

**PA12-082**

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**JOINT  
STANDING  
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**SELECT  
COMMITTEE  
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happy to have you on this committee and we really look forward to working with you.

At that same time, I would also say that we are missing Representative Hamm and we hope and pray that she is doing very well, but we know that Representative Rose will be a great addition and will help us get good things done for children. So welcome, Representative.

And now I'll turn it back to my cochair to get us going with, I believe it's COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Yes, thank you, Representative Urban.

Our first person to testify is Commissioner Joette Katz of the Department of Children and Families.

Welcome, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Thank you so much. And if it's okay I'm -- I brought with members of the Department who can answer questions and if it's all right with you I'd ask them to have a seat.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you, yes. Please proceed.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: Thank you.

Good afternoon, Senator Gerratana, Representative Urban and members of the Select Committee on Children. I'm Joette Katz, Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families and I'm here to offer our support on several bills on your public hearing agenda.

The first three bills that I will address were introduced by DCF and I thank the committee for

SB192  
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The third and final DCF is H.B. Nnumber 5217,  
AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTES  
CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND  
FAMILIES. This omnibus Bill makes a number of  
technical and/or minor changes to various DCF  
statutes. Our written testimony includes a  
section-by-section summary of the Bill and I  
would just like to highlight a few of these  
changes specifically.

Sections 4 and 5 amend Section 17A dash 28 of  
the General Statutes to make technical and  
minor changes to Section 17A-28 of the General  
Statutes, which is the CDF confidentiality and  
access to records statute. Last year with your  
support we enacted a major overhaul of this  
statutes and we're back this year with some  
minor clean-up language.

Section 6 would rename Riverview Hospital in  
Middletown and Connecticut Children's Place in  
East Windsor as the Albert J. Solnit Children's  
Center north and south campuses. Dr. Albert J.  
Solnit, the former Commissioner of Department  
of Mental Health and Addiction Services was  
also the long-time director of the Yale Child  
Study Center. He was a recognized  
international expert in child psychiatry. Last  
year the Department consolidated the operations  
of the two facilities under a single management  
structure.

Sections 8 and 9 of the omnibus Bill recognize  
the statutes regarding the failure to report  
suspected child abuse or neglect by a mandated  
reporter. Section 10 clarifies jurisdiction of  
the statute regarding the false reporting of  
childhood abuse.

Section 11 establishes a procedure for  
individuals whose names have been on the child  
abuse and neglect registry for at least five

years to show good cause for removal. Under the proposal good exists when the applicant has been rehabilitated, the person has accepted personal responsibility for the acts or omissions that resulted in his or her being included in the registry in the first instance, a bonafide need to remove his or her name and at least two supporting letters are submitted from competent adults. DCF must develop the application and include space for the applicant to specify the basis for his or her good cause claim. The applicant is entitled to a contested case hearing if DCF denies the request and those whose applications are denied can reapply every two years indicating on each subsequent application good cause that has arisen since the last application.

Section 14 reveals a property conveyance concerning property owned by DCF at the former Long Lane School in Middletown. This conveyance was originally enacted in 1999 as part of Legislation concerning the construction of the Connecticut Juvenile Training Facility. While most of the former Long Lane School property was transferred to Wesleyan University, these properties were to be conveyed to the City of Middletown. At the request of the city this conveyance has been amended twice, in 2005 and again in 2009, but now the city is not interested in finalizing the transaction. DCF requests that this property conveyance be repealed so that the property can be disposed of in accordance with standard surplus state property requirements.

Regarding other bills on your agenda today, DCF supports Senate Bill Number 156 which is AN ACT CONCERNING SIBLING VISITATION FOR CHILDREN IN THE CARE AND CUSTODY OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. We concur with the important of this -- of this Bill to

deal of interaction with children should be included on the list of those mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Currently, Connecticut's mandated reporting law Section 17A-101 of the General Statutes does not apply to youth, college or university coaches. We believe that this is a gap that should be addressed and we want to work with you this session to remedy this.

Finally, while we appreciate the intent behind House Bill Number 5186, AN ACT ADOPTING A FOSTER PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS, we have some concerns -- regarding the language of the Bill as written. While most of these provisions are reasonable expectations of the relationship between the Department and our foster parents, we do have concerns that enacting this language in State Law would subject the state to litigation in which foster parents could assert that the state is legally responsible to provide the services that -- that support the specific provisions of this Legislation.

This concludes my testimony and I'd be happy to answer any questions that may have and thank you for this opportunity.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you, Commissioner. I certainly appreciate the comprehensive approach and all of your comments. And at this time I ask if there are any questions.

Yes, Senator Suzio.

SENATOR SUZIO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Commissioner, for showing today. I feel like I'm getting to know you personally. I see you so often these days. Just a quick comment. I know a woman with your background and intelligence is probably a speed reader but

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I didn't know you were a speed speaker. That was incredible, just following you, I was just trying to zoom along.

I have just a couple questions. If I may ask, in terms of your testimony on -- regarding House Bill 5217 and Section 11. The -- there's a phrase in there that you have to establish a, quote, a bonafide need to remove his or her name. What would be a bonafide need?

TOM DEMATTEO: Good afternoon, Senator. My name is Tom DeMatteo, I'm an assistant legal director at DCF.

The need that we anticipate is employment or licensing. Background checks of the DCF central registry are used for people who apply for daycare licenses. Last year the -- the Legislature required that all teachers have to have background checks -- we're talking about camp employees, a number of -- anybody who works with children frequently will be -- will be asked to undergo a background check at DCF, same thing with licenses. So this would be a -- a barrier to their being able to be employed or licensed in their professions. That's the bonafide need we're thinking about. It's not just a matter of being on the registry, it's also affecting your ability to -- to work or be licensed.

SENATOR SUZIO: So in other words we're talking about a situation where someone is going to be involved with minors and -- and who -- people who are potentially vulnerable and we're talking about removing them from this list so that they can be employed in that capacity. So it would seem to me that -- I mean that's something I'd be concerned about to some extent, I don't know, I'm sure there are psychological tests and assessments that are

done but, boy, before we let somebody back in -  
- somebody's got a history of it, seems to me  
the standard ought to be very, very high.

TOM DEMATTEO: I think the good -- the good cause  
standard in the statute is pretty high and, you  
know, we'd be looking for -- basically what  
we'd be looking for is rehabilitation, change,  
from the circumstances that gave rise to the  
substantiation and placement on the registry  
what has changed.

So I think you're right, it might be  
information from -- from physicians, from  
professionals, it might be a change in -- in  
lifestyle, all different things. And this is  
an include -- including but not limited to list  
so we would be looking at other factors as  
well.

SENATOR SUZIO: And unless they prove that need, in  
other words if they're involved in a situation  
let's say where their job had nothing to do  
with this or wouldn't be involved, even though  
they've been rehabilitated they would still  
stay on the list?

TOM DEMATTEO: As this Bill is currently drafted,  
yes. The idea would be that we would -- and I  
think it's more a matter of trying to control  
the volume of these kinds of cases to limit it  
to those who need to come off the registry.

SENATOR SUZIO: And it would be proactive on the  
part of the applicant, they would have to come  
and ask for -- it wouldn't be something that  
would automatically be done.

TOM DEMATTEO: No, they would be filing the  
application.

operate a camp at all because they -- they couldn't hire the people in time. I mean, I think, I applaud the intent of the whole thing, it's a question of making it workable and practicable. And again since a lot of -- the people that work in these camps tend to be teenagers themselves, not that they can't do some pretty bad stuff. But I guess what we'll have to do is clarify that as we go through the -- reviewing the Bill itself, but I just wanted to know what your opinion or position was on that.

COMMISSIONER JOETTE KATZ: If I can comment twofold. First of all with regard -- or make an additional comment rather. With regard to your first question, in terms of background, not background checks, I'm sorry, people seeking to get off the registry. I mean we can all imagine that somebody may have a past and it could be 25 years ago. I mean certainly I -- I can tell you that that's the approach we're taking with families, relatives who are seeking to get custody of their children when in fact - - we have to remove children from biological parents and we first -- our first placement is to look for a relative.

In many instances we have relatives who may have a significant history or maybe not a significant history but certainly a history enough that would have caused a substantiation in their own lives with -- with their own children who are in fact now the parents that we're dealing with. And not -- not to talk about it's all about forgiveness, but it really is all about rehabilitation and so this would give us an opportunity and there was a recent case that came across my desk last week that involved one such individual and he had a drug history, but it was a 25-year-old drug history and through his own drug counseling and

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rehabilitative efforts he has totally reformed his life and is now in a position of taking care and custody of his grandchildren and -- and we brought services in and did our own evaluation and I'm happy to say that the family's doing quite well.

So that's just an example and I think frankly if I'm going to provide that same lens within the agency, I -- I -- it would be hypocritical frankly not to extend it beyond to the general public dealing with families who have crossed our paths before. So that's with regard to the first question.

Your second question, my -- my biggest interest, I mean certainly we are testifying in support of both a criminal history and mandated reporters and I -- and my biggest focus in on the mandated reporting of athletic coaches and you -- you gave me the opportunity to testify about that a couple of weeks ago and I realize that -- that this is cumbersome but we get this frankly with school teachers who are often hired in August, when somebody goes out on maternity leave or family with medical leave and we have to -- we don't -- we don't give them a pass. We think it's important enough that we partner with them, we do whatever mandated education we have to do so that -- to teach them to be mandated reporters, et cetera on few weeks' notice and hopefully we'll be able to put a lot of the -- do it through the Internet.

But again, it's important enough that we're prepared to assume the responsibility and partner with these agencies and I think it's important enough to require this of facilities, particularly camps, dealing with young children.

SB 193

JAMEY BELL: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Next to testify is Joan Kaufman from Yale University School of Medicine on Senate Bill 156.

JOAN KAUFMAN: And if it's okay, I'd like to make a comment. Is it Senate Bill 5217 where the thought is to take people off the list of child abuse neglect?

SENATOR GERRATANA: Yes, 5217, the Department did, I think it's in Section 8 or 9 or 11, but that's the one.

JOAN KAUFMAN: If it's okay I'd like to just add a comment on that one as well but.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Sure, absolutely. Just, you know, I'm sorry, administratively we do need to have people introduce themselves before they give testimony, if you would do so and then go for it.

JOAN KAUFMAN: Sure. My name is Dr. Joan Kaufman, I'm a child clinical psychologist. I am also a federally-funded research study -- researcher studying risk and resiliency in maltreated children and on faculty in the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine.

In terms of Senate Bill 156, should children in care have an opportunity to see their siblings on a regular basis, I think if any one of us were to ask our mothers our mothers would say of course they need to see their siblings on a regular basis. But speaking as a professional, what we do know is that when siblings are separated from one another they are increased risk for experiencing depression, anxiety,

problems with anger. We also know separation from siblings increases the likelihood of there being disruptions in adoptions and foster care placements. The presence of positive stable supports is the most important factor in promoting resiliency and siblings is a part of that network which helps to promote resiliency, positive adaptation in children.

So without a doubt it is clinically indicated. If it is clinically indicated it is in the best interest of the child to work to try to support visitation on a regular basis.

If there's questions on that or let me just move forward. I don't see the two issues as being totally parallel. Taking someone off the child abuse list to allow them 20 years later to parent, be a grandparent and take care of a grandchild versus to be employed. When a parent -- a grandparent might become a caregiver for a child, it's a family decision and the family members are making it knowing the history of prior abuse, addiction and are making an informed consent.

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If I'm sending my child to a camp without that knowledge of someone's past, it's not an informed consent and to me it's not a parallel situation. And as a professional I would -- it's hard to really make that full evaluation whether or not someone relapses is the rule not the exception.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you for that comment on -- well, actually your comments on both Legislation.

Are there any questions or discussion with our presenter? If not, thank you so much for coming here today.

JEREMIAH ROMERO: Yes.

REP. URBAN: Okay, so he's right across the border.  
Then you have another sibling still in Florida?

JEREMIAH ROMERO: Yes, she's still in Florida and  
she still has trouble because she's not able to  
see the rest of her family.

REP. URBAN: How old is she?

JEREMIAH ROMERO: She just turned 15.

REP. URBAN: Okay, so these the ones that -- we know  
that our Commissioner is trying very hard to  
bring children back to Connecticut.

JEREMIAH ROMERO: She's been adopted so it's --

REP. URBAN: Oh, so she's adopted now, so, okay.  
Well good and bad.

JEREMIAH ROMERO: Yes.

REP. URBAN: Thank you so very much for coming up.

JEREMIAH ROMERO: Thank you so much.

REP. URBAN: Your voice is so important, thank you.

JEREMIAH ROMERO: You're welcome.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Okay. Next person is Sheila  
Matthews from Able Child, I think.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Hi.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Hi, Sheila.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Hi, I'm Sheila Matthews, I'm with  
a national parent organization called Able

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Child and I recently worked on a one-year investigative report with Diane Sawyer on the foster care system. I provided her with information from the state of Connecticut regarding the drugging of children in foster care. And I'm here to talk about -- H.B. 5217, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTE CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES. I also sit on the Behavioral Health Committee which this Bill refers to in the beginning of the Advisory Committee. And basically I'm opposed to this Bill on renaming Riverview. I think that is a joke, to rename Riverview is not addressing the problem. Basically, it costs the state almost 1 million per child to -- to treat in -- in Riverview and our Medicare is being billed for this. And -- and renaming Riverview is -- is not appropriate. This -- this Bill being a technical Bill is a shame. This Bill could really give this committee an opportunity to protect children in foster care and state care and reform it, reform it.

So my suggestion is a couple of things. Is one, to not rename it but to break up this Behavioral Health Committee that reports to the governor. It is all behavioral health vendors, they have a dog in the race and there's no speech and language experts included on the committee. Behavior is a direct result of communication. When you do not teach children communication, they have behavioral problems. So my suggestion is to insert into this Bill some language that will provide speech and language services to children and have, not psychiatry and these vendors diagnose children as they come into state care but to -- to have an opportunity to have a speech and language expert evaluate the child to see where they are with cause and effect and sequencing because if

they can't do -- do that, then they -- they are reactive.

I provided Diane Sawyer with the pharmacy report from Riverview which was disgraceful. Some of these children are on massive amounts of drugs that are not FDA approved for children. I'm disappointed that the Commissioner left because, you know, I've been working in this issue here in Connecticut for 10 years and I've seen Commissioner come and go. I've seen governors come and go and I've seen parents come and go before this committee and your faces and nothing is changing. Nothing. And we are paying for this, taxpayers.

So I would be happy to work with the committee, I would be happy to provide each one of you suggestions that are low cost and -- and to break up the psychiatry monopoly within this Department. Because basically, that's the problem here. It's not renaming and providing -- you know, I think it's disgraceful to come before this committee as a Commissioner and say I want to make technical changes. We need more than technical changes, we need reforms. And Diane Sawyer has bravely gone before the nation and showed children holding up bags of medication saying I've been placed on this by the state.

So I -- I really do want to help and -- and I appreciate your power here in the Legislature, I've met with the governor, I'm disappointed in him, but I'm disappointed in both Republicans and Democrats. I'm here as -- as a mom. I have two boys and -- and there is moms and dads that don't have a voice here. I want to be their voice. I want to help the state save money, but I want to help the state protect children in state care.

So -- and then why I'm here -- I -- I do want to raise my voice regarding other bills, I never really prepare my testimony. But, you know what, on Senate Bill, sibling visitation rights, that's a no-brainer. I support that.

The H.B. 5185, AN ACT CONCERNING INTERVIEWING IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT -- I oppose that. Because I really strongly believe that a parent has the right to be present when their child is questioned. So I -- that scares me that Bill.

The foster parent bill of rights, I support that, 5186, absolutely.

So I -- I'm willing to work with the committee, I'd like to send you some testimony privately and thank you for your time.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you, Sheila. Thank you for all you testimony on the Legislation and you raised some significant concerns.

Are there any questions or? Ah, Representative Mushinsky.

REP. MUSHINSKY: Thanks for coming in. And I did want to ask you when the -- in the rare occasion when the parent is actually the source of the child's abuse, would it not be best to interview them separately. For example, you must have -- be familiar with the case where the child just escaped from the house, ran down the street barefoot, had been kept in the basement without food or toileting for, you know, months and months and was pretty much skeletal. This was -- the two parents did this to this child. It would not be appropriate I don't think in that case to have the parent who obviously intimidated this child enough that she didn't try to escape until she was almost

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dead. I think it would be inappropriate in that case to have them both in the same room. The child is not going to testify under the threat of that parent.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Well, I assume that there's evidence through a police report, I assume that the parents are being charged under a criminal statute so you're going to have a child go and provide date for the trial? Or are you going to -- what is -- how old was that child?

REP. MUSHINSKY: I believe she was 14.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Yes, I'm sure she has -- I'm sure the parents had the police there and they are already being -- they're already in custody and they're already being charged with something, right? So why would you need the child to -- the evidence was her running down the street, correct?

REP. MUSHINSKY: Well, in that case it was. But I'm just saying that on occasion the committee has heard about cases where one of the parents actually was inflicting harm on the child and in that type of case it's really dangerous to put the two together because you're -- you're going to get -- you're going to get testimony that never emerges.

SHEILA MATTHEWS: Well, that's a specific case and, you know, I just am strongly -- support informed consent and I believe that DCF's record is horrible regarding taking children without due process so, you know, giving them more power to do that concerns me a great deal. And another one piece that was -- a lot of people mentioned up here was this mandated reporting. Under H.B. 5217 in Section D, this is -- this is exactly what I'm talking about, it says any mandated reporter as defined in

CHERYL MARTONE: I'm just going to set this up because I heard that it's not being recorded so I'm going to record myself.

They're not recording it, I already called ahead. I've been enough at these hearings to know better.

Good afternoon, Select Committee on Children. My name is Cheryl Martone and I think you all know who I am. I'm an activist. I do my activism work and my public awareness testimony being made in speeches many places and here at Legislation. I hope that Governor Malloy, President Obama and our great Senators and Representatives and all of you that can do anything to prevent the atrocities that are being created by this deplorable entity called DCF. Because I interview many parents, I've been investigating this agency for three years now because of things that -- harassment, many things that have been done to myself and my child.

And I'm here on behalf of the childrens and parents whose children were taken away illegally by false reporting to the agency called DCF and illegal and erroneous investigating done by the CPS agents. I'm talking about many public awareness -- making public awareness about what DCF, family court, school administrators, Yale's evaluators and therapists have done. And I'm not going to read my whole written testimony because you already have that.

I'm just going to elaborate on what Sheila said about the workers being -- in this Bill 5217 -- I think it -- I think it's in that bill, that when there's a -- when a worker does see a child being harassed or abused by another

worker, is there an agency or is there oversight in Legislation or somewhere that disciplines these workers. Because I have made harassment report about a worker and nothing was done about it.

So what I'm saying is, is that but -- DCF makes false reports on parents all the time and they get arrested for a false report. But does DCF workers get arrested, or do they get disciplined for making -- doing abusive things to children? Because I see it all the time, I work with parents all the time, I go to court with parents all the time, and it is really sad and inhumane that DCF is continually allowed to get away with this taking of children.

Every Legislator and every DCF agent, social worker in this state should read -- get a copy of the constitution because I don't think that they know our constitutional rights. And I have met with many families and children all the time, I meet with them all the time, go to court with parents, I advocate for parents all the time. And DCF and many entities in the family and juvenile courts do not uphold our constitutional rights and I want to know if there's any bill of rights for parents. And it states in the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, our laws, no state shall make or abridge any law which shall enforce any law which shall abridge the privilege or immunities of citizens of the U.S. nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law, not deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

They're destroying our lineage. I'm here to testify on behalf of innocent parents. I know that there's parents out there who do things wrong, abuse their children, but for the most part half of the children, I would say, on my

expertise and experience that I have been doing with families, that half of the children do not need to be in DCF's care or taken by state entities. And of course I say in this letter, too, I challenge the Commissioner which she already left so she's not going to know that I challenge her, of DCF, Joette Katz to hold a meeting forum with parents on the issues of \*necessary harm to our children to be put in a nutshell by the illegal taking of our children.

And I do want to state in Bill, in this Bill, Section 10, 17A, and I say it in my written testimony, of the General Statutes, any person who's alleged to have knowingly made a false report of a child -- of child abuse or neglect pursuant to -- in this Bill -- to the chief state's attorneys for purpose of a criminal investigation. This should include language about DCF themselves. He's going to be busy with this cause unless DCF starts meeting with innocent parents who have been made false reports about, well I guess we better get busy, and does the state have a different office or role for reporting DCF for making their own false reports.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Cheryl, I'm sorry. I know the bell went off. But would you do me a favor, please. Would you not just summarize but I did want to hear about your son, I know you have some testimony in here. If you'd be so kind.

CHERYL MARTONE: My son, they shoved my son into a special ed school. My child did not have mental health problems before he was taken illegally by DCF. Now he's emotionally disturbed after DCF had him in their clutches. And recently, and I've talked to you about this, Senator Gerratana, in your office, that he was put in a -- there goes my mind blank

because it's very unnerving that he was put in a scream room, or what do you call those rooms?

SENATOR GERRATANA: Seclusion rooms, right.

CHERYL MARTONE: Seclusion rooms which is like -- those people got to be crazy, they should lock them up because no child should be put in any -- kind of seclusion or restraint in school and I don't want to go off on it because you know I will be I feel that that -- that's disgusting. And I consulted with other children outside of my son, not talked to him about it too much because it -- didn't cause more harm for my child and they -- they told me that they were at this -- I talked to a child that was at my son's school and they said they have thick walls like a prison cell and it's a huge lock with a timer on it. So now I'm giving you absolute testimony about what -- take -- the taking of these children by DCF, what harm it does to their mind and destroys them ultimately and their life is destroyed for the rest of their lives. Unless they have their natural parents in their life that brought them up to be good children.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you.

CHERYL MARTONE: Good parents having good children. My child had a life before DCF got them in their evil clutches and I'm being nice about that. I've been arrested how many times because of the false reporting by DCF, all thrown out but because they -- they just think they're the child police, not. We need to take that authority, power away from them because they think that they're -- they're the child police or something.

SENATOR GERRATANA: All right. Well, Cheryl, thank you so much for giving your testimony today, we

do appreciate it. And just so you know, we will be having a hearing, I think it's next week perhaps, but in the future on the seclusion rooms also. And I thank you very much.

CHERYL MARTONE: I appreciate it --

SENATOR GERRATANA: You're welcome.

CHERYL MARTONE: -- that if this Bill -- I'm opposed to this Bill because --

SENATOR GERRATANA: That is clear.

CHERYL MARTONE: It doesn't help children. It doesn't help children and -- and it separates them -- it ruins their lineage. DCF does not care, children do not have a voice. It's destroying our country's lineage. And the family's lineage.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Thank you. Thank you, Cheryl.

CHERYL MARTONE: Thank you for listening, I appreciate it.

SENATOR GERRATANA: We do, too, thank you so much.

CHERYL MARTONE: Have a good evening.

SENATOR GERRATANA: Next to testify is Noreen Bachteler, I believe.

Noreen, hi, welcome.

NOREEN BACHTELER: Good evening Cochair Senator Gerratana, Cochair Representative Urban and distinguished members of the Select Committee on Children. My name is Noreen Bachteler and I come before you today as an individual member of the Connecticut Council on Adoption to speak

SB192



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Public Hearing Testimony  
Select Committee on Children  
February 28, 2012



**S.B. No. 192 AN ACT CONCERNING FINALIZING ADOPTIONS BY THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR JUVENILE MATTERS**

The Department of Children and Families supports S. B. No. 192 - An Act Concerning Finalizing Adoptions by the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. This proposal is part of DCF's legislative package this year, and we thank the Committee for raising the bill.

This bill would permit the finalization of adoptions in the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters for those cases under the jurisdiction of the Court for purposes of a termination of parental rights (TPR) petition. The Superior Court for Juvenile Matters has detailed knowledge of the case including the child's best interest and the care the child received by the proposed adoptive parents. Approximately 1,000 adoptions are finalized each year by Probate Courts and this legislation would impact 500 to 600 adoptions. The non-DCF adoptions finalized by Probate Courts are typically step-parent adoptions and adoptions facilitated by private child-placing agencies.

The data below from FY 2011 shows that it takes just under one year (11.6 months) on average from termination of parental rights to adoption finalization. The median length of time is 6.9 months. We believe that this bill can decrease this length of time between termination of parental rights and adoption and permit permanency for the child and the adoptive family.

DCF Office	FY 2011 Adoptions	Time from TPR to Adoption	
		Average	Median
Bridgeport	25	7.8 months	6.1 months
Danbury	17	9.7 months	4.8 months
Hartford	75	10.3 months	6.8 months
Manchester	62	9.1 months	6.7 months
Menden	23	15.7 months	4.5 months
Middletown	9	12.4 months	4.8 months
Milford	17	17.6 months	7.5 months
New Britain	59	12.7 months	7.4 months
New Haven	48	13.5 months	10.6 months
Norwalk	8	14.9 months	4.9 months
Norwich	63	8.5 months	4.6 months
Stamford	6	15.9 months	9.8 months
Torrington	28	8.8 months	5.2 months
Waterbury	56	16.4 months	10.2 months
Willimantic	23	9.9 months	5.7 months
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>11.6 months</b>	<b>6.9 months</b>

HB5185

HB5217

SB156

SB157

SB193

HB5186

**H.B. No. 5185 AN ACT CONCERNING INTERVIEWS IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES**

The Department of Children and Families **supports** H. B. No. 5185 - An Act Concerning Interviews in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases. This proposal is part of DCF's legislative package this year, and we thank the Committee for raising the bill.

This bill would permit DCF to interview a child in a child protective investigation without parental consent in those limited circumstances when obtaining such consent would place the child at risk of physical harm. Currently, DCF has the legal authority to interview children without parental consent in cases in which the parent or guardian is the alleged perpetrator of physical abuse. The Department believes that this change would strike a reasonable balance between child safety and the rights of the alleged perpetrator, and is consistent with changes the Department is initiating through our new Strengthening Families Practice Model.

**H.B. No. 5217 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

The Department of Children and Families **supports** H. B. No. 5217 - An Act Concerning Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Children and Families. This proposal is part of DCF's legislative package this year, and we thank the Committee for raising the bill.

This bill makes a number of technical and/or minor changes to various DCF statutes. The bill accomplishes the following:

- Section 1 amends section 17a-1 of the General Statutes to modify a reference to the Children's Behavioral Health Council.
- Section 2 amends section 17a-4 of the General Statutes to modify the membership of the State Advisory Council on Children and Families to include representation from each of the Regional Advisory Councils. It also permits members to serve three consecutive two-year terms, which is the same as the Advisory Council for the Department of Developmental Services.
- Section 3 amends section 17a-4a of the General Statutes to change the appointing authority for sixteen of the members of the Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Committee from the Chairperson of the State Advisory Council on Children and Families to the Commissioner of Children and Families.
- Sections 4 and 5 amends section 17a-28 of the General Statutes to make technical and minor changes to section 17a-28 of the General Statutes, the DCF confidentiality and access to records statute.
- Section 6 would rename Riverview Hospital in Middletown and Connecticut Children's Place in East Windsor as the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center (North and South Campuses). Dr. Albert J. Solnit, the former Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, was also the long-time Director of the Yale Child Study Center. He

was a recognized international expert in child psychiatry. Last year, the Department consolidated the operations of the two facilities under a single management structure. For additional information regarding the consolidation plan, please see the report entitled "*The Future of Riverview Hospital for Children and Youth: Ten Steps Forward.*"

- Section 7 amends section 17b-221a of the General Statutes to change a reference to Riverview Hospital.
- Sections 8 and 9 reorganize the statutes regarding the failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect by a mandated reporter under sections 17a-101 and 17a-101a of the General Statutes.
- Section 10 clarifies jurisdiction under section 17a-101e of the General Statutes regarding the false reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- Section 11 establishes a procedure for individuals whose names have been on the child abuse and neglect registry for at least five years to show good cause for removal. Under the proposal, good cause includes: 1) the applicant has been rehabilitated; 2) the person has accepted personal responsibility for the acts or omissions that resulted in his or her being included in the registry; 3) a bona fide need to remove his or her name; and 4) at least two supporting letters are submitted from competent adults. DCF must develop the application and include space for the applicant to specify the basis for his or her good cause claim. The applicant is entitled to a contested case hearing if DCF denies the request. Those whose applications are denied can reapply every two years, indicating on each subsequent application good cause that has arisen since the last application.
- Section 12 amends section 52-259a of the General Statutes to waive the fee for certified copies of criminal records for DCF employees acting in the performance of their duties. The proposal would exempt DCF from having to pay copy fees to the courts. Currently, the statute exempts the Division of Criminal Justice, the Division of Public Defender Services, any employee of the Judicial Department, the Attorney General, the Office of Consumer Counsel, the Department of Revenue Services, the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the Freedom of Information Commission, the Board of Labor Relations, the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, the Office of the Victim Advocate and the Department of Social Services.
- Section 13 amends section 17a-107 of the General Statutes to correct an obsolete reference to the Commissioner of Youth Services.
- Section 14 repeals a property conveyance concerning property owned by DCF at the former Long Lane School in Middletown. This conveyance was originally enacted in 1999 as part of legislation concerning the construction of the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. While most of the former Long Lane School property was sold/transferred to Wesleyan University, these properties were to be conveyed to the City of Middletown. At the request of the City, this conveyance has been amended twice (in 2005 and 2009), but now the City is not interested in finalizing the transaction. DCF requests that this property conveyance be repealed so that the property can be disposed of in accordance with standard surplus state property requirements.

## CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February Session, 2012

Raised Bill No. 5217**An Act Concerning Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Children and  
Families;****Section 11 - Registry Removal**

Referred to Select Committee on Children

## REMARKS OF ATTY. MICHAEL H. AGRANOFF

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I have been a DCF defense lawyer since 1991. At present, ours is the only law firm in the State of Connecticut providing full-service DCF defense to private-paying adults on a full-time basis.

Section 11 of the present bill provides a mechanism for persons who have been placed on the state child abuse and neglect registry to be removed from the registry for good cause. Our

office has been working with DCF for over three years to have this bill introduced, and we commend DCF for raising it.

The bill removes a serious anomaly in the Connecticut state justice system. At present, it is possible for a person convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony, including murder, to receive a pardon; but there is no mechanism to be "pardoned" or removed from the registry. Therefore, a person may suffer serious lifetime employment or other consequences, due to a one-time act for which he or she has long since atoned, and even if he or she is clearly no longer a danger to children. Additionally, many persons are on the registry for one-time non-serious acts committed before October 1, 2005, when being substantiated meant automatic registry placement.

This office has represented many non-dangerous persons who were not even aware that they were on the registry, yet found themselves unable to secure employment. It must be noted that few if any of those persons were aware of their right to legal counsel when first being investigated by DCF. In short, we often have innocent, unrepresented persons unable to get a job, with no means to redress the situation.

With this bill, a person has a reasonable chance to prove that he or she should be removed from the registry. The requirements for a DCF registry removal application are reasonable. Further, the availability of an administrative appeal remedy also protects the applicant.

Our office supports this bill as being long overdue for the citizens of Connecticut.

Respectfully Submitted,

MICHAEL H. AGRANOFF

Attorney At Law

mha.LOB.testimony.5217.registry



*Division of Public Defender Services  
State of Connecticut*

ATTORNEY CHRISTINE PERRA RAPILLO  
DIRECTOR OF DELINQUENCY DEFENSE & CHILD PROTECTION

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN  
FEBRUARY 28, 2012

TESTIMONY OF CHRISTINE RAPILLO  
DIRECTOR OF DELINQUENCY DEFENSE AND CHILD PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

RAISED BILL 5217, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports Raised Bill 5217, An Act Concerning Revisions to Statutes Concerning the Department of Children and Families. This proposal makes mostly minor and technical changes to the governing statutes of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). This Bill makes one revision that is of utmost importance to our Agency. Section 5(g)(6) would allow the Chief Public Defender or the Chief Public Defender's designee access to the records of DCF for the purpose of "ensuring competent representation by the attorneys with whom the Chief Public Defender contracts to provide legal and guardian ad litem services to the subjects of such records, and for ensuring accurate payments for services rendered by such attorneys".

The Division of Public Defender Services has been working diligently to consolidate the operations of the Commission on Child Protection into our Agency. Evaluating the quality of the legal services provided by the lawyers who represent children and families is a challenge. Furthermore, responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars requires that we be able to monitor work done, confirm that clients were assisted in an effective manner, and make payments in an accurate and timely manner. Review of DCF records is likely to be rare and would happen only in cases where a concern or complaint could not be resolved in some other way. The ability to see the DCF file will be critical to reviewing a lawyer's work on behalf of a child or parent client, as it will be a tangible record of the case activity outside the court proceedings. The Office of Chief Public Defender thanks Commissioner Katz and DCF for including this in their proposal and urges this committee to act favorably on the Bill.

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Written Testimony by: Cheryl Martone  
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On: Tues. Feb. 28, 2012 Public Hearing  
Select Committee on Children  
Chairs: Senator Terry B. Gerratana and  
Representative Diana S. Urban and the Committee

On Raised Bill No. 5217; AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.  
To make technical and minor changes to statutes concerning the Department of Children and Families.

Good Afternoon SCC, you know who I am from my activism work and my public awareness/testimony being made in many speeches here at Legislation. I hope the Governor Malloy, President Obama, all our great Senators, Representatives and all that have and can do anything to prevent the atrocities that are being created by the deplorable entity called DCF/CPS and we as American citizens can and will straighten this matter of telling innocent victims what to do with their beloved children. I'm here on behalf of all the children and parents whose children were taken away illegally by false reporting by the agency called DCF and illegal and erroneous investigating done by their CPS agents. I'm about making public awareness about what DCF/CPS, family courts, school administrators, GAL's, AMC's, evaluators, therapists, etc. (recently in the news "scream rooms" how dare you! How does this go unnoticed DCF, where were you then) do to parents and children. We empower parents & families to stand up, be strong and protect their family. It is true that DCF/CPS take children illegally and kidnap them for the steady flow of profit\$ through Title IV funding & block grants. Good parents who have faithfully loved, cared for, and nurtured their beloved children should study the Sec. 4-1 CT. code of Evidence before entering a courtroom with these monsters, especially in juvenile court because they are writing false reports to the court all the time.

You call 19 pages of this Bill minor changes, I guess I have to read the whole thing, but I must remain calm as it states in here that there shall be another council to take more states money to control and take our children. I'd like to be the Parent in this state advisory council or know who it will be because there has never been any fairness to parents when dealing with DCF at all. I say there be an outside council of parents who oversees what DCF is doing to children especially when

it comes to taking them away from parents and putting them into mental health evaluations which they do way to much of. Inside of one year I know a child in their captivity they will do 2-3 psych evals at state cost is why they need 3.2 million more from the federal grants to hire more professionals to write more false reports so they will have a job of making children look like they a mental problem. I have a niece who is a bio-chemist magna cum laude from SCSU and I helped her with her science projects in High School. Here is a question for parents and anyone that thinks of giving a child under 17 any pschotropic drugs: would you give your child rat poison, well that is what is in Ritalin which is the #1 drug psychiatrists use on children. I would like to know the statistics of the % of children who are prescribed psychotropic drugs that come into the custody of DCF. When a child cries for the innocent Mommy and Daddy they drug them with powerful drugs to silence them and this mode of torture has got to stop and you the Legislation have the power to do it. I say shame on the DCF who maliciously/manipulatively make reports to doctors about behavior for unnecessarily drugging children, and shame on us if we do nothing about taking that power away and we need to discipline them for doing this to our beloved children.

I challenge the Commisioner of DCF/CPS Joette Katz to hold a meeting/forum with parents on the issues of unnecessary harm to our children to put it in a nutshell by the illegal taking of our children.

In this Bill Sec. 10 section 17a-101e of the general statutes Part (c ) Any person who is alleged to have knowingly made a false report of child abuse or neglect pursuant to >> to the Chief State's Attorneys for purpose of a criminal investigation. He is going to be busy with this cause unless DCF starts meeting with innocent parents who have been made false reports about well I guess we better get busy or does the state have a different office for reporting DCF/CPS for making their own false reports.

My son was damaged by DCF cause he had a life before DCF did their unethical tyrant behavior towards us. He had a wholesome life when he lived with me and they destroyed it, is anyone listening.

There is so much more that DCF is doing wrong to innocent families and I will send my full report to all of Legislation about it in my written testimony. I hope the state does not allow them to further get away with such behavior and law breaking way. The DCF/CPS violates peoples 'Bill of Rights' and exceeds restrictions of our 'Constitutional' Rights as outlined in the Constitution. The government has created a organization to steal our children like when you go to the car repair they do an unauthorized repair work to your vehicle.

Work with us not against us DCF/CPS. We will never give up to your unlawful ways. With love Cheryl Martone

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THE CLERK:

On page 42, Calendar 293, Substitute for House Bill Number 5217, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, favorable report by the Committee on the Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Diana Urban of the 43rd, you have the floor, madam.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint committees' favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Question is acceptance of the joint committees' favorable report and passage of the bill.

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The underlying bill makes changes in law covering DCF. These include appointment authority and composition of the state's Advisory Council on Children. It allows the DCF commissioner to appoint certain members of the Children's Behavioral Health

Advisory Committee, and in addition, has that committee now reporting also to DCF. It makes changes in disclosure of DCF records. It refers false reports of child abuse to the Chief State's Attorney for criminal investigation. It exempts DCF attorneys from paying certain fees. And it renames Riverview Hospital, the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center South; and the Connecticut Children's Place in East Windsor the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center North campus.

Madam Speaker, the Clerk has in his possession an amendment, LCO Number 4064. I asked that he call it, and I'd be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

And will the Clerk please call LCO 4064, designated as House Amendment Schedule "A."

THE CLERK:

LCO 4064, House "A" offered by Representative Urban, Gerratana, Fawcett, Fox, Hetherington, and Wood.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The Representative seeks leave of the chamber to summarize? Is there objection? Is there objections?

Seeing none, Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And I think in becoming familiar with our Department of Children and Families Commissioner, we have all seen her pay extraordinary attention to data and using the data to make children under her care in DCF better off. This amendment, Madam Chair, would permit the finalization of adoptions in the Superior Court, rather than moving them in the Probate Court for juvenile matters for those cases under the jurisdiction of the courts for -- for termination of parental rights petition. In essence, where we would appointing DCF the statutory parent.

We are looking at the data, as I mentioned previously, and it has taken under one year, on average, 11.6 months for termination of parental rights to adoption finalization. This amendment will allow DCF by retaining the adoption procedures in the Superior Court to expedite this time between termination of parental rights and adoption finalization, which would not only make the child better off, it will make the families better off, and we are also going to be saving dollars.

I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The question before the Chamber is on adoption of House Amendment "A." Will you remark further on House Amendment "A"?

Representative Wood of the 141st, good afternoon to you, you have the floor, madam.

REP. WOOD (141st):

Thank you, Madam Chair -- Madam Speaker.

I also stand in support of this amendment. I think moving the adoption process -- keeping in the Superior -- sorry, I want to be clear on this technicality. What we're doing is moving the adoption process to the Superior Court to keep the process with the same judge and the same families know what to expect. It speeds the process. My understanding is it's about 500 kids a year that go through the adoption process. And I think anything we can do that can make it easier for them and speed the process, keeping the integrity the whole time, makes a lot of sense. So I do stand in support of this amendment.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, madam.

Would you care to remark further on the amendment before us?

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

If I may have questions the proponent of the amendment?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Please proceed.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In lines 230 through 232 of the amendment, seem to indicate a change in terms of the records of cases of juvenile matters, and I'm not familiar with the sections of the statute that this is referring to. If the proponent could tell us how this language, if adopted, is going to change present policy, I would be in her debt, through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, my understanding is that is putting the Superior -- the Probate Court issues in conjunction with the Superior Court issues,

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so that it all meshes. And this has been worked out through Probate and through Judiciary, as well as DCF, through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

So just for clarification purposes, there's nothing here that we're looking to change in terms of the access to the information regarding adoption?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, that's absolutely correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Alberts.

REP. ALBERTS (50th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I appreciate the clarification, and I will support the amendment.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir.

Will you care to remark further?

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Question, through you to the proponent of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Representative, I'd like to ask a question along the same lines. Does this increase the confidentiality through this particular section of the three lines between 230 and 232, or does it ease up some of the confidentiality, because we are talking about the creation of a new family, and so on and so forth, but we also have an old family to deal with, as well, and oftentimes with great stress and strife that has go along with that? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, it would be absolutely the same as it is now with the Probate Court. So there would be not be any further disclosure, through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

I appreciate that. It's difficult to read in this type of language when it just refers to a citation.

If I might, a second question, through you, Madam Speaker. In looking at the shift, which seems to be a streamlining affect, obviously shortening the time period is huge. It's been a goal for a couple of administrations through DCF, so I'm pleased to see this one. Is there an added -- do believe, or is it your expectation that there would be an added cost to the families because of the shift in the courts that it's a more expensive the court to operate in, or would be fairly consistent? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, actually we're anticipating that there, perhaps, will be a minimal savings, through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's an expensive process to go through with a number of lawyers. There is one for the child, there's one for the families. There's one for the state, as well. Do you know, through you, Madam Speaker, is there a reduction in the number of lawyers that are required if it goes through this process, or is that probably the same? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, my assumption is it's going to be the same. It would be the expediting of the process that's going to help us here, to the good Representative.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I'd like to thank everyone who worked on this particular bill. We've had, in my memory, about a 15-year process as this has

slowly developed through the different abilities to speed adoptions, when there has been a DCF case. And we have tried to make ways for families to be able to have the ability to go straight through the process. The key here, Madam Speaker, is for the child. This is about creating a stable home life for child. And when there is disruption for long periods of time that leaves a child with an indelible childhood memory of not really belonging to anyone, being halfway between one and halfway between the other.

So I'd like to say a very special thank you to those who have worked so hard on this. And anytime we can speed up the process in giving a child a solid home life I think this Chamber has done a good deed.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, madam.

Will you care to remark further?

Representative Chapin of the 67th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, a couple of questions the proponent of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Please proceed.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I believe I heard you indicate that there would be a cost savings; is that correct? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, yes, there was a minimal cost savings.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I look at the fiscal note it says there is no fiscal impact to the Department of Children and Families, so who that -- who would that savings accrue to? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, to DCF.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

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Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And not being that familiar with the adoption process, would the potential parents who were going to adopt a child, would they incur costs through this process? And if so, would it be more if this process were through Superior Court rather than Probate Court? Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Urban.

REP. URBAN (43rd):

Through you, Madam Speaker, no, they do not incur a cost.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I think the proponent for her answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir.

Will you care to remark further on Amendment Schedule "A"? Will you care to remark further on House Amendment "A"?

If not, let me try your minds.

All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

All those opposed, nay.

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

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

If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is taking a roll call vote. Members to the chamber please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Have all members voted? Have all the members voted?

If all the members have voted, please check the board to determine if your vote has been properly

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cast. If so, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

And will the Clerk please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5217 as amended by House "A"

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The bill passes as amended.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 377?

THE CLERK:

On page 22, Calendar 377, House Bill Number 5147,  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF LAW BY  
NOTARIES PUBLIC, favorable report by the Committee on  
Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Fox you have the floor.

REP. FOX (146th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move for the acceptance of the joint  
committees' favorable report and passage of the bill.

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SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Also calendar page 18, Calendar 458, House Bill 5031.  
Move to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Moving to calendar page 20, where we have one item,  
Calendar 468, House Bill 5217. Madam President, move to  
place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

On calendar page 21, Calendar 471, House Bill 5164. Move  
to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

On calendar page 22, Calendar 476, House Bill 5263. Move  
to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

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On page 13, Calendar 426, House Bill 5443; on page 14, Calendar 438, House Bill 5347; Page 14, Calendar 439, House Bill 5388; page 15, Calendar 441, House Bill 5501.

Also on page 15, Calendar 442, House Bill 5536; page 16, Calendar 445, House Bill 5145; page 16, Calendar 446, House Bill 5395; on page 16, Calendar 448, House Bill 5414; page 17, Calendar 451, House Bill 5548; page 18, Calendar 456, House Bill 5285.

Also on page 18, Calendar 458, House Bill 5031; on page 20, Calendar 468, House Bill 5217; page 21, Calendar 471, House Bill 5164; page 22, Calendar 476, House Bill 5263.

On page 23, Calendar 485, House Bill 5237. On page 25, Calendar 497, House Bill 5512; page 26, Calendar 502, House Bill 5497; page 26, Calendar 503, House Bill 5409.

On page 28, Calendar 512, House Bill 5424. And on page 30, Calendar 522, House Bill 5289.

THE CHAIR:

That seems correct.

Mr. Clerk, would you please call for a roll call vote on the consent calendar. (Inaudible.)

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gomes, would you like to vote, please. Thank you.

If all members have voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, would you please call a tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's consent calendar,

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Total Number Voting	35	
Necessary for passage	18	
Those Voting Yea	35	
Those Voting Nay	0	
Those Absent and Not Voting		1

THE CHAIR:

The consent calendar passes.

Are there any points of personal privilege or announcements? Are there any points of personal privilege or announcements?

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Yes, Madam President, if there are no announcements or points of personal privilege, we will, of course, be in session tomorrow -- or actually it's later today but -- but not on Thursday. But --

THE CHAIR:

Okay. Promise?

SENATOR LOONEY:

-- we will -- we will convene later this morning. We will have a -- announce the Democratic caucus at eleven followed by session at noon today.

Thank you, Madam President.

With that, would move the Senate stand adjourned, subject to the call of the chair.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir. Everybody drive safely.

On motion of Senator Looney of the 11th, the Senate, at 12:32 a.m. adjourned subject to the call of the chair.