



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



Susan I. Hamilton, M.S.W., J.D.
Commissioner

M. Jodi Rell
Governor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Health Committee

FROM: Susan I. Hamilton, J.D., M.S.W

DATE: March 12, 2010

SUBJECT: S.B. No. 402 AN ACT CONCERNING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on **S.B. NO. 402 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP**.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) concurs with the testimony of the Departments of Social Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services and supports the principle concept behind the proposed legislation. Also, like our sister agencies, we urge a careful approach when changing the responsibilities of the Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership (CT BHP). We express this caution only to ensure that any changes to the composition or role of the CT BHP not undermine the tremendous progress that this remarkable collaboration of state agencies, legislators, parents and providers has achieved over the past five years.

As you know, over these past five years, multiple stakeholders comprising the CT BHP have worked very hard to better clinically manage the mental health services offered under HUSKY A and B programs in addition to our DCF grant funded services. Progress is evident and promising. Building on this progress, we believe this legislation creates an important opportunity to dialogue with members of the Committee, our sister agencies, and others, to better understand the impact the wise, but complex, public policy goal to further integrate services across the lifespan may entail. Accomplishing this goal should not compromise the gains that have been made, thwart progress toward future goals that currently focus the work of the Oversight Council, or impact the efficient functioning of the CT BHP.

Again, we share the motivation behind the bill and express support for the direction it embodies. Please know that DCF is willing to participate in any discussions with the members of the Public Health Committee if this proposal moves forward.