

*Written Testimony for the Judiciary Committee  
March 11, 2015*

The Department of Social Services offers the following written testimony on two bills that may impact the agency.

**S.B. No. 1030 (RAISED) AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE COLLECTION OF PAST DUE CHILD SUPPORT**

This bill implements the recommendations of the Task Force to study methods for improving the collection of past due child support.

The Department would like express its gratitude toward the Committee for hearing a bill related to improving the collection of past due child support. The Department's Bureau of Child Support Enforcement division works tirelessly to improve the self-sufficiency of Connecticut families through increased financial and medical support.

In general, the Department is supportive of much of this bill; however the Department would like to note specific concerns with the provision listed in section 6, 7, 8 & 9. As written, section 6 would negatively impact the Department's efforts to establish paternity and child support orders in a timely and effective manner.

The current process permits an investigator to gather both location and financial information simultaneously, which leads to an expeditious and streamlined establishment process. To mandate officials to wait until the paternity matter is resolved would greatly extend the time to establish a support order. Employer information is critical in assisting staff with the location of noncustodial parents as well as establishment of financial orders. Information such as addresses, Social Security numbers and wage information are all frequently obtained from an individual's employer. This provision would tend to have the following impact:

- Many putative fathers would not be located, which would prevent the establishment of legal paternity as well as support for children.
- Families would wait longer to receive child support.
- Federal Performance Measures would be reduced, resulting in a loss of federal incentive money.
- Unpaid arrearages would increase, from the outset of the order, if eventually entered.

Related to sections 8 and 9, there are no funds included in the Governor's recommended budget to support such additions.

The Department is willing to work with the proponents of the bill to discuss these concerns further. However for these reasons the Department is unable to support this bill as written.

**H.B. No. 6929 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM IN THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT TO ALLOW FOR THE SERVICE OF A CAPIAS MITTIMUS ORDER BY AN OFF-DUTY CITY POLICE OFFICER**

This bill would authorize an off-duty Bridgeport police officer to execute capias mittimus orders in IV-D support cases for the same fee paid to state marshals performing the service. The pilot program would be limited to orders returnable to the Fairfield J.D. at Bridgeport, and would end on 1/1/17, with a report by Judicial to the Judiciary Committee due by 4/1/17.

As written the Department is unsure of the intent of this bill. Clarity is needed to define the terms of the pilot program, as the current language may prove to be problematic.

The Department has questions related to the status of the off-duty police officer executing capias mittimus orders. Would they still be considered an employee of the city of Bridgeport? There are also union related questions that may arise from this process.

Another concern the Department would like to note is if the off-duty police officer mention in the bill is able to transport outside of the Bridgeport city limits. If they are unable to do so, a state Marshall would have to attend, prolonging the process and over extending resources.

For these reasons the Department is unable to support this bill.