

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
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AGENCY DEFICIENCIES FOR THE
FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2016

Good morning Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, and thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding projected agency deficiencies for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.

On October 19th, the Office of Policy and Management issued a forecast identifying a projected year-end operating shortfall of \$118.4 million. This follows a September forecast that showed a \$103 million shortfall which was resolved through rescissions. These shortfalls are almost entirely due to Personal Income Tax revenues lagging budgeted growth rates, with only \$8.5 million of the figure resulting from expenditure issues that are the subject of this hearing.

The agency deficiencies contributing to the shortfall are as follows:

- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. A total shortfall of \$400,000 is estimated, consisting of \$300,000 in Personal Services and \$100,000 in Other Expenses, due to an increase in the number of autopsies performed by the agency.
- Office of Early Childhood. A \$6.5 million deficiency is forecast in the Birth to Three program as a result of caseload increases and increased utilization of more costly services.
- Public Defender Services Commission. A total shortfall of \$1.6 million is projected. Of this, \$1.2 million is in the Assigned Counsel – Criminal account due to an increased number of habeas corpus petitions following passage of Public Act 12-115, which places time limitations on filing such petitions. The Expert Witnesses account will have a projected \$0.4 million shortfall due both to P.A. 12-115 as well as a Connecticut

Supreme Court decision requiring the agency to pay for reasonably necessary expert witnesses when requested by pro se indigent defendants in criminal cases. Please note that the agency recently communicated a substantial new shortfall due to increased child protection caseloads, but somewhat reduced expenditures for the habeas and expert witness issues noted above. As a result, the agency's testimony differs materially from our October forecast.

In conclusion, please note that the estimates presented here today are based on the best information available when we issued our October projections. OPM issues a forecast each month, and these deficiency estimates will undoubtedly be updated as the year progresses.

Again, I thank the committee for the opportunity to present this testimony. Agency representatives are here today to provide more in-depth information regarding projected shortfalls, but I am happy to answer any questions you may have.