



CONNECTICUT COALITION to
END HOMELESSNESS 257 Lawrence Street, Hartford CT 06106 | P (860) 721-7876 | F (860) 257-1148 | www.cceh.org

Testimony of Lisa Tepper Bates

Regarding: Bill 5304

AN ACT PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS FOR YOUTH UNDER THE CARE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

March 6, 2014

Dear Legislator,

The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, in partnership with members and communities throughout the state, creates change through leadership, advocacy, and building the capacity of members and the field to respond to environmental challenges. Our collective mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.

The institutions which currently manage homelessness in Connecticut will be transformed as we solve this unacceptable human condition through the implementation of prevention strategies, development of permanent affordable housing, coordination and addition of culturally relevant support services and systems, and the emergence of real opportunities or steady and stable incomes for all of Connecticut's citizens.

It is my understanding that in 2012, almost 20% of youth exiting foster care in Connecticut were discharged to "Shelter," "Friends" or "Unknown." This is unacceptable. We know that there are too many young people aging out of DCF and falling into homelessness. Not only are these young people particularly vulnerable when homeless (much more likely to experience violence, addiction, sexual assault or abuse, and similar issues) but this experience can set them on a trajectory that will not allow them to recover.

Homelessness and its effects -- including, for many of these young people -- a life in and out of expensive emergency systems and incarceration, is not only wrong for these residents of our state, it is also expensive. It is a much better investment of public dollars to find better and more effective ways to prevent these terrible, negative outcomes for vulnerable young people than it is to pay (over and over) for the unacceptable consequences of lack of appropriate and accountable care.

CCEH supports this bill and this initiative.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisa Tepper Bates
Executive Director
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH)

