



**AdvoServ Testimony on Connecticut H.B. 5558
March 19, 2014**

Distinguished Co-Chairs Gerratana and Johnson, Members of the Public Health Committee, Good morning.

My name is Kelly McCrann and I am the Chief Executive Officer for AdvoServ. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5558 and to introduce AdvoServ and our programs to you. We hope that AdvoServ and our 42 years of experience serving individuals with Autism and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities may benefit Connecticut and its citizens.

In brief, our mission is to fill a critical need for services to individuals with the most complex behavioral and medical challenges with Autism and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. These complex behavioral and medical challenges include severe aggression, self-injury and property damage. These individuals often inflict serious harm to themselves and others, require the greatest resources at the highest costs, and are most likely to attract attention from legal, advocacy and media sources.

Services for these individuals are extremely difficult to arrange because they require high levels of professional expertise, a lengthy record of high quality services and strong financial stability. AdvoServ's singular mission for over forty two years has been to provide the highest quality clinical care to individuals with the most significant needs, while providing substantial cost savings to the states in which we operate. We believe that AdvoServ can assist Connecticut in serving its most vulnerable citizens at a considerable cost savings.

We appreciate the legislature's support for the Department of Developmental Services and its mission to serve both children and adults with Autism and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Even with the best of intentions and efforts by the Department, our understanding is that Connecticut serves many of its most challenging individuals in state centers and out-of-state placements, or they remain on an emergency or crisis waiting list because appropriate services are not available from providers willing or able to provide these services within Connecticut. We believe that House Bill 5558 takes a major step toward meeting

the needs of these most vulnerable citizens. The pilot program provides for intensive and comprehensive services from a provider who has a proven track record of improving behavior and helps the State address a significant need, i.e. individuals with challenging behaviors that find themselves in hospitals or state centers, out of state placements away from families, or on an emergency list without appropriate services.

Serving high-need intensive individuals is expensive. However, providing these services in Connecticut allows the State to recoup 50% of the cost through its Medicaid Waiver program. From the data available to us, we believe that this could represent a savings of over \$100,000 per person per year if those individuals could be served in state and utilize the federal reimbursement for services. Out-of-state placements do not recoup any of these federal dollars. In addition, these out-of-state placements send Connecticut taxpayer dollars to another state.

We thank the sponsors for their leadership on this Bill and encourage your support to meet the needs of people with Autism and Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities. We further thank all of you for this opportunity to be here today.