



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



Public Hearing Testimony

Housing Committee

March 1, 2016

S.B. No. 258 - AN ACT BROADENING THE DEFINITION OF CHILD CARE FACILITY.

The Department of Children and Families offers the following comments regarding S.B. No. 258, An Act Broadening the Definition of Child Care Facility. This bill proposes to broaden the definition of "child care facility" in section 17a-93 of the General Statutes to include persons under twenty-five years of age who are currently homeless. Currently, section 17a-93 defines "child care facility" as "a congregate residential setting licensed by the Department of Children and Families for the out-of-home placement of children or youths under eighteen years of age, or any person under twenty-one years of age who is in full-time attendance in a secondary school, a technical school, a college or state accredited job training program."

The Department is aware of a new program for homeless youth and young adults that is being established by the City of New Haven to reportedly serve a population ages 13 to 24. While the Department is supportive of programs to serve homeless youth, we are concerned that broadening the definition of "child care facility" in section 17a-93 of the General Statutes to include persons up to twenty-five years of age who are currently homeless is too broad. We would object to any expansion of this definition beyond age 21. DCF is also concerned that if services are to be provided to such a wide age range, potentially teens through age 25, it would not be in the best interests of youth to be served, and indeed potentially dangerous, unless such services were operated in a segregated manner for youth and adults.

Section 17a-145 of the General Statutes requires a license from DCF for any person or entity that provides board and care of a child. The specific requirements are detailed in sections 17a-145-48 through 17a-145-98, inclusive of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. While there are some exceptions to this statutory requirement, services for homeless youth are not currently exempted from licensure.