6988, which would be designated Senate
Amendment Schedule "A". It's offered by Senator
Gerratana, the 6th District, et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gerratana.

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Mr. President, I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

On adoption, will you remark?

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Thank you, I will.

This amendment comes by way of Senator Fasano, here in our Chamber. Senator Fasano approached me as Co-chair of the Children's Committee. And I also consulted with Representative Urban in the House, about a situation that he brought to our attention and that is when children are placed for adoption from one state to another, specifically, from Connecticut and then being adopted in another state.

This amendment actually addresses the probate court, which may handle such adoptions,

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as well as also the court and the interstate compact on the placement of children, juvenile matters that sets in statute, a process that will ensure that when the child is leaving our state, going for adoption, that a process that will ensure that the child will be safe and that the place setting, the setting where the child will be going will be appropriate.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further on the amendment?

Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would like to thank Senator Gerratana for helping me with this amendment, as well as Representative Urban and the Commissioner of Children and Families for helping draft this legislation.

Let me just give you a quick history of why this came to my attention. There was a case in which a parent had relinquished its parental rights over a child. The child, therefore, was

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left for adoption, and it was in a foster care. The parent -- I should say the aunt and uncle from Florida, determined that they wanted to be the adoptive parent. And under the compact agreement that we have, you check with the state that the adoption would take place. And if that state agreed, the adoption would go forward.

Well, Florida did not agree in that case. And the Department of Children and Families voiced the objection, based upon Florida saying, we don't believe that the adoptive parents in Florida can raise this child, being two years old at the time.

The family court ignored the State's plea and allowed the child to be adopted by Florida relatives. Well, right now, this child is adopted by a family that the adoptive parents in Florida are not recognized, as the adoptive parents, and this child is not being looked at through the sister agency in Florida, because Florida is not recognizing that adoption. Basically, this kid is lost in the system.

Connecticut lost its jurisdiction upon the adoption. And Florida doesn't recognize the

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adoption. That isn't what the compact was supposed to be.

The compact was supposed to be two states getting together, to ensure that a child is going to be taken care of. And if there's any mistake that the judicial branch had, and what the intent of that compact or the intent of this legislature was, to protect children, what this bill is defined and reaffirm our commitment that no child will be adopted out of state, unless that state, its sister agency agrees that those adoptive parents can take care of that child. And they will watch that child down there. If we can't do that then we have hurt these children.

So Madam -- sorry. Mr. President, I thank you. And I thank the good Senator for bringing this amendment out. And I appreciate all of her help. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further on the amendment?
Remark further on the amendment? If not, I'll
try our minds. All those in favor, please
signify by saying, aye.

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SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Those opposed, nay. The ayes have it. The
bill is adopted as amended.

Will you remark further on the bill as
amended? Senator Kane.

SENATOR KANE:

Thank you, Mr. President.

I, too, rise in favor of the underlying
bill. And I thank Senator Gerratana and Senator
Musto for their work on this bill.

This ties into a bill that I was very much
involved with last year, which was a Safe Harbor
for Exploited Children. And this creates a
technical fix, which is certainly needed. And I
appreciate their hard work and look forward to
its passage.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator.

Will you remark further on the bill as
amended? Will you remark further on the bill as
amended?

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Senator Gerratana.

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Thank you, Mr. President.

If there's no objection, I ask that this item be placed on Consent.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR GERRATANA:

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Calendar page 35, Calendar Number 236, File Number 366, Senate Bill 371, AN ACT CONCERNING INDICATION OF A PERSON'S STATUS AS A VETERAN ON A MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENSE AND IDENTIFY CARD, Favorable Report of the Committee on Veteran's Affairs, Transportation and Appropriations. Clerk is in possession of amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Leone.

SENATOR LEONE:

Thank you, Mr. President. And good evening

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Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

And at this time, I'd ask if there's --
seeing no objection, the bill will be put on
Consent.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Good evening,
again, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Good evening, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Madam President would like to have the Clerk
call the items on the Consent Calendar, so that
we might move to a vote on that Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

An immediate roll call has been ordered in
the Senate on the First Consent Calendar. Will
all Senators please return to the Chamber?

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the
Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all
Senators please return to the Chamber?

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Madam President, the items placed on the First Consent Calendar begin on Calendar page 1, Calendar 571, House Joint Resolution Number 122; Calendar 593, Senate Joint Resolution Number 52; Calendar page 3, Calendar Number 130, substitute for Senate Bill 999; Calendar page 5, Calendar Number 221, substitute for Senate Bill 858; Calendar 222, substitute for Senate Bill 973; Calendar page 7, Calendar Number 270, substitute for Senate Bill 212; Calendar 299, substitute for Senate Bill 139; Calendar 304, substitute for Senate Bill 860; Calendar page 10, Calendar Number 439, substitute for Senate Bill 1216; Calendar page 11, Calendar 456, substitute for Senate Bill 927; Calendar page 29, Calendar Number 41, substitute for Senate Bill 98; Calendar page 31, Calendar Number 114, substitute for Senate Bill 881; Calendar page 32, Calendar 140, substitute for Senate Bill 863; Calendar page 34, Calendar Number 201, substitute for Senate Bill 1038; Calendar page 35, Calendar 215, Senate Bill 227; Calendar 236, Senate Bill 371; Calendar page 37, Calendar Number 271, substitute for Senate Bill 1111, Calendar page 38, Calendar

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293, substitute for Senate Bill 1103; Calendar page 39, Calendar 303, substitute for Senate Bill 764; Calendar page 40, Calendar 342, Senate Bill 843; Calendar page 41, Calendar 362, substitute for Senate Bill 1217; Calendar 368, substitute for Senate Bill 882; Calendar 369, substitute for Senate Bill 939; Calendar page 43, Calendar 382, substitute for Senate Bill 1224; Calendar page 44, Calendar 398, substitute for Senate Bill 1044; Calendar page 45, Calendar 410, House Bill 5021; Calendar page 46, Calendar 434, substitute for Senate Bill 1219.

Madam President, that completes the items placed on the First Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

We'll wait a moment. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, there is one item that we will need to remove from the Consent Calendar, because it needs to be amended and be reconsidered and then amended, and that is Calendar page 5, Calendar 222, Senate Bill 973. If that item might be removed from the Consent

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Calendar and called after the Consent Calendar,
so it can be corrected?

THE CHAIR:

The bill is removed from the Consent
Calendar. At this time, Mr. Clerk, will you re-
announce the roll call vote and the machine will
be open?

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the
Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all
Senators please return to the Chamber? Immediate
roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the
Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please
return to the Chamber?

THE CHAIR:

All members voted? All members have noted.
The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you
call the tally?

THE CLERK:

Motions on adoption and Consent Calendar

Number 1:

Total number voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0

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Those absent, not voting 0

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passed. Mr. Clerk, do you want to recall that bill? Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if that item might -- might be passed temporarily, I believe the amendment that would be a strike-all that we needed is not -- not here yet. So we will pass that item.

SB913

Madam President would yield the floor for Members for purposes of announcements or points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there any announcements or points of personal privilege? Any point of personal privilege or announcements? Seeing none.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, it's our intention to convene tomorrow at 11:00. Also, advise Members that you should make the weekend, especially Saturday, available for possible session, as