

March 14, 2013

I am writing to support Raised Bill No. 6482, An Act Concerning Birth Certificates For Homeless Youth.

As the Chairperson of the Waterbury Homeless Youth Committee for the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, I believe it is important for unaccompanied homeless youth to be able to access their birth certificates without a parent/guardian or grandparent. This change is needed because without access to their birth certificates unaccompanied homeless youth are limited in many activities which can lead to self-sufficiency such as:

- ~Working, as most employers require long-form birth certificates
- ~ Access to mental health treatment
- ~ Complications in school registration
- ~ Obtaining a state issued identification or driver's license

All of these activities can assist youth in bettering themselves in order to end their homelessness, and yet they are unable to do so due to the current law.

This bill makes sense as it is in line with the process of the federal College Cost Reduction Act, which gives unaccompanied homeless youth access to federal financial aid without requiring parental financial information.

I therefore urge you to please pass Raised Bill No. 6482 so unaccompanied homeless youth may access work, health and support services.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jill G. Schoenfuss, MBA, OTR
Waterbury Homeless Youth Committee Chairperson
Grants Manager
StayWell Health Center
80 Phoenix Avenue
Waterbury, CT 06702
203-756-8021 x3113
jschoenfuss@staywellhealth.org