



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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QUESTIONS FOR BUREAU OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES NOMINEE

By: Susan Price, Senior Attorney

1. How would you describe the Bureau of Rehabilitative Service's (BRS) overall mission? How is it reflected in day-to-day operations and long-range planning?
2. Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner Bremby, while serving as acting bureau director, split its functions into two divisions – (1) Rehabilitation Services and (2) Services for the Blind. Do you intend to keep this organizational structure? If not, what changes are you considering and why?
3. There appear to be some functions currently being provided in both BRS divisions, notably vocational rehabilitation and independent living services. Could bureau resources be used more efficiently if these functions were consolidated?
4. Among other things, the bureau is charged with integrating functions previously performed separately by the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB), the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, DSS' Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, and the Workers' Compensation Commission's Rehabilitation Program. What are the major challenges to accomplishing this?

5. Currently, the bureau is receiving administrative and business office support from the departments of Administrative Services and Social Services. These supports are scheduled to end after June 30, 2012, and the bureau will then become a self-sustaining state agency. Do you anticipate that BRS will be able to operate independently by that date? What must be done to meet the deadline?
6. The federal Rehabilitation Administration's most recent report on Connecticut's compliance with the administration's standards and performance indicators shows that the state's performance in FFY 10 was a mixed bag. While our state-administered rehabilitation programs (at that time, BESB and DSS' BRS) did very well in some areas, overall they did not meet the administration's minimum standards. One concern was the significant decline in positive employment outcomes in 2010 when compared with 2009 figures. Has the bureau developed a strategy for improving its performance? How do you think its FFY 11 performance will compare with FFY 10?
7. What are your legislative priorities for the 2012 session?

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