

Testimony of Brenda R HB-7050

IN SUPPORT OF HB 7050, AN ACT CONCERNING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Dear Representative Tong, Senator Coleman, Distinguished Members of the Committee on Children: I submit this testimony in support of Section 4 of HB 7050.

I'm 15 years old. I was first shackled when I was 14 years old, and then again 6 months ago. Being shackled made me feel like I was treated like an animal. Being held and walked like I was a dog made me feel like an animal.

I think being shackled made me feel bad about myself. It made me feel like I was a bad person and something was wrong with me. My DCF worker, my therapist, and my Mom and Dad all saw me shackled when I walked into court. I felt everyone's eyes on me, they were looking at me as a big criminal. My parents cried.

Shackles were not necessary for truancy. A 15 year old young woman whose crime was truancy: Not going to school, should not be shackled. Shackles aren't necessary because they make people feel less than what they are.

I think if I walked in without shackles it would have been better. I didn't need shackles; the marshals walked me into court.

This issue is important because it's just wrong, especially if a child is truant, to be shackled. It's important because shackling kids is just wrong.

Brenda R

Waterbury

Passages Program