



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE F. CAFERO, JR.
ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SECOND DISTRICT

REPUBLICAN LEADER

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 4200
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
TELEPHONE
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-1423
FAX: (860) 240-0184

Testimony in Support of RB 5186
Select Committee on Children
February 28, 2012

Chairs Gerratana and Urban, Ranking Members Suzio and Wood, and distinguished members of the Children Select Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **Raised Bill 5186, *An Act Adopting a Foster Parent Bill of Rights***.

Foster parents serve a valuable function to the children they care for and the state. Without foster parents, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) would be inundated to an even greater extent with children looking for a placement into a nurturing family setting. Although placement with these parents is usually temporary, many serve as parents to placed children for numerous years and treat the kids like they would their own. The parents throw birthdays, schedule family trips, attend parent-teacher school meetings, and other parent-child activities that are no different from what biological parents do.

I know Commissioner Katz is working hard to redefine the agency and protect the interest of the children. She has accomplished much since her arrival. However, anecdotally, I have heard of foster parents having difficulties with DCF on certain matters. I have heard some were given little to no information on pending child permanency plans, were treated with lack of respect, and given poor information on the

process or the actions they can take. Such poor treatment of these parents is unacceptable, especially from an agency which purportedly wants to increase child home placements. I believe placing these rights into statute will provide the dignity and respect that these parents so much deserve.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration. I urge the committee to vote favorably on this bill.

Sincerely,

Lawrence F. Cafero