



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



Public Hearing Testimony  
Human Services Committee  
February 10, 2011

**H.B. No. 5431 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION CONCERNING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT BY A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE**

The Department of Children and Families **supports the intent behind H.B. No. 5431**, An Act Concerning Notice by the Commissioner of Children and Families to the Commissioner of Education Concerning Allegations of Abuse and Neglect by a School Employee.

The bill codifies one of the recommendations from a report of the Attorney General and Child Advocate entitled "*Protecting Our Children: Improving Protections for Children When Allegations are Made that School System Personnel Abused and/or Neglected Children*" dated July 8, 2010 concerning investigations of reports of child abuse and neglect in schools. This report identified a number of areas in the statutory scheme governing mandated reporters, the investigation of child abuse and neglect and the sharing of information across all the involved systems that may need improvement. The full report is available via the Office of the Attorney General's website at - <http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/health/dcfedureport070810.pdf>

Specifically, H.B. No. 5431 would require DCF to notify the State Department of Education when DCF substantiates an allegation that a school employee has abused or neglected a child.

The Human Services Committee has also raised four other Proposed Bills to be drafted as Committee Bills on this same topic. These bills will be heard at a future public hearing(s). These bills are:

- Proposed H.B. No. 5428, An Act Concerning Prompt Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect in an Educational Setting;
- Proposed H.B. No. 5433, An Act Concerning Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect by School Employees and Investigations by Employing School Districts;
- Proposed H.B. No. 5435, An Act Concerning Notice of Child Neglect by a School Employee; and
- Proposed H.B. No. 5755, An Act Concerning Training for Persons Mandated to Report Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.

DCF suggests that the Committee consolidate these concepts together if you chose to favorably report these bills, as many of the statutory changes in the various sections are interrelated. The Department is willing to work with the Committee in developing specific language as these bills move forward.