

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Stephanie Ward. I live in Bristol, Connecticut. I am an employee for one of the Birth to Three Providers here in Connecticut. I would like to bring your attention to significant changes that are being proposed for the Birth to Three System. As you know, Birth to Three has been slated to move from the Department of Developmental Services to the Office of Early Childhood. This service system is in a state of flux with additional significant changes being proposed. Currently, DDS handles all Medicaid billing for Birth to Three; however, OPM intends to shift this burden onto private providers without conducting a feasibility study. The Governor's budget currently has Birth to Three transferring to the OEC with the same budget as 2014. However, what is not being discussed is that this change in Medicaid billing will not allow the providers to receive a good portion of these budgeted funds. In an attempt to maintain Birth to Three as the wonderful program it is, the policy change needs to be stopped. Medicaid billing needs to remain the responsibility of the State. One of our political supporters recently said, that the responsibility of the Birth to Three providers should be putting together a comprehensive quality program to meet the needs of the children of Connecticut, not haggling over every Medicaid dollar. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Ward