



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

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Testimony Of
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Raised House Bill No. 7039

An Act Concerning Public Access to Proceedings in Certain Juvenile Matters

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing - February 16, 2007

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports that portion of the bill which would require that "juvenile delinquency" and "families with service needs" matters continue to remain confidential.

However, this office does not support that portion of the bill which provides for opening up neglect proceedings in the juvenile court to the public. The reason that this office is opposed to opening up neglect proceedings to the public is because many of the juveniles that are represented by public defenders in juvenile delinquency matters are also the subjects of neglect petitions which may be pending simultaneously in the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. And as written, this proposal could permit medical and psychiatric information, family information and other information pertaining to the juvenile including schooling, and information pertaining to victims and witnesses to be open to the public in neglect proceedings. If such information and or records were public, it is very possible that the delinquency proceedings, for which confidentiality exists, would be impacted.