



# CITY OF HARTFORD

## HARTFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**EDDIE A. PEREZ**  
Mayor

**DARYL K. ROBERTS**  
Chief of Police

### **Raised Bill No. 5926**

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am testifying today in support of raised bill 5926, *An Act Concerning Families With Services Needs, Certificates of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth, Reentry and Diversionary Services for Youth, and Drug Courts for Youth.*

The Hartford Police Department Truancy Reduction Program is in its second year of operation and has reported positive results with participating students from the Hartford Public Schools. The partnership between the Hartford Police Department (HPD) and the Hartford Public Schools (HPS) is a leading factor in the overall success of the program, particularly in identifying students with Family With Service Needs (FWSN).

The HPD Truancy staff has reported that many of the truant students have some kind of FWSN issue that has contributed to their truancy problem. Early identification of FWSN issues by the HPD Truancy staff and HPS has had a considerable impact on reducing the absences of the truant. The HPD Truancy Reduction Pilot Program (1<sup>st</sup> four month period) produced the following successes end of S/Y 06-07:

- There was a **79.4%** attendance improvement for all actively tracked students.
- The participating students' attendance was increased by an average of **11** days per actively tracked student.
- The total unexcused absences were reduced by **863** days among the 73 actively tracked students.
- There was a **41%** reduction in unexcused absence.
- There was a Preventative Truancy Loss and Overall savings of **\$71,024.90**<sup>1</sup>

#### *Truancy: Predictor of Youth Crime and Violence:*

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Study Group on Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders devoted two years to analyzing the research on risk and protective factors for serious and violent juvenile offending, including predictors of juvenile violence derived from the findings of long-term studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Savings was calculated using a formula designed by HPD and HPS, which was a cost benefit analysis: *The annual student tuition cost fiscal model.* [www.hartford.gov/police/Truancy/Truancy%20](http://www.hartford.gov/police/Truancy/Truancy%20)

In the April 2000 Juvenile Justice Bulletin, the OJJDP's Study Group published the *Predictors of Youth Violence*, which identified the following predictors of violence that are arranged in five domains: The school factor domain is of particular interest to police as it supports the correlation between truancy and crime. School factors include, academic failure, low bonding, truancy and dropping out of school, and frequent school transitions.

The HPD website link [www.hartford.gov/police/Truancy/Truancy%20](http://www.hartford.gov/police/Truancy/Truancy%20) evidences our strong working partnership with the HPS. Through the HPD Truancy Reduction Program, our staff has effectively worked on the critical relationships of students, families, schools, peers and neighborhoods to reduce unexcused absences and increase parental involvement within the communities we serve.

Raised bill 5926, *An Act Concerning Families With Services Needs, Certificates of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth, Reentry and Diversionary Services for Youth, and Drug Courts for Youth*, is critical to addressing the needs of truant students through the establishment of a school-based prevention team, which will be effectively implemented by the Department of Education and the Judicial Department. The HPD Truancy Reduction Program will collaborate with the proposed school-based prevention team for the purposes of addressing the needs of truant students within the City of Hartford.

*Lieutenant Mark J. Tedeschi  
Hartford Police Department  
Commanding Officer  
Juvenile Investigative Division*

