



## State of Connecticut

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Senate Minority Leader Len Fasano  
Testimony re: Child Protection Reforms  
Children's Committee Public Hearing  
February 23, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am here to testify on S.B. 183 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROGRAM OF FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE.; H.B. 5135 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CLOSURE OF THE CONNECTICUT JUVENILE TRAINING SCHOOL AND THE PUEBLO UNIT FOR GIRLS and S.B. 181 AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Despite promising to improve the lives of Connecticut's children and families and get Connecticut out from under court mandated oversight, recent Court Monitor and Office of Child Advocate (OCA) reports reveal an agency that is in a downward spiral. DCF is failing to meet the needs of over half the children in its care, more than at any point since Commissioner Katz took office. Disturbingly, we have seen an unprecedented number of child homicides involving children who should have been protected by DCF. The agency has ignored multiple known risk factors and has prioritized administrative expediency and keeping children in the home above actual child safety. And we've seen a state facility where child abuse in the form of dangerous physical restraints and seclusion is tolerated.

The heart wrenching case of 2 year old Londyn Sach highlights many of these concerns and starkly demonstrates how promoting lower DCF caseloads above child safety is resulting in the deaths of Connecticut children. According to the Office of Child Advocate report, Londyn died in her home due to a drug overdose. Her death was found to be a homicide. Despite an extensive history of alleged abuse and neglect spanning at least seven years and two states, and after receiving multiple reports in 2013 and 2014, DCF nevertheless declared the family "low risk" and assigned them to the Family Assessment Response (FAR) program. This decision was, according to the Child Advocate, "not appropriate" in light of the documented chronic pattern of child welfare complaints and proved to be fatal for young Londyn.

Even worse, just weeks before her death, DCF refused to accept a report from police to the DCF hotline regarding possible abuse of Londyn and her brother and, astonishingly, closed its case on Londyn leaving her unsupervised and vulnerable in an unsafe and unstable home.

The OCA's report found systemic problems with the DCF FAR program including inconsistent and inadequate risk assessment protocols, lack of quality assurance and control, inadequate communication between community providers and DCF to ensure family compliance and success with treatment programs, premature case closures, and lack of independent oversight and accountability. The OCA

reports that almost half of all abuse and neglect cases are now diverted through the FAR program. One third of these cases end up coming back to DCF with subsequent reports of abuse and neglect. According to the OCA, the majority of these families were not “low risk” and should not have been sent through FAR, but should have been accepted as higher risk cases requiring DCF oversight and responsibility. That is too many children being put at risk by a failing system.

Unfortunately, this pattern of failure has been repeating itself at DCF for several years. Calls from advocates, parents and others, including myself, for reform have gone unheeded. So, I regretfully find myself before you once again, calling for reform.

I don't blame the case workers who work hard every day to protect the kids they care for. I blame management for allowing the system to weaken more and more each year, for rejecting proposals to strengthen child protection and increase accountability, and for charging full speed ahead with policies that advocates have questioned. It is time for the General Assembly to take action to protect Connecticut's most vulnerable children and families.

### **1) Improve the Family Assessment Response (FAR) Program**

S.B. 183 would require the Department of Children and Families to submit an annual report on the family assessment response program for inclusion in the annual report card on policies and programs affecting children. While I applaud efforts to increase transparency with regard to the FAR program, this bill does not go nearly far enough in adopting the kind of systemic reform needed to improve child safety and DCF operations.

***We must increase standards and accountability of risk assessment in the Family Assessment Response Program (FAR).*** FAR is a tool used by the DCF to determine if a case will be referred to the agency for appropriate action and monitoring or if the case will be referred to supports provided by the community. In light of recent tragic events and the OCA report, we must ***strengthen*** the FAR by requiring DCF to:

- utilize public objective standardized evidence based criteria for assessing risk and assigning children and families to the FAR
- increase training for their Hotline and risk assessment workers ,
- implement a tracking system to monitor progress and outcomes for children and families referred to FAR
- require a DCF supervisor to sign off before determining that a child or family has successfully met the goals of the FAR and no longer requires FAR services
- accept all calls to the DCF hotline by law enforcement as high risk
- look at out-of-state child abuse history prior to assessing risk as well as to
- Establish a FAR Advisory Board to oversee, monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the FAR

**2) Close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and Pueblo Unit Effective Jan. 1, 2017**

Despite objections raised by the OCA, the Center for Children's Advocacy and Connecticut Voices for Children, among others, the Commissioner forged ahead with what Martha Stone from CCA called an "ill advised" plan to develop a new high security prison like facility for juvenile girls. Within months, advocates raised concerns regarding the increasing number of girls being incarcerated and the rising use of violent physical restraints at Pueblo.

At the same time, the OCA, Public Defender's Office, CJTS Advisory Group, CCA and JJA all raised concerns about the increasingly dangerous conditions of confinement at CJTS and Pueblo. Ms. Stone wrote that fights and restraints had become the norm at CJTS and that there were over 100 incidents of boys being "subject to physical and mechanical restraints" in just three months.

An OCA review of the conditions at CJTS and Pueblo found an excessive use of physical restraints and seclusion, including the dangerous use of "prone restraints" (a practice so abhorrent it is outlawed in private facilities) on youth with physical conditions, such as asthma, that make such restraint dangerous if not life threatening and on children with histories of trauma for whom such restraints can be emotionally devastating.

OCA's review also noted a disturbing rate of suicidal behavior and noted the documented correlation between the use of seclusion and suicide. OCA highlighted the "urgent concern that youth with significant mental health needs are subject to restrictive measures—including seclusion—for days at a time."

An August 2014 Hartford Courant's review of data show (1) a high injury rate for staff, (2) high rate of assaultive behavior and resort to physical restraints, and (3) safety deficiencies including "blind spots" that make suicide detection and prevention difficult. In September 2014, the Child Advocate took the unprecedented step of reporting DCF for child abuse based on the repeated use of violent "prone restraints" at Pueblo.

Although DCF has promised to reduce the use of restraints and seclusion and improve suicide prevention, many advocates believe that CJTS and Pueblo are fundamentally flawed facilities and failed models. Furthermore, with fewer children housed at CJTS the cost of maintaining the facility, in light of its limited therapeutic success, simply cannot be justified.

- It costs the state \$52.9 million to operate CJTS.
- This equates to an annual cost of \$545,671 per resident in FY 2015.
- These children are not getting the therapeutic treatment they need in that institution.
- Various non-profit and advocacy organizations feel that these children can be better served in the community.
- The population of CJTS would be grouped based on type of offense and would be either placed in a secure residential facility, residential group home, or at home with intensive community supports.

While the Governor has promised to close CJTS by July 2018, there is no legislative mandate that he do so. There is also no reason to wait that long. There are community placements available to accept the children where they will get better care and treatment at a much lower cost. Every day that children at CJTS are locked in confinement or subject to restraints is a day wasted and an opportunity to improve conditions and outcomes for our children missed.

### **3) Increase Transparency within the Department of Children & Families**

***Increase public access to DCF records including videos and internal reviews, reports and investigations.*** S.B. 181 would allow certain individuals access to DCF records when the records pertain to a child receiving services from the department and the parent, guardian, foster parent or prospective adoptive parent with whom such child lives or is placed is convicted of certain crimes. While I support increased access to DCF records, again this bill does not go far enough to increase transparency for an agency that directly impacts the lives of our most vulnerable children yet has resisted calls for increased independent oversight, accountability and transparency.

Current statute broadly exempts all DCF records *“created or obtained in connection with the department’s child protection activities.”* Because everything DCF does arguably *“relates to its child protection activities”*, this exemption allows DCF to withhold virtually everything. As a result, policy makers and the public depend on an understaffed Office of Child Advocate to investigate, review and report on internal DCF operations, and OCA generally can only react to situations brought to its attention.

The general statutes should be amended to limit freedom of information exemptions for DCF records to only personally identifying information or medical records. Internal reviews, reports, assessments, and other records related to the department’s handling of child protection matters and facility operations should be deemed a public record as well as any video depicting operations within any DCF facility so long as the identity of the children can be sufficiently obscured.

Additionally, in working with families of DCF involved children, one parent related to me that while her son was at CJTS, she noticed bruising when visiting him. Although she requested records disclosing how the bruising occurred, treatment he received, etc. she had trouble receiving a timely and complete response. It seems to me that parents, unless their parental rights have been terminated, should have prompt access to facility records relating to DCF’s treatment or interactions with their child.

Together these proposals would go a long way towards improving the quality, accountability and transparency of DCF programs and improving outcomes for children. In addition, I have proposed several other reforms to improve services to our most vulnerable children. These proposals are discussed below.

Another issue that was recently brought to my attention by a juvenile justice advocate is a proposal actually raised several years ago by then Senate President Donald Williams and Senator Ed Myer, which is to require that DCF become accredited by the Council on Accreditation. The Council on Accreditation

(COA) is an international, independent, nonprofit, human service accrediting organization founded in part by the Child Welfare League. COA partners with public and private human service organizations to improve service delivery and outcomes by formally evaluating organizations and programs using evidenced based standards and criteria. They should be viewed, not as a list of bureaucratic requirements but as a cookbook for programmatic excellence that can be used to drive system improvement. Perhaps if we had adopted Sen. Williams and Sen. Myer's proposal in 2007, DCF would be meeting the needs of children in its care today.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to working with you on these important issues.

**Additional Proposals:**

**1) Transfer Juvenile Justice Functions Currently Operated under the Department of Children and Families to the Judicial Department's Court Support Services Division.**

Require that *all juvenile justice functions that are currently the responsibility of the Department of Children and Families be transferred to the Judicial Department's Court Support Services Division*. The CSSD is a well-respected department that utilizes performance based standards and appears better equipped to administer this function.

**2) Establish an Independent Department of Children & Families Ombudsman.**

Transfer current positions to the Office of Child Advocate which will create a *new independent ombudsman to review youth grievances under the care of the Department of Children and Families*. The ombudsman would receive complaints and grievances from children who are under the care of DCF. Numerous child advocates have called for an independent ombudsman recognizing that requiring children to report grievances to a DCF employee has a chilling effect on such reports and poses an inherent conflict of interest. The Judicial Department successfully utilizes an outside ombudsman which has resulted in more issues being raised and resolved. An independent ombudsman would also increase public accountability and confidence in DCF's programs.

**3) Implement a Quality Assurance Program for Department of Children and Families Programs and Facilities**

*DCF and any DCF-contracted juvenile justice committee should incorporate the use of Performance Based Standards (PBS) which is a quality assurance program* launched by the Department of Justice in 1995 to improve conditions of juvenile confinement. PBS is an evidence-based program that is already used by the Judicial Department at the juvenile detention facilities. While the system will allow for extensive outcomes, in particular this system will allow for the compilation of all incident reports which will allow the CJTS Advisory Board, the Office of Child Advocate (OCA), the independent ombudsmen, legislators and other interested parties to easily see and understand data trends. In addition, require that data compiled must be shared at least quarterly with the CJTS Advisory Board. PBS should not be used solely for CJTS as proposed in S.B 75 but system wide to ensure that all children in DCF operated or contracted facilities are receiving the best evidence based care.

**4) Conduct an Independent Review of the Department of Children and Families.**

Similar to the review recently conducted for the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, this proposed bill seeks to ***require the Department of Children and Families to undertake an independent review of their operations, programs and policies by an independent consultant like the Child Welfare League of America.***

**5) Ensure Child Placement Decisions Reflect the Best Interests of a Child.**

***Restore the court's authority to order a child under its jurisdiction (i.e. found to be delinquent) to be placed in an out of state facility if such placement is in the best interests of the child and there is no comparable in state program or facility.*** The Court previously had this authority but the Department lobbied to take it away and give the Commissioner sole placement authority. As a result, there is no independent oversight to ensure that placement decisions reflect the best interest of the child.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Len Fasano', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Len Fasano  
Senate Minority Leader

<b>Department of Children &amp; Families Raises Questions</b>	
<b>Disturbing Individual Case</b>	<p><b>February 18, 2016 – Groton Family Placement Leads to Abuse</b>                      A Groton woman granted temporary custody of her sister's child by the state has been charged with severely neglecting and abusing the 18-month-old boy, who was malnourished and had broken bones and burn marks when he was hospitalized after being removed from the woman's home. <a href="http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-child-abuse-dcf-foster-0219-20160218-story.html">http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-child-abuse-dcf-foster-0219-20160218-story.html</a></p>
<b>Disturbing Individual Case</b>	<p><b>January 28 2016 - Watertown Couple Abused Children Adopted From DCF</b>                      Couple charged with two counts of cruelty to persons, unlawful restraint in the second degree and risk of injury to a minor. Couple confined kids to bathroom for months as punishment. 4 of their 5 adoptive children had special needs. How DCF Dropped the ball:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the summer of 2015, a complaint was made to DCF "concerning excessive discipline and rigid parenting," Child Advocate Sarah Eagan confirmed Friday. "DCF substantiated the complaint and then handed off the case to mental-health providers who were working with the family."</li> <li>• Eagan said DCF did not keep the case open for ongoing supervision of the family after handing it off.</li> <li>• The couple told police during interviews that DCF and the children's therapists were aware that they used isolation in the bathroom as a form of punishment and that they had their permission.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-watertown-adopt-abuse-0130-20160129-story.html">http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-watertown-adopt-abuse-0130-20160129-story.html</a></p>
<b>CALL #3 FOR RESIGNATION</b>	<p><b>January 20, 2016 – Court Monitor Report Finds More than Half of Kids Needs Not Met</b>                      Report finds DCF is only meeting the needs of 44.4 percent of the children it serves. That's down from 47.2 percent last year. It's a significant drop from where we were when Commissioner Katz took over in 2010 when DCF met the needs of 67.3%  <a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2016/01/fasano-statement-on-court-monitors-report-renews-call-for-commissioner-katzs-resignation/#.VsheWYL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2016/01/fasano-statement-on-court-monitors-report-renews-call-for-commissioner-katzs-resignation/#.VsheWYL2bIU</a></p>
<b>CALL #2 FOR RESIGNATION</b>	<p><b>December 22, 2015- OCA Report on Death of Londyn S. points to System Failures</b>                      The 2-year-old girl died on October 19, 2014 as a result of homicide due to Suboxone toxicity, a drug used to treat adults addicted to opioids. Report found that DCF:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Failed to adequately assess the risk of children in Londyn's home.</li> <li>2. Did not open a child protective services investigation following a September 2014 call from police regarding possible physical abuse of Londyn and her baby brother.</li> <li>3. Inappropriately assigned Londyn's family to the FAR track (a lower risk categorization) on two occasions.</li> <li>4. Did not provide an adequate community service plan for the family's serious needs.</li> <li>5. Did not receive complete information from community providers.</li> <li>6. Lacked the needed quality assurance framework to support effective assessment and case planning.</li> </ol> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/12/sen-fasano-renews-call-for-commissioner-katz-to-resign-in-light-of-new-report-by-the-child-advocate/#.VshfPIL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/12/sen-fasano-renews-call-for-commissioner-katz-to-resign-in-light-of-new-report-by-the-child-advocate/#.VshfPIL2bIU</a></p>

DCF Timeline

<p><b>Misc. Failure</b></p>	<p><b>November 2015 - DCF missing more than \$100,000 Subsidized Guardianship</b>                  The Eyewitness News I-Team found that for a half dozen families receiving monthly stipends from DCF after a relative child is placed in their care, the payments didn't stop when child turned 18 (or 21 when in school). The money kept coming, even though it was no longer deserved, and by the time DCF caught on, there was \$107,000 missing. A DCF employee should have been checking the recipient's ages, but no one did.  <a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/11/dcf-missing-more-than-100000-fasano-theres-no-accountability-wfsb/#.VshZ IL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/11/dcf-missing-more-than-100000-fasano-theres-no-accountability-wfsb/#.VshZ IL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Misc. Failure</b></p>	<p><b>September 16, 2015 - Child Advocate Releases Videos of Restraint/Seclusion</b>  <a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/09/child-advocate-releases-dcf-videos-of-youth-being-restrained-secluded-in-locked-facilities-ct-news-junkie/#.Vshc YL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/09/child-advocate-releases-dcf-videos-of-youth-being-restrained-secluded-in-locked-facilities-ct-news-junkie/#.Vshc YL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>July 30, 2015 - Auditors' Report finds in DCF that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employees are arriving late and being paid for time not in the office, having debit cards with no accountability, getting mileage reimbursement when they shouldn't, and also found a lack of accountability and control over comp time, longevity payments, accrued vacation and sick time.</li> <li>- Failure to conduct criminal background checks and license foster homes in a timely manner, potentially putting kids at risk.</li> <li>- Wasted money by failing to adequately document expenses that could be eligible for federal reimbursement.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/fasano-statement-on-auditors-report-on-dcf/#.VshdToL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/fasano-statement-on-auditors-report-on-dcf/#.VshdToL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>CALL #1 FOR RESIGNATION</b></p>	<p><b>July 23, 2015 –Call to resign</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fasano also <u>asked the Attorney General</u> to investigate the conduct of DCF as described in the Child Advocate's report including their failure to investigate whistleblowing complaints regarding the abuse witnessed in DCF's facilities.</li> <li>- Fasano is also asking the <u>co-chairs</u> of the state's Committee on Children, Senator Dante Bartolomeo and Representative Diana Urban, as well as <u>children's advocates</u>, to support his call for Commissioner Katz to resign.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/sen-fasano-calls-for-resignation-of-department-of-children-and-families-commissioner-joette-katz/#.Vsh4VfkrLIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/sen-fasano-calls-for-resignation-of-department-of-children-and-families-commissioner-joette-katz/#.Vsh4VfkrLIU</a></p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>July 22, 2015 – OCA CJTS/Pueblo Investigative Report Released –Abuse at locked facilities</b>  <a href="http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/child-advocate-identifies-abuses-at-dcfs-locked-juvenile-facilities/">http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/child-advocate-identifies-abuses-at-dcfs-locked-juvenile-facilities/</a></p>

DCF Timeline

<p><b>Fasano Urges Action</b></p>	<p><b>July 16, 2015 – Fasano Urges Commissioner to Revisit Reform Legislation</b>                  In light of Court Monitor’s report which found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under Katz’ leadership, DCF has consistently failed to meet 7 critical quality benchmarks, up from 6 in 2010 before she took office.</li> <li>- DCF developed adequate treatment plans for children only 47.2% of the time compared to 86.5% in 2010; successfully met children’s needs only 47.2% of the time compared to 67.3% in 2010.</li> <li>- DCF failed to meet 306 identifiable needs of children in its care. More than 30% increase from just last year and a 125% increase in unmet needs in 2010 (136)</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/urges-commissioner-to-revisit-reform-legislation/#.VshhPoL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/07/urges-commissioner-to-revisit-reform-legislation/#.VshhPoL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>July 13, 2015 – Report released by Robert Kinscherff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Children and Families said it plans to focus more on rehabilitation and less on restraint and seclusion at its locked facilities for boys and girls in Middletown</li> <li>- Many recommendations in the report describe issues that have been cited by juvenile justice advocates for years.</li> <li>- DCF paid Kinscherff \$40,254.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/dcf-seeks-to-make-improvements-following-consultants-report/">http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/dcf-seeks-to-make-improvements-following-consultants-report/</a></p>
<p><b>Disturbing Individual Case</b></p>	<p><b>June 15, 2015 - Appeals Court Ruling: DCF Violated Transgender Teen’s Due Process Rights</b>                  DCF has come under intense scrutiny from dozens of civil liberties advocates over its treatment of Doe — who suffered from <u>previous physical and sexual abuse</u>, spent several weeks under solitary confinement in an adult prison setting, and was <u>publicly shamed</u> by DCF for an allegation involving several other youth.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/appeals-court-dcf-violated-transgender-teens-due-process-rights/">http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/archives/entry/appeals-court-dcf-violated-transgender-teens-due-process-rights/</a></p>
<p><b>Disturbing Individual Case</b></p>	<p><b>June 2, 2015 - East Haven LeRoya Moore murders two of her children Aleisha Moore, 6, and Daaron Moore, 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child Advocate's Office is investigating why child-protection authorities did not maintain supervision of Moore after 2014 arrest for assaulting her ex-husband in front of the children.</li> <li>- Child Advocate Sarah Eagan questioned why DCF closed its file after the 2014 assault case, despite Moore's history of child-endangerment charges, including a 2006 conviction for risk of injury to a minor, as well as the termination of parental rights for two children from previous relationships.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-east-haven-child-deaths-mother-charged-20150610-story.html">http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-east-haven-child-deaths-mother-charged-20150610-story.html</a></p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>April 29, 2015 – Federal court monitor: Foster children’s needs still unmet</b>                  Nearly half of foster children in Connecticut are still not receiving all the mental health services, child care, housing supports they need, partly because the programs not available</p> <p><a href="http://ctmirror.org/2015/04/29/federal-court-monitor-foster-childrens-needs-still-unmet/">http://ctmirror.org/2015/04/29/federal-court-monitor-foster-childrens-needs-still-unmet/</a></p>

DCF Timeline

<p><b>Fasano Urges Action</b></p>	<p><b>February 5, 2015 – Public Hearing on Fasano DCF bills – Katz says unnecessary</b>                  Bills Katz rejected included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S.B. No. 307 An Act Implementing a Quality Assurance Program for the Department of Children and Families’ Programs and Facilities</li> <li>- S.B. No. 306 An Act Establishing an Independent Department of Children and Families Ombudsman</li> <li>- S.B. No. 304 An Act Concerning the Connecticut Juvenile Training School Advisory Group</li> <li>- S.B. No. 301 An Act Concerning Transparency within the Department of Children &amp; Families</li> <li>- S.B. No. 308 An Act Concerning an Independent Review of the Department of Children &amp; Families</li> <li>- S.B. No. 310 An Act Strengthening Child Fatality Review Procedures</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/02/dcfs-katz-and-sen-fasano-square-off-over-agency-oversight-accountability-courant/#.VsheLIL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2015/02/dcfs-katz-and-sen-fasano-square-off-over-agency-oversight-accountability-courant/#.VsheLIL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Fasano Urges Action</b></p>	<p><b>December 23, 2014 – Malloy announces plans to reappoint Katz</b>                  Fasano Expresses Serious Concerns about closing group homes and a decision by the State Child Advocate in June to investigate the deaths of nine children whose families had been in recent contact with DCF.</p> <p><a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/12/malloy-to-reappoint-dfc-commissioner-joette-katz-fasano-expresses-serious-concerns-ct-news-junkie/#.VshhV4L2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/12/malloy-to-reappoint-dfc-commissioner-joette-katz-fasano-expresses-serious-concerns-ct-news-junkie/#.VshhV4L2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Cuts</b></p>	<p><b>November 20, 2014 – Malloy Cuts \$9.2 million from DCF as part of rescissions</b>                  \$455,125 cut to child abuse and neglect intervention, a \$415,039 cut to community based prevention programs, and a \$94,610 cut to family violence outreach and counseling – all programs focused on preventing child fatalities. Also includes \$6 million cut to residential board and care for children. <a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/11/sen-fasano-questions-malloys-cuts-to-dcf-in-light-of-child-deaths-group-home-closures/#.VsheSIL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/11/sen-fasano-questions-malloys-cuts-to-dcf-in-light-of-child-deaths-group-home-closures/#.VsheSIL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Disturbing Individual Case</b></p>	<p><b>October 19, 2014 - Death of Londyn S.</b>                  The 2-year-old girl died as a result of homicide due to Suboxone toxicity, a drug used to treat adults addicted to opioids.</p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>July 31, 2014 – Child Fatality Review Report (2013) Finds “unprecedented” number of child homicides where kids should have been protected by DCF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Of the 38 non-natural deaths in 2013 of children birth to age 3, the majority of children lived in families that had current or previous involvement with the Department of Children and Families.</li> <li>- 22 children died due to abuse and neglect; 16 of these children had active cases with DCF and should have been monitored and protected by the agency</li> <li>- In many cases, DCF seems to have wilfully ignored multiple known risk factors, such as drug abuse and a known history of family violence, in order keep the child in the home and avoid out of home placements.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.ct.gov/oca/lib/oca/Final_OCA_Infant_Toddler_Fatality_Report.pdf">http://www.ct.gov/oca/lib/oca/Final_OCA_Infant_Toddler_Fatality_Report.pdf</a></p>

DCF Timeline

<p><b>Fasano Urges Action</b></p>	<p><b>June 30, 2014 - Senator Fasano Questions Policy to Remove Child Abusers from State Registry</b>                  Letter to Katz demands answers concerning a potentially dangerous department policy shift. DCF has implemented a policy that now allows some individuals on the agency's Child Abuse and Neglect Registry to petition for removal from that list just two years after committing acts of abuse or neglect.  <a href="http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/06/senator-fasano-questions-policy-to-remove-child-abusers-from-state-registry/#.VshhZYL2bIU">http://ctsenaterepublicans.com/2014/06/senator-fasano-questions-policy-to-remove-child-abusers-from-state-registry/#.VshhZYL2bIU</a></p>
<p><b>Disturbing Individual Case</b></p>	<p><b>September 29, 2013 - Ayden Baskay (20 months) died, head injury from father</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was not the first time the father, Christian Williams, had beaten his son. In May of 2012, baby Ayden was rushed to the hospital with bleeding on the brain. DCF was notified.</li> <li>- Rather than actively monitoring the situation, DCF simply instructed the mother not to allow the child to be alone with Mr. Williams and closed its case in just one month.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Dad-investigated-for-abuse-a-year-before-child-s-4872968.php">http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Dad-investigated-for-abuse-a-year-before-child-s-4872968.php</a></p>
<p><b>Report</b></p>	<p><b>June 2013 – Georgetown Report shows need for juvenile justice reforms</b>                  The study done by the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice and paid for by the included a comprehensive evaluation of DCF's juvenile justice programs and facilities. It highlighted many of the issues advocates continue to raise concerns about.  <a href="https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/1383850-ctparolereport-nov-final.html">https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/1383850-ctparolereport-nov-final.html</a></p>
<p><b>Disturbing Individual Case</b></p>	<p><b>November 23, 2011 - Athena Angeles beaten to death by mother's boyfriend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Despite receiving multiple warnings about the abuse from a Willimantic health clinic doctor and the Head Start workers who cared for Athena, DFC failed to conduct a thorough investigation</li> <li>- In violation of its own guidelines, DCF did not even bother to interview the boyfriend, who later admitted to police that he punched and stuck Athena on multiple occasions.</li> <li>- DCF workers were dismissive of the Head Start workers' concerns and made the workers feel uncomfortable when they continued to raise alarms about Athena's well being.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-athena-angeles-sentencing-0121-20150120-story.html">http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-athena-angeles-sentencing-0121-20150120-story.html</a></p>

