



State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Commission on Children

6402  
820

Human Services Committee  
Public Hearing  
February 17, 2009

Testimony Submitted by Elizabeth C. Brown

Senator Doyle, Representative Walker and members of the Committee. My name is Elizabeth C. Brown and I appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning in favor of two bills that would maximize federal Medicaid dollars and establish a rapid rehousing program.

HB 6402, An Act Concerning Maximization of Medicaid reimbursement for the State of Connecticut and Federal Medical Assistance Percentages. The Commission support this bill and recommends that additional federal health dollars be included in a review. Specifically, the Commission serves on the Department of Public Health's Medical Home Advisory Committee, established to oversee Title V federal funds for Children with Special Health Care Needs. As chair of the subcommittee on financing, the Commission reviewed national programs and worked with consultant Carl Valentine on how to maximize Title V dollars for care coordination with the broader Medicaid Program administered by the Department of Social Services.

The recommendations entailed a detailed analysis of current distribution of Medicaid dollars and Title V dollars and options for leveraging the funding from both to maximize dollars. The recommendations would garner more Medicaid dollars and free up Title V dollars for more direct services for children with special health care needs. Title V requires the state to link with Medicaid and not duplicate reimbursable items.

Connecticut is in the process of looking at this policy shift but the state agencies operate separately and it is difficult to move forward in a cohesive manner. The bill before you would facilitate cross agency planning and coordination to maximize federal dollars.

SB 820, An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Rapid Rehousing Program

The Commission is a member of the advisory committee for the Coalition to End Homelessness. For the past few years a concerted effort was undertaken to identify the root causes of homelessness and to identify the best way to use limited resources. The bill before you will field test the results of the research and reallocate dollars from the Departments of Social Service, Children and Families and Economic and Community Development to initiate a rapid response strategy to prevent homelessness in an effort to maintain stable housing for the families. If successful, this will provide a blueprint for better use of existing dollars and facilitate strategic coordination among state agencies to focus on helping families to maintain housing. The Commission commends Carol Walter for her leadership in bringing the stakeholders together and the willingness of the state agencies to partner in this effort.

Thank you for your attention to these critical issues.