



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER
30 TRINITY STREET
FOURTH FLOOR
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

CHRISTINE PERRA RAPILLO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER
DIRECTOR OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY DEFENSE
(860) 509-6431 TELEPHONE
(860) 509-6495 FAX

**TESTIMONY OF CHRISTINE RAPILLO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER
OFFICE OF CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
RAISED BILL NO. 5700-AN ACT CONCERNING JUSTICE FOR ALL
CHILDREN
MARCH 20, 2006**

I am Christine Rapillo and I am the Director of Juvenile Delinquency Defense for the Office of the Chief Public Defender. I am here today on behalf of the Office of the Chief Public Defender to speak in support of *Raised Bill No. 5700, An Act Concerning Justice all Children.*

This proposal attempts to address the overrepresentation of minority children in the juvenile detention centers in Connecticut. The most recent statistics from the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance show that a child of color is twice as likely to be held in detention as a Caucasian child, even when they are arrested for the same type of offense. This legislation would require all the systems stakeholders to develop a set of race neutral criteria to be used when determining if a child should be held in detention. These criteria would include things like criminal history, seriousness of the charge, past runaways or failures to appear and school attendance. This proposal will not legally bind a judge to release a child. It merely offers objective, neutral guidelines to be applied in the decision to release

The Office of the Chief Public Defender respectfully requests that this committee approve this proposal.