



State of Connecticut

African-American Affairs Commission

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509

Hartford, CT 06106

860-240-8555

February 24, 2014

Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Glenn A. Cassis and I am the Executive Director of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC). The mission of the Commission is to promote and improve the economic, educational, health, safety and political well-being of the African-American community in Connecticut. I wish to submit testimony in support of **SB 366 – An Act Concerning the Erasure of Records in Delinquency and Family With Service Needs Matters**

Often the judicial system places too much attention on the severity of the punishment administered to convicted offenders. Not enough attention is focused on how well an ex-offender can reenter society and become productive. Juveniles convicted of delinquent acts and who have served their penalty, should be afforded the opportunity to reenter society without additional burdens. Most juveniles commit offenses without understanding the full consequences. The judicial system adjudicates infractions separately from adults because juveniles have not fully matured. Juveniles should not be placed at a disadvantage if no additional offenses have taken place. A clean record will enable juveniles to apply to school, seek employment, enter the community and become productive members of the community.

For African-Americans this bill is critically important. African-American youth are disproportionately represented in the Connecticut juvenile justice system. This continues to be a bias resulting from decades of inequities. **SB 366** begins to address some of the outcomes of the societal disparities

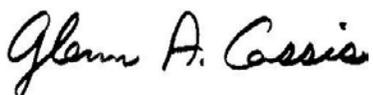
Our Mission

To improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut

by providing juveniles of color with a more even playing field. The Commission supports this bill because it is good policy. We know that racial disparities exist throughout our system and it is our responsibility to make every effort to resolve them when possible. The Commission urges the legislators to support **SB 366** because it will improve and empower the lives of juveniles who have turned their lives around in a positive direction.

Thank you for your time.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn A. Cassis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Glenn A. Cassis

Executive Director

Attachment