



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services



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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

March 3, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and members of the Human Services Committee. I am Morna A. Murray, Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of [H.B. No. 5255](#) **AN ACT CONCERNING GUARDIANSHIP OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**.

The bill updates the Probate Court's guardianship statutes that apply to persons with intellectual disability. By removing an outdated term like "ward" and replacing it with "protected person" and by removing the definition of a "person with intellectual disability" and just defining the condition "intellectual disability", the Probate Court is leading by example as to how any person having a disability wishes to be referred to as a person first and with respectful language.

Because the Probate Courts serve so many individuals that are also receiving funding and services from the Department of Developmental Services, it is important for our two agencies to work together to show respect for persons with intellectual disability. I would like to thank the Probate Court for continuing in their efforts to use appropriate, respectful language when referring to any person who comes before the court. DDS remains committed to the use of appropriate and respectful language in all circumstances and we continue to encourage all state agencies to use "person first" and respectful language in all their communications.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the Probate Court's bill, [H.B. No. 5255](#). Please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs at (860) 418-6066, if you have any questions.