



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

M. Jodi Rell
Governor

Peter H. O'Meara
Commissioner

**TESTIMONY OF THE
TO THE
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
March 12, 2008**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Caruso and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I am Christine Pollio, Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs for the Department of Developmental Services. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **SB 675, An Act Concerning the Extension of Lobbyist Restrictions to Certain State Employees.**

Although I cannot speak on behalf of all state agency Legislative Liaisons, as I have not discussed this bill with all of them, I would like to share the comments of several of my colleagues regarding this bill.

When a legislative liaison engages in efforts to advocate for their agency, the end goal is to better the outcomes of services and supports to citizens of the state, there is no private monetary gain to the individual. This is especially true among the human service agencies. Advocacy by a state agency liaison is intended to improve our overall service delivery systems.

Additionally, agency liaisons are accountable to commissioners or agency heads who are mostly appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the legislature. Through this appointment and confirmation process, the legislature is entrusting a commissioner or agency head to do what is in the best interests of the population served by that agency. The legislature has no such control or authorization over private lobbyists.

This language of the bill proposes to add legislative liaisons to the requirements of the Code of Ethics for Lobbyists, but it does not exempt us from the Code of Ethics for Public Officials to which we are currently subject. Therefore, we would be the **ONLY** ones in the state to be subject to both codes of conduct.

In essence, this proposal would hold us to a higher, more restrictive standard than anyone else, including legislators, public officials or state contractors. What is the justification for holding us to a higher standard?

We would suggest that continuing to apply the code of conduct that governs legislators and public officials is sufficient for legislative liaisons. If there are perceived short-comings in the Code of Ethics for Public Officials, we would recommend that this be addressed separately and that new restrictions be applied equally to everyone that works on behalf of the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our thoughts on this proposal. Several of us would be happy to discuss this issue in greater detail at your convenience. I may be contacted at 418-6066 or at christine.pollio@ct.gov.

In addition, the following Legislative Liaisons wish to express their support of this testimony:

Melanie Attwater-Young, DoAg 713-2509

Jane Ciarleglio, DHE 947-1803

Doreen Delbianco, DMHAS 463-8651

Gordon Frassinelli, DCF 836-2617

Josh Howroyd, DCF 550-6329

Robert LeFrance, DEP 424-5401

Rod O'Connor, DDS 418-6130

Joseph Oros, DECD 270-8186

Carolyn Triess 418-7024

Tom Tyler, DEP 424-3001

Thank you.