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**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of the Deborah J. Fuller
Human Services Committee Public Hearing
February 24, 2009**

Raised Bill 6399, AAC Child Protection

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Judicial Branch on **Raised Bill 6399, AAC Child Protection**.

This bill would address gaps that currently exist in child protection procedures. The Judicial Branch supports it, with the exception of section 4.

Some of the provisions of this bill that we support are as follows: Section 1 would authorize DCF to provide children in their custody with all necessary care, including medical and mental health care. This would eliminate the need for DCF to get a court order every time a child needs treatment, which can be particularly important where a need for emergency care arises. Section 3 would require more frequent court review of the progress that parents are making in regaining custody, in cases where the permanency plan is reunification with the parent, for children under age 6. Section 7 would allow the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters to handle adoptions for children who were the subject of termination of parental rights cases in that court. The Judicial Branch would be able to handle this within existing resources.

We would respectfully request that section 4 be eliminated from the bill. This section would automatically transfer cases that originate in Probate court, in which the Department of Children and Families has gained custody of the child, to the Superior Court. We believe this provision is overbroad and that these cases are being adequately handled under current law.

Thank you for your consideration.