



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE CONNECTICUT JUVENILE JUSTICE ALLIANCE  
FOR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 23, 2008**

IN FAVOR OF:

H.B. No. 6487 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REPORTING OF TRUANCY DATA.

H.B. No. 6489 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL ARREST REPORTING.

H.B. No. 6491 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING LONGITUDINAL STUDIES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

This testimony is submitted by Abby Anderson, Executive Director of the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance (Alliance). The Alliance is a statewide, non-profit organization that works to reduce the number of children and youth entering the juvenile and criminal justice system, and advocates a safe, effective and fair system for those involved.

The Alliance is keenly interested in data surrounding youth in the school environment because success in school is such a critical predictor in terms of long-term success in life, including staying out of the juvenile and adult justice systems. We know that schools have become one of the largest feeders of youth into the juvenile and criminal systems through truancy referrals and school-based arrests. That is not meant as a condemnation of the schools as we think these situations are a symptom of larger issues and not the cause. When schools are chronically overcrowded and underfunded it becomes much more difficult for them to effectively reach children who present difficulties and challenges.

It is impossible to solve a problem until that problem is clearly defined. Without clear, accurate data, there is no consensus on the state regarding what the problem really is, not to mention working together to determine a solution.

The Alliance strongly supports these three pieces of legislation which, with no to very little financial consequences or threats to the confidentiality of students, would help all of us who are interested in public policy ensure that Connecticut's schools are as effective as they can possibly be.

Thank you for your time.

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