State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.
Commissioner

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TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

H.B. No. 6616 - An Act Concerning the Governor's Prevention Budget

March 22, 2013

Senators Harp and Kane, Representatives Walker and Miner and members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Terrence W. Macy, PhD., Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **H.B. No. 6616 - An Act Concerning the Governor's Prevention Budget.**

This bill would repeal the requirement for the Governor to present a "prevention budget" as part of his biennial budget. This prevention document includes the Governor's recommendations for appropriations for prevention services to children, youth and families.

Although the Department of Developmental Services understands the importance of primary prevention, we question whether this Prevention Budget really answers the state's need to assess the benefits and outcomes of the state's prevention services. Besides the amount of staff time it takes each agency to prepare its piece of the Prevention Budget, department staff struggle with whether the programs chosen as "prevention services" really contribute to an overall state goal or even what that state goal is. While DDS reports on the Birth to Three System, which has a fairly clear goal of preventing developmental delays, DDS also reports on Individual and Family Grants, Respite Services, and the DDS Voluntary Services Program, which do not have as clear-cut ties to prevention. Much of this budget's information overlaps other reporting requirements that DDS has such as the annual Agency Prevention Report for the Child Poverty and Prevention Council.

DDS has concerns that the Prevention Budget has no discrete measures of what is to be prevented. The budget has a stated goal for each program but the goal is not necessarily tied to preventing something. The budget numbers are a comparison of previous fiscal year's expenditures to the current fiscal year's estimated expenditures to the Governor's recommended budget line item. This line item comparison means very little if you have no measurable prevention goal and no statistical outcomes of the various programs. All that is known from the Prevention Budget is what the program's goal is and whether each program's budget has increased or decreased but nothing about the successes, failures or problems with the program. For these reasons, I agree with the proponents of this bill that this reporting requirement could be eliminated without hindering the state's understanding of the benefits of prevention services.

If you have any questions or need any additional information from DDS, please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs at (860) 418-6066.