



Testimony, Human Services Committee, February 10, 2015

My name is Brian Anderson. I am a Legislative Representative for Council 4 AFSCME, a union of 32,000 public and private employees. Council 4 also represents most of Connecticut's Department of Social Services employees.

Council 4 opposes HB 6676, An Act Concerning the Administration of Social Services Programs. This bill would privatize all Department of Social Services functions to non-profit providers. There are many reasons to oppose this bill. First among them is that this would violate several federal laws and regulations that mandate that eligibility, fraud detection and other work be done by state government employees. This would lead to a massive loss of federal funds and threaten the aid that goes to many Connecticut working poor families.

The belief that privatization is more cost effective has been disproved repeatedly. Privatization has been studied exhaustively and most studies show that it is more expensive, results in a loss of public accountability and control and often yields lesser service.

Privatization forces down wages and benefits for workers at a time that America is suffering from serious economic disparity. The US Census Bureau recently found that 50% of working families are now considered "working poor." The Southern Education Foundation reported last month that more than half of American public school children are living in poverty. More information can be found about the harmful effects of privatization at <http://www.inthepublicinterest.org/RaceToTheBottom>.

Council 4 DSS employees take great pride in their work in trying to alleviate the suffering of Connecticut's neediest residents. Yet, our members are frustrated by the lack of staff and resources that are needed to provide resources for poor people. Just over ten years ago, Governor Rowland slashed DSS staff. This helped to destroy the bridge between poor people and the services that they need. That bridge has yet to be rebuilt.

Council 4 would be happy to provide the committee with any additional information. Thank you for your consideration.