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COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
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RAISED BILL 652, AN ACT CONCERNING REFERRALS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO THE BIRTH TO THREE PROGRAM

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of *Raised Bill 652, An Act Concerning Referrals from the Department of Children and Families to the Birth to Three Program*. This proposal would create a pilot program in two regional offices of the Department of Children and Families where every child under the age of three would be required to be referred to the "Birth to Three" Program. "Birth to Three" is a federally funded program designed to ensure that children are reaching important physical, intellectual and social development milestones in the first three years. Birth to Three provides families with professionals that evaluate a child's progress and implement services when a child shows developmental delays. Data has shown that young children in the care of DCF are not automatically referred to Birth to Three. This is a missed opportunity for these vulnerable children. Given the trauma and that a child entering into DCF custody has experienced, it is critical that every child in DCF care be evaluated for Birth to Three services.