



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
February 27, 2006**

**Senate Bill 159, An Act Concerning Permanency
Plans For Children**

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch in support of *Senate Bill 159, An Act Concerning Permanency Plans for Children*.

This bill primarily makes minor changes to the statutes pertaining to permanency plans for abused or neglected children in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). For instance, the bill clarifies that hearings on contested permanency plan motions filed by the Department may be consolidated with hearings on a petition to terminate parental rights. This is the current court practice. It should also be noted that the Department would still be required to prove that it has made reasonable efforts to re-unify the child with the parent before a court can grant a petition to terminate parental rights.

In summary, the Judicial Branch supports this bill because it alleviates unnecessary delay and expedites permanency for children in DCF custody.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.