



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE February 11, 2009

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### **Senate Bill 826 - An Act Concerning the Licensure of Child Day Care Facilities and Youth Camps**

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The Department of Public Health supports Senate Bill 826. Thank you for raising this important Department bill.

#### **Information Sharing Between DPH and DCF**

This bill is necessary to address numerous conflicting statutes with regard to the exchange of information between the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) Child Day Care Licensing Program.

It authorizes:

- DPH's receipt and use of complete information regarding perpetrators of child abuse and neglect when making child day care licensing decisions;
- DPH to release substantiated child abuse and neglect findings to child day care operators pertaining to their staff to enable them to make informed employment decisions that comply with child day care licensing regulations;
- DPH to share with the public substantiations of child abuse and neglect that are on the DCF child abuse / neglect registry that have occurred at licensed child day care facilities or by licensed child day care providers to assist parents in choosing child care for their children;
- The use of DCF records provided to DPH in administrative hearings.

#### **Hazardous Activities at Youth Camps**

Concerning the Youth Camp Licensing Program, this bill will:

- Enable DPH to take more immediate action to cease a specific hazardous activity that occurs at a licensed youth camp.

The current statute mandates the Department to suspend the full operation of a youth camp when an immediate hazardous activity or condition has been identified thereby, closing the camp until the incident has been addressed. The passage of this bill will allow the Department to solely suspend the activity in question, which will minimize disruption to participating children and their families while protecting the public health.

- Exclude summer educational programs operated by public schools and private schools that meet specific criteria established by the State Department of Education from youth camp licensing.

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

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