

Goldman, Joseph

From: Passaro, Cara
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 5:38 PM
To: Goldman, Joseph
Subject: FW: Public Hearing 2/29: Bill No. 244 Request Changes Re: SUICIDES AND DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES CLIENT DEATHS

FYI - Her testimony?

From: Sheila [mailto:gallo@optonline.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 12:17 PM
To: Senator Handley; Rep. Sayers, Peggy; Rep. Ritter, Elizabeth; Senator Slossberg; Sen. Roraback, Andrew; Sen. Coleman, Eric; Rep. Ayala, Andres; Rep. Olson, Melissa; Rep. Panaroni, Peter; Rep. Ryan, Kevin; Rep. Tercyak, Peter; Rep. Widlitz, Patricia; Rep. Bye, Beth; Rep. Christ, Michael; Rep. Christiano, Tom; Rep. Heinrich, Deborah; Rep. Hurlburt, Bryan; Rep. Malone, Jack; Rep. Nardello, Vickie; tim@timobrien.org
Cc: Ablechild; Clinton Libbey
Subject: Public Hearing 2/29: Bill No. 244 Request Changes Re: SUICIDES AND DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES CLIENT DEATHS

DATE: February 26, 2008

Submission via Email: For Friday, February 29, 2008 Public Hearing Public Health Committee
TO: Public Health Committee Members
FROM: Ablechild.org, National Non Profit Parent Organization; State of Connecticut Office, Cofounder, Sheila Matthews, (203) 966-8419; gallo@optonline.net

COMMENTS FOR THE RECORD OF PUBLIC HEARING

Ablechild does not support this bill as it is written. However, there are several proposed changes that will substantially increase the benefit that this bill offers the citizens of the Commonwealth of Connecticut.

Purpose of proposed changes: In order to provide evidence based information in a timely manner and consistent with the high standards of the Commonwealth of Connecticut, standard protocol establishes that only a medical examiner can determine the true cause and manner of death. Due to the amount of time required to perform such autopsies, additional time has been included in order to not place an undue burden on the Medical Examiner's Office. In order to provide adequate information to the families of the deceased, it is imperative that the next of kin receive a copy of such documentation.

Raised Bill No. 244

AN ACT CONCERNING NOTIFICATION TO THE OFFICE OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION INMATE SUICIDES AND DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES CLIENT DEATHS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (Effective from passage) The Commissioner of Correction, or the commissioner's designee, shall provide written notification to the director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities of any inmate suicide or apparent inmate suicide not later than the next business day after the date of death of such inmate or, in the case of an apparent suicide, the next business day, [after the date on which the commissioner determines that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that such death may be due to suicide.] The written notification shall include, but not be limited to, the name of the inmate, the inmate identification number, the address of the correctional facility where the death occurred and any mental health status determination made with respect to such inmate by Department of Correction staff and shall order an autopsy report from the Medical Examiner's Office which shall include, but is not limited to, blood and tissue toxicity testing to determine cause and manner of death. The commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall furnish a copy of the department's internal investigation report concerning any inmate suicide to the director not later than five business days after the date of the completion of such report. The autopsy report shall be furnished by the Medical Examiner's Office to the director and next of kin not later than 30 business days after the date of the completion of the written notification.

Sec. 2. Subsection (d) of section 17a-451 of the 2008 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective from passage):

(d) The commissioner shall coordinate the community programs receiving state funds with programs of state-operated facilities for the treatment of persons with psychiatric disabilities or persons with substance use disorders, or both. In the event of the death of a person with psychiatric disabilities or a person with substance use disorders, or both, who is receiving inpatient behavioral health care services from a Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services operated facility, the commissioner shall report such death to the director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities and the next of kin not later than thirty days after the date of the death of such person and shall include an autopsy report from the Medical Examiner's Office which shall include, but is not limited to, blood and tissue toxicity testing to determine cause and manner of death.