



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN February 21, 2013

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House Bill 6400 - An Act Concerning Mandated Reporters and Requiring Criminal History Records Checks For Youth Camp Directors and Alternate Directors

The Department provides the following information with regards to House Bill 6400:

This bill requires:

- Youth camps to conduct state and national criminal history records checks on any director or assistant director which is employed or volunteers at the licensed youth camps.
- Youth camps to recognize background checks conducted for immigration purposes not earlier than six months prior to the individual's employment or volunteering to meet this requirement.

Facts regarding youth camp licensing and background checks

- In 2012, DPH licensed 478 youth camps and issued initial approval to 370 directors and assistant directors.
- The cost for a complete background check is \$16.50.
- The processing time for fingerprint supported background check results is currently 12 weeks and has been as long as 16 weeks. Additional response time for follow up on results that indicate criminal history can also be expected. This processing time could negatively impact a youth camp's ability to continue operation should they need to replace or hire a new director or assistant director during the camp season.
- The bill does not specifically indicate who is responsible for conducting the review and necessary follow-up of background check results that indicate a criminal history. Federal law prohibits outside parties (e.g. youth camps) to conduct national fingerprint criminal background checks. Should the Department of Public Health be required to process the background checks on all youth camp directors and assistant directors, significant resources would be needed for additional staffing.

The Department supports the addition of youth camp directors and assistant directors to the list of mandated reporters but suggests that any person paid to care for a child in a youth camp be included similar to staff in child day care programs.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's comments on this bill.

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