

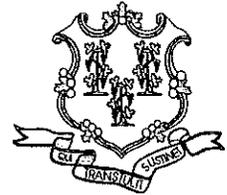


**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

**Public Hearing Testimony  
Commissioner Joette Katz**

**Public Health Committee**

**March 7, 2016**



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**S.B. NO. 353 AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ABUSE**

The Department of Children and Families offers the following comments regarding section 1 of S.B. No. 353, An Act Concerning Opioid Abuse. This bill would add five members to the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council (ADPC) and specify requirements for the council's state-wide plan; allow for the provision of auricular acupuncture services outside of private, freestanding facilities; and allow primary care providers and licensed alcohol and drug counselors to provide certain services relating to patients' substance abuse.

As a Co-Chair of the Alcohol and Drug Policy Council, I believe that this proposed change in the composition of the Council and the adding of additional directives to the Council's charge is unnecessary. Last year, the Governor proposed and the General Assembly approved a provision to reconstitute the ADPC as a statewide coordinating body to fight the spread of substance abuse and overdose. Under the direction of Governor Malloy, the ADPC has been charged to study and make recommendations in the following areas:

- best practices in the treatments of alcohol and substance use disorders, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and other evidence-based treatment programs;
- a coordinated, audience specific, prevention message including modern messaging to be used by school districts, parents, medical professionals, municipal leaders, state agencies, and law enforcement;
- a collaborative effort, with medical professionals including doctors, nurse practitioners, dentists and physician assistants to educate all prescribers on the dangers of overprescribing narcotics and the current best practices in identifying substance use disorder and the resource available for treatment; and
- a strategy to make the overdose reversing drug naloxone widely available and affordable to first responders, in pharmacies, and to any individual who may be able to use it to reverse an overdose.

Along with my Co-Chair, Commissioner Delphin-Rittmon of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, we have recently established subcommittees to address each provision of the Governor's charge and are seeking people other than just voting members of the ADPC to participate on these subcommittees. We believe that utilizing subcommittees in this manner will greatly assist the ADPC in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities thereby mitigating the need for this legislation.