



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE THEMIS KLARIDES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

REPUBLICAN LEADER

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Testimony in Support of House Bill Number 5135 Committee on Children February 23, 2016

Chairwomen Bartolomeo and Urban, Ranking Members Martin and Kokoruda and Members of the Committee on Children, the Republican Caucus would like to thank the Committee for raising **House Bill Number 5135: An Act Concerning the Closure of the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and the Pueblo Unit for Girls.**

This bill is an important Republican proposal to require the closure of the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and the Pueblo Unit in favor of community programs run by non-profit providers by January 1, 2017.

Currently, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School is a huge drain on state resources, costing us \$52.9 million a year for operations. This breaks down to an astronomical price tag of \$545,671 per resident in FY 2015. For an ongoing cost, this is simply unsustainable.

Making matters worse, we are not getting anywhere near the return on investment we should for that price. The children located at CJTS are not getting the therapeutic treatment they so badly need in that institution. Various non-profit and advocacy organizations have spoken up and feel that these children can be better served in the community for a fraction of the price.

Under our proposal, the population of CJTS would be grouped based on the type of offense and would be either placed in a secure residential facility, residential group home, or at home with intensive community supports. This allows us to make sure these children are receiving proper therapeutic treatment while not continuing the high cost has taken a toll on our state budget.

I urge the Committee on Children to pass Raised Bill Number 5135 to close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and the Pueblo Unit for Girls. Please allow the full General Assembly the opportunity to debate this issue and to pass legislation to improve the dire financial situation in our state.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Themis Klarides". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Themis Klarides
State Representative
114th District