



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities and related developmental disabilities

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Testimony before The Education Committee
HB 5318 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL RESOURCE
OFFICERS

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by

Leslie Simoes, Assistant Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut

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Good morning Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and Members of the Education Committee. My name is Leslie Simoes and I am the Assistant Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 58-year-old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide supports, services, and advocacy for individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout Connecticut.

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I am here this morning to testify in favor of:

HB 5318 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL RESOURCE
OFFICERS.

Contributions are tax-deductible

In recent years, I have heard from parents whose children were arrested and charged with assault for behavior that could have, or should have, been addressed by a positive behavior support plan in the students' IEPs. These have all been students who were included in the general curriculum and spent most of their days in the general student population.

The Arc supports a bill that would require the state to develop a plan for a school resource officer training course that includes, among other things, de-escalation of behavior in students with behavioral health and special education needs.

The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters: Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / The Arc of Farmington Valley / Friends of New Milford, Inc. / The Arc of Litchfield County / LOV-Arc, Westbrook / MARC, Inc., Manchester / MARC: Community Resources, Portland / The Arc of Meriden-Wallingford / The Arc of Greater New Haven / The Arc of New London County / Options, Unlimited / The Arc of Plainville / The Arc of Quinebaug Valley / SARAH Inc., Guilford / SARAH Seneca Residential Services / SARAH Tuxis Residential Services / STAR, Norwalk / The Arc of Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

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Perhaps better training of school resource officers would help to keep our kids out of the criminal justice system and certainly would be beneficial in the school setting supporting the children, teachers and school administrative staff. Everybody wins with this.