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COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
APRIL 1, 2011

R. B. No. 1226 - *AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPACT ON MUNICIPALITIES OF THE INCREASED AGE OF JUVENILE JURISDICITON*

R. B. No. 1164 - *AN ACT DELAYING IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONS TO RAISE THE AGE OF JUVENILE COURT JURISDICITON FOR YOUTH SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE*

The Office of Chief Public Defender opposes passage of ***Raised Bill 1226, An Act Concerning the Impact on Municipalities of the Increased Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction and Raised Bill 1164, An Act Delaying Implementation of Provisions to Raise the Age of Juvenile Court Jurisdiction for Youth Seventeen Years of Age.*** These proposals are unnecessary. The members of the *Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy and Operations Coordinating Council* (JJPOCC) have continued to meet to monitor the progress of ***Raise the Age.*** The group, which includes advocates, state agency staff, the Judicial Branch and a municipal police chief, has already suggested changes needed to make the implementation of the Raise the age law more efficient. A further study is not necessary.

Delaying implementation is equally unnecessary. Since January 1, 2010, over 4000 sixteen (16) year olds have been integrated in to the juvenile court system, many of whom were diverted into services without a court hearing and successfully returned to their communities. Not included in the 4000 are youth who were sent to community programs like juvenile review boards, where their cases were handled without the cost of a court referral. Statistics show that the 16 year olds who avoided prosecution as adults were for the most part, misdemeanor offenders who had exercised poor judgment. They have benefitted from the programs and services available in juvenile court.

So far, this has been done without negative impact on service provision. There is still capacity at both the juvenile detention centers and the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. The numbers of children under the age of fifteen being referred to the juvenile court has continued to decline, so there should continue to be available capacity in the juvenile system. The Office of the Public Defender has managed to implement the legislation so far without any additional budgetary allocation. All the planning, policy and budget has been done for Raise the Age and it should be implemented on schedule in July of 2012. Delaying the movement of seventeen (17) year olds to juvenile court is unwise and unnecessary.

The Office of Public Defender asks that this Committee not report favorably on either *Raised Bill 1226, An Act Concerning the Impact on Municipalities of the Increased Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction* or *Raised Bill 1164, An Act Delaying Implementation of Provisions to Raise the Age of Juvenile Court Jurisdiction for Youth Seventeen Years of Age.*