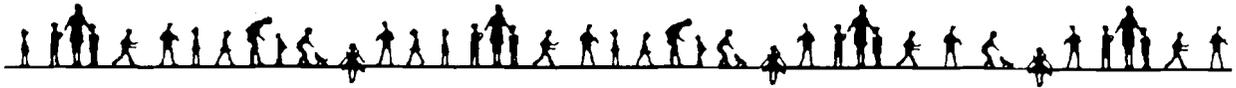


CONNECTICUT YOUTH SERVICES ASSOCIATION



Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee, My name is Susan Radway EdD and I am the Director of Waterford Youth Services Bureau and President of the Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA). CYSA is a professional organization that represents Connecticut Youth Service Bureaus. There are currently 99 Youth Service Bureaus serving 129 communities across Connecticut.

I am testifying in support of SB1411, An Act Concerning Youth Service Bureaus. This bill has the potential to strengthen the Youth Service Bureau system by providing the funding necessary for Youth Service Bureaus to carry out their functions as mandated by Connecticut State Statute 10-19m. The statute states that a Youth Service Bureau is an agency operated directly by one or more municipalities that is designed for planning, evaluation, coordination, and implementation of a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth, and their families. Additionally, YSBs are responsible for the provision of services and programs for all youth to develop positively and function as responsible members of their respective communities. YSBs provide juvenile justice, mental health, youth development, community outreach, parent education, teen pregnancy prevention, and child welfare services. More than 70,016 children, youth, and families received services from YSBs during FY06. In addition, YSBs diverted 27,120 youth from the juvenile justice system during FY06. Concern for the well-being of youth is central to the work of Youth Service Bureaus.

We applaud the Education Committee for recognizing the importance of prevention through increased funding in areas that can make a difference to Connecticut's children and youth. Youth Service Bureaus have extensive experience in community collaboration and assessment, which has resulted in the development of a wide variety of comprehensive services that address the needs of children and their families. The Connecticut Youth Services Association encourages the General Assembly to fully utilize Youth Service Bureaus and their nearly four decades of experience in youth development.

Thank you.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker:

*Susan Radway*

Date:

*3/12/07*

Bill Number:

*1411*

CYSA, the professional organization that serves as the collective voice of the Connecticut Youth Service Bureau system, is dedicated to promoting quality services for Connecticut's children, youth, and families.