STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
March 17, 2008

Meg Hooper, Branch Chief, Branch/Office Phone Number

House Bill 5926 - An Act Concerning Families with Service Needs, Certificates of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth, Reentry and Diversionary Services for Youth, and Drug Courts for Youth

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The Department of Public Health provides the following information with regard to House Bill 5926.

This bill replaces the "Certificate of Stillbirth" that is issued by the Department of Public Health, with a new certificate named "Certificate of Birth Resulting in A Stillbirth." The Department would like to bring the following technical issue to the attention of the committee:

- **In section 5 of the bill, C.G.S. 7-51(c)(2)(B) states that a parent may request the department issue a certificate of birth resulting in stillbirth at any time without regard to the date on which the fetal death certificate was issued. The word "issued" should be revised, as most fetal death certificates are never issued. Instead, we recommend that the language be revised, changing the word "issued" to "filed." We are also uncertain about the meaning of the last clause of subparagraph § 7-51(c)(2)(B), which states, "except as provided in subsection (d) of this section. We ask that this be clarified.**

This same proposal has come up several times in the past few years. In response, we have spoken to vital records offices in other states who issue the "Certificate of Birth Resulting in A Stillbirth." Aside from the larger political issues, these other states expressed concerns about the possibility of misuse of the document because it closely resembles a birth certificate. With key terms such as "Certificate of Birth," "Mother's/Father's Name" and a state file number, the document may be misconstrued as a birth certificate, particularly if used out of the country and read by someone not fluent in English.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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