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JUDICIAL BRANCH

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Testimony of Stephen N. Ment
Committee on Children Public Hearing
February 5, 2015

Senate Bill 303, An Act Concerning Children Exposed To Family Violence

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, in support of Senate Bill 303, *An Act Concerning Children Exposed to Family Violence*. This bill would establish a task force for the purpose of evaluating existing policies and procedures used by state agencies and others when minors are exposed to family violence, and calls for the development of a state-wide model policy for responding to minors who witness such violence.

As members may know, this legislation is the outgrowth of the "Improving Outcomes for Children & Youth Impacted by Family Violence" workgroup that met this past fall. The Judicial Branch was represented on this workgroup, and supported its aims. As was noted in the workgroup's report, "[I]ntimate partner violence within families puts children at high risk for severe and potentially lifelong problems, with physical health, mental health, and school and peer relationships as well as disruptive behavior."

The Judicial Branch supports the goal of improving our state's response to children who witness family violence and would be pleased to work with the bill's proponents to achieve this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.