

# Legal Assistance Resource Center

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### **Testimony before the Appropriations Committee on the Department of Labor Budget**

by Jane McNichol, Executive Director  
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Good evening. I am Jane McNichol, Executive Director of the Legal Assistance Resource Center of Connecticut, the advocacy and support center for legal services programs in the state. We represent the interests of very low income residents of the state. LARCC also convenes the Welfare Working Group, a group of about 25 advocates on welfare issues. Since 1996, the Welfare Working Group has monitored the federal TANF program and the state's family welfare program and its impact on low-income families with children in the state.

**I am here to speak in strong support of the new funding included in the Governor's budget for the Jobs First Employment Services (JFES) program.** This funding represents an important step toward a family welfare program which helps parents transition from receiving cash assistance to getting a job that will enable them to support their families. **JFES provides** services and job supports for parents in Connecticut's family welfare program who are striving to move from welfare to work. JFES served almost 16,000 parents last year.

The proposed funding is very small - \$747,500 in the first year of the biennium and \$555,000 in the second year. It will be used to "implement several alternative and innovative strategies, policies, and procedures designed to improve employment outcomes for needy families, under the federal TANF waiver guidance."

This initiative builds on ideas generated in this Committee and the Department of Labor (DOL) and Social Services (DSS) over the past two years. In 2011, DOL convened a work group to make recommendations on improving the JFES program. The report of that group recommends alternative and innovative approaches in JFES but acknowledges the problems in implementing these problems. In 2012, a small pilot program was funded and funding was again provided for a pilot in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

One major impediment to change has been the limited activities that meet the federal government's definition of work-related activity. Connecticut must demonstrate that a certain percentage of the parents in the JFES program are engaged in work-related activities in order to meet the requirements of the TANF block grant. Education and training are generally not encouraged in the federal scheme.

However, education and training are critically important to JFES participants getting and keeping jobs. This proposition was confirmed by a recent study by Kenneth A. Couch, Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Connecticut of the Connecticut Jobs First program. This study followed about 9,500 families in the JFES program over 3 years. The study

is entitled "Jobs First Employment Services and Temporary Aid to Needy Families in Connecticut" and is available through DOL. Among the conclusions of the study: **"Having an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education or less reduces the probability of being employed by 16.1%. Having more than 8 but less than 12 years of education similarly reduces the probability of employment by 17.8%."**

The need for alternative approaches is now being recognized by the federal government. Last summer, the Department of Health and Human Services indicated that it was willing to waive certain aspects of the federal TANF program for states that wanted to design alternative paths to employment.

Governor Malloy has picked up on this new flexibility by the federal government. He has proposed allocating \$747,500 in SFY 2014 and \$555,000 in SFY 2015 to DOL for "alternative and innovative strategies" in JFES. **This is a small but important step toward a better JFES program. We urge support of this funding.**

Attached to my testimony is a summary of how Connecticut has spent its federal TANF block grant money and the required maintenance of effort funds since 1997.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

## How Connecticut Spends its TANF and MOE Funds – 1997 – 2012

Combined TANF and MOE Spending - FFY 1997 – 2012 (in millions of dollars)

TANF is the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant, set up to replace the federal AFDC program. Connecticut is eligible for \$267 million a year in federal TANF funds and we generally receive and spend all that we are eligible for.

MOE stands for Maintenance of Effort funds, the funds that a state is required to spend in order to be eligible to receive federal TANF funds (similar to a match). Connecticut is required to spend \$184 - \$196 million in state MOE funds each year.

The information in the chart below is drawn from reports by the Department of Social Services to the TANF Council or to the Chairs of the Human Services Committee.

	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2012
Transfer to SSBG	5.9	24.1	26.7	26.7	26.7	26.2	26.7	26.7	26.7
<b>Cash Assistance</b>	<b>320.6</b>	202.0	158.4	124.4	125.7	<b>106.8</b>	<b>89.2</b>	<b>87.2</b>	<b>80.9</b>
<b>Child Care*</b>	<b>75.5</b>	115.0	96.1	38.3	12.5	<b>32.6</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>33.1</b>
Other Services					0.3	0.1	0		
Assistance - Prior Law			6.4	1.6	2.2	2.5	2.1	1.6	1.5
Other Work Act/ Educ.; 2010 – Sub. Employ.			.4	16.8	7.7	1.1	0		
GoodNewsGarage; DOL Services; Welfare to Work				1.6	1.2	0.3	0		
<b>Employment Serv/ IPC</b>	<b>12.1</b>	16.0	16.1	15.1	15.8	<b>21.7</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>16.8</b>
Transportation/Safety Net			5.1	5.3	4.8	4.0	5.6	5.1	5.0
Diversion; 2010 (ARRA)									
Rental Assistance				1.8	2.3				
Energy									
Medicaid for Non- Citizens			5.0	8.3	8.6				
<b>Pregnancy Prevention*</b>	<b>0</b>	0	21.4	38.9	66.4	<b>76.2</b>	<b>70.3</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>63.6</b>
<b>2-Parent Family Form.*</b>	<b>0</b>	0	0	18.1	7.7	<b>10.0</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>22.9</b>
Prior Law*			13.0	15.9	15.5	18.7	20.3	15.1	13.7
Administration	37.3	37.0	37.0	21.5	28.6	34.3	37.3	32.3	28.4
Information Technology	2.5	1.0	1.7	0.8	0.7	0.9	.5	.4	.4
Family Supp. Hsg (DCF)					0.9				
<b>Other*</b>	<b>0</b>	55.0	65.4	126.4	156.6	<b>163.5</b>	<b>194.7</b>	<b>199.7</b>	<b>185.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>453.9</b>	<b>450.1</b>	<b>452.7</b>	<b>461.5</b>	<b>484.2</b>	<b>498.9</b>	<b>504.2</b>	<b>503.8</b>	<b>478.1</b>

\* for more details, see attached pages.



<b>OTHER includes:</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Teen Pregnancy Prevention	0.7							
State "Medicaid" for Non-Citizens						12.2	15.1	
Faith Based Initiatives				0.1				
Family Violence Prevention								
Outreach Services			2.1	3.8	0.5	4.2	0.1	0.2
Supportive Housing (DSS)						0.3	1.0	0.7
<b>SDE School Readiness</b>			<b>32.9</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>65.2</b>	<b>68.0</b>	<b>69.3</b>
SDE Adult Education		0.7	0.8	0.5		0.7		
SDE Family Resource Centers		1.6			0.7			
SDE Priority School Districts								
<b>DCF Case Management Services</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>37.3</b>
DCF Substance Abuse Screening	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.1
DCF Trtm't/Prev/Child Abuse	3.9	3.4	4.1	3.6	3.5	3.6	4.3	4.1
DCF Family Preservation Services	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.0	2.9	2.6	3.6	3.3
DCF Substance Abuse Services	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.6	0.5	1.3	1.3
DCF Local Systems of Care		0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	3.0	4.0
DCF Community Emergency Services		0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1			
DCF Family Violence Services		0.3	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.5
DCF Early Childhood Development		1.8	0.4	0.2	0.4		0.7	0.2
DCF Support for Recovering Families			2.6	4.1	0.1		8.7	9.8
DCF Child Guidance Clinics								
DCF Family Support Teams				4.5	3.3	3.5	2.0	1.5
DCF Supportive Housing								
DMHAS Substance Abuse Grants			0.2					
DMHAS Mental Health Grants			0.9					
DMHAS Managed Service System			0.3					
<b>DCF Investigations</b>			<b>27.2</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>46.3</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>44.6</b>
DCF Intensive In-home Services			3.7	5.5				
CHEFA Loans to Day Care Centers		2.0						
Certificate Eligibility Development				0.6				
CCMIS (Maximus Contract for CCCP)		7.6	4.8	4.1		9.5	6.1	
DCF Individualized Family Support			0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1		
DMR Family Support			0.3					
DMR Respite Centers			0.3	0.4	0.6	0.9		
DMR Respite Grants			0.4	0.4		0.3		
Judicial Alternative Incarceration				2.3	2.0	2.4	2.7	2.5
Judicial Multi-Systemic Therapy				3.7	3.7	3.6	4.2	4.0
Judicial Court-Based Juvenile Assessments				0.7	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.8
DDS Respite Care							0.7	0.7
DDS Respite Grants							0.3	0.4
Unspecified MOE (Other)	18.0							
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>126.6</b>	<b>156.4</b>	<b>163.3</b>	<b>194.5</b>	<b>200.0</b>	<b>185.3</b>

\*In some cases, notably 2001, total does not match the total on the summary reports because the spending reports to the federal government were revised and no revision of the more detailed report to the Legislature was prepared.

	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2012
<b>PREVENTION OF OUT OF WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES includes:</b>							
Teen Pregnancy Prevention							
Teen Pregnancy	1.0	1.1	2.1	1.8	1.1	2.5	1.9
SDE Priority School Districts	7.4	7.5	18.1	26.8	17.6	14.8	16.4
SDE Priority School Districts ESH	2.5	3.0	3.8	4.3	3.5	1.0	3.5
SDE Youth Services Bureau	2.2	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.5	2.9	4.6
SDE Transitional School Districts	0.8						
SDE Interdistrict Coop Grant	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.3		
SDE Young Parents Program	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
SDE Family Resource Centers		4.3	7.1	6.4	5.4	5.1	6.9
SDE Safe Learning Grant		0.2					
OPM LEAP	2.3	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.7
OPM Neighborhood Youth Centers	2.0	1.0		1.6	2.2	1.2	1.9
OPM Grants to Boys and Girls Clubs	0.7	0.1					
OPM Children and Youth Development	0.2						
OPM Truancy Prevention	0.6						
OPM Governor's Prevention Partnership	0.5						
DPH Paternity Registry	0.2						
DPH Pregnancy Healthline		0.1					
DCF Early Childhood Development		2.1	1.0	1.1	1.3		0.7
DCF Extended Day Treatment			3.9	6.7	6.2	7.1	6.9
DMHAS Special Population		2.7	17.1	16.7	22.5	21.5	19.0
DMHAS Grants for Substance Abuse		0.3					
DMHAS Governor's Partnership		0.1					
DSS Family Planning		0.1					
Judicial IOM							
Judicial Counseling Services		1.1	0.9	1.3	1.0	1.2	0.9
Judicial Truancy Services		0.3	0.2				
Judicial STARS		0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	
Judicial JSRC		2.5					
Judicial Juv Justice Center		2.6	3.0				
Judicial Alt Detention Program		2.9	2.6	2.1	1.3		
Judicial Community Detention Program		2.2	2.0	2.5	2.9		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>66.2</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>59.0</b>	<b>63.6</b>

<b>CHILD CARE includes:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Employment Services Child Care	2.8	10.1	0.6	0.8	4.4	6.7	
Work Related Child Care	13.8						
Child Care Certificate Program	16.7	12.6	2.0	18.3	10.5	20.0	23.2
Transitional Child Care	26.9		10.0	13.6	12.3	10.1	9.8
SDE School Readiness	35.5	15.7					
Care4Kids Stimulus Checks							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>33.0</b>
<b>2-PARENT FAMILY FORMATION includes:</b>							
Fatherhood Initiative		0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3
DOC Education and Training		9.7	4.1	5.8	2.1	1.5	1.5
DOC Addiction Services for Non-Custodial Parents		7.5	2.8	3.5	8.6	21.1	21.0
DMHAS Problem Gambling		0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>18.1</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>22.9</b>
<b>PRIOR LAW includes:</b>							
DCF Case Management Services	3.1	10.2	9.0	11.8	14.4	14.4	12.9
DCF Family Preservation	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8
DCF EA Foster Care & Res. Treatment	6.6	4.5	3.7	4.5	3.7		
DCF Foster Care "Non-Claimable Balance"			2.0	1.7	1.6		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>13.7</b>

