



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities and related developmental disabilities

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Testimony before The Human Services Committee

by

Leslie Simoes, Assistant Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut

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Good morning Senator Doyle, Representative Walker, and Members of the Human Services 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.

Secretary
Lori Baer
The Arc of Litchfield County
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I am here this morning to testify in favor of three bills:

Treasurer
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HB 5437 AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES TO THERAPEUTIC GROUP HOMES IN THE STATE

SB 219 AN ACT CONCERNING STATE CONTRACT REDUCTIONS

SB 316 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION ON NONPROFIT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Immediate Past President
Ken Cholewinski
SARAH Seneca
Gulfport

HB 5437, will bring children previously being served out of state back home to Connecticut. Recently I listened to testimony by DDS saying that they were looking into bringing back the children in their system so they can capture the Medicaid dollars since Connecticut can only bill Medicaid for services provided in this state. The Arc finds the focus should be on bringing the children back closer to their families, rather than focusing on the dollars they can generate for the State, however, we are happy that a process is in motion for these children to come home. It is the right thing, cost aside, to support these children closer to their families.

Contributions are tax-deductible

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SB 219, would allow private providers to adjust their budget expenditures without approval when a state agency reduces the providers' funding. The Arc of Connecticut is in favor of this bill and any initiative that offers flexibility in their state contracts.

SB 316, is long awaited. A similar bill was vetoed by Governor Rell and The Arc is again, in favor of this commission. The state has got to take a better and deeper look at the private provider system and how its chronic underfunding has worn away the structural foundation. I have recently heard the Commissioner say that there is no crisis and while private providers have not started handing in their keys and closing their doors, there IS a crisis. Services are being cut internally or eliminated completely to the people who need them the most. This legislature had better hope that private providers do not start handing in their keys because then there will be a crisis of insurmountable levels for Connecticut. Hope will not fix that. The Arc of Connecticut strongly urges the legislature could do more than hope, but rather voted favorably to seat this commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.