

**TESTIMONY OF STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 796, AN ACT CONCERNING
LENGTHY SENTENCES FOR CRIMES COMMITTED BY A CHILD OR YOUTH
AND THE SENTENCING OF A CHILD OR YOUTH CONVICTED OF CERTAIN
FELONY OFFENSES**

Joint Committee on Judiciary
March 4, 2015

Submitted by A collection of students from the University Of Connecticut,
School of Social Work

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee. We would like to thank you for hearing our testimony. We submit this testimony **in support of S.B. 796.**

As social workers we feel this particular policy should be supported and implemented because children and youth are more likely to reform than adults who commit the same offenses. Therefore a line should be drawn between how we treat youth who commit crimes as opposed to adults.

The bill fits in directly with the "Second Chance Society" Governor Malloy proposed in recent weeks. If we are choosing to build our communities through creating alternatives for those who have made mistakes, then youth should be a priority. As quoted in the Governors speech to the Yale Law School, "people, particularly young people make mistakes". This bill would make a major statement in our efforts to build our citizens through a second chance motto.

In addition, citizens of Connecticut are paying close to three times the amount of money to incarcerate those eligible for S.B. 796 than it is for community supervision. This bill would reduce those unnecessary costs. The costs of dragging these cases through court are also reduced as hearings would be upheld and tended to in a more extensive and supervised manner by the parole board.

Again, we ask for your support for SB 796.

We thank you for hearing our testimony.

Sincerely,

A collection of students from the University Of Connecticut School of Social Work:

Landon Osborn
Aurelia Price
Jasmine Haynes
Robert Haswell
Alberto Cifuentes jr.

Aswad Thomas
Christen Cassidy
Kenterra Carrion
Madeline Granato
Kelsey Barringham

Raquel Vasquez
Takaya Owens