



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Patricia A. Rehmer, MSN
Commissioner

Testimony by Patricia Rehmer, MSN, Commissioner
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Before the Human Services Committee
March 12, 2013

Good Morning Senator Slossberg, Representative Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. I am Commissioner Patricia Rehmer of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and I am writing today to express our concerns with Senate Bill No. 1085, An Act Concerning a Pilot Program for the Provision of Emotional and Behavioral Health Services to Youth.

The bill as written would have DMHAS take responsibility for developing a program to address the emotional and behavioral health needs of youth between the ages of 13 and 18. Currently, DMHAS provides services to adults with serious and persistent mental illness and substance use disorders. Our expertise and clinical knowledge base is directed at 18 year olds and older and DMHAS does not have expertise with younger teens as contemplated in this bill. In order to meet the requirements of this bill, we believe that the committee should consider the expertise and experience of the Department of Children and Families as well as the providers of children's behavioral health services. In times of limited resources, we believe the committee would be best served by looking at program models that exist and are funded by DCF such as The Bridge in West Hartford which appear to fit in with the proposed language.. .

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.