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February 22, 2016

Children's Committee Members

RE: S.B. 180 (An Act Concerning Permanency Hearings, Youth Advisory Councils and Foster Families)

Dear Committee Members:

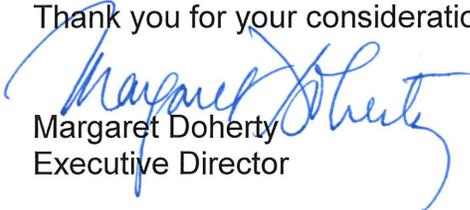
My name is Margaret Doherty. I have the privilege of serving as Executive Director of Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents ("CAFAP"). While I applaud the intention of the provisions of S.B. 180, I have concerns about Section 4(a), as currently drafted. CAFAP is requesting that the proposed mandated information be conveyed verbally by Department of Children and Families ("DCF") staff to each child twelve years of age or older, not in writing.

Children and youth in foster care should be informed, prior to placement, about the essential facts of the homes and families with whom they will be living. However, foster families should not have written documents about them being created by DCF employees which could then be left behind on school buses, thrown away in school cafeterias, etc.

I ask that if policymakers mandate that the specified information be conveyed, it be done in a way to protect the privacy of the foster families who are opening their homes to children and youth.

I am very happy to answer questions or to provide additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.


Margaret Doherty
Executive Director