



*Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
Roderick L. Bremby, Commissioner
March 7, 2014*

Good morning, Senator Bye and Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Roderick Bremby and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services. I am pleased to be before you today to testify on **Senate Bill 340**.

The Department is very supportive of addressing the needs of two-generational households as many of our programs and services contribute to assisting families and children to achieve positive outcomes. We agree that the integration of early childhood education and access to skills-based training and adult education for parents is a comprehensive family-centered service that deserves attention. As such, DSS currently coordinates with state and community organizations to ensure that these services are accessible and reach the intended individuals.

We do not believe, however, that the proposed legislation is necessary. We believe the intended goal of this legislation is already addressed in the work performed annually by the Child Poverty and Prevention Council and by current legislation that governs the Family Resource Centers, administered by the Department of Education.

We also expect that the new Office of Early Childhood will be added to the Child Poverty and Prevention Council. This action will assist with ongoing work begun by state agencies to address access to child care, high school diplomas, adult education, vocational training, and job attainment.

I also wish to share another example of existing legislation that directs DSS and the Department of Labor (DOL) to jointly administer the Jobs First Employment Services program for individuals receiving Temporary Family Assistance (TFA). While this is a specific target group, it is an excellent example of two agencies – DSS and DOL – working together to connect individuals to all of the areas targeted in the proposed bill: child care, high school diplomas, adult education, vocational skills training, and jobs.

In summary, while DSS supports the intent of the legislation and administers many programs and services that are reflective of its language, there are effective, existing working relationships between our agency, the Department of Labor, the Department of Education and, most recently, the Office of Early Childhood, to implement these priorities. The Child Poverty and Prevention Council is a key coordinating resource. We respectfully submit to the Committee that SB 340 is redundant and duplicative of current law and practice.