

Public Hearing HB5691, An Act concerning Postsecondary Tuition Assistance and Special Need Subsidies for Adopted Children

Hearing Date: February 24, 2009

Greetings Committee Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Doris Doucette, and I reside in the town of Waterbury and I am a licensed foster/adoptive parent. I am writing to testify on the House Bill HB5691, An Act concerning Postsecondary Tuition Assistance and Special Need Subsidies for Adopted Children. Let it be known by this committee that I support the bill, Public Hearing HB5691, An Act concerning Postsecondary Tuition Assistance and Special Need Subsidies for Adopted Children. This Act will help even the playing ground for children that may have just missed getting these certain benefits. On a more personal note, I have been licensed since 1991. It was originally not our plan to be adoptive parents, but in July 2002 all that changed. We fostered our son Nicholas and prepared to make moves to return him to his parents, but neither parent was able to make the necessary steps to get him back. We then joyfully took the steps to adopt him. Subsequently he did have 2 more full biological sisters within the next few years and we gladly kept them together and adopted them as well. Now we were a family of six. So my personal dilemma is that Nicholas was adopted 11/9/04 just before the tuition benefit took effect and his sisters were adopted 7/06 and 6/07 and they are going to benefit. Nicholas is a VERY bright boy and I would want him to have every right and benefit that is available to him. As a parent that just put a child through college, I am familiar with scholarship and grant and will do what ever it takes to give him every advantage. There are many things an adoptive parent has to explain to their children, but why the girls would get the benefit and he doesn't is an avoidable issue. I would respectfully ask that you consider Part I of this Bill, as it will level the playing ground for my son and many others.

Part II of the Bill is also important; as you all are aware the cost of raising a child does increase from year to year, and as we get cost of living increases in our workplaces, so too we should also see that increase regardless of the adoption date. The raise needs to be across the board. As there are increases in the foster children's benefits, so too should the children that were given the subsidy benefit upon adoption, receive the same increase. This affects my children, as their dates of Adoption are years apart.

Part III of this Bill is also very beneficial to the few Children that would need the extra time to complete their education. For many reasons, there are children that have either never

been pushed to do their school work by their biological parents and need to catch up. Or, there are those that struggle after placement to catch up in a new home, new school and new life. This part of the Bill is very beneficial to our children in the Foster/Adoptive system.

Thank you so very much for your time and consideration of our personal interest in seeing this bill pass fully. We respectfully put our children and all the children in DCF care into your capable hands.

Sincerely,
Doris A Doucette
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