



Testimony
March 7, 2017
Public Health Committee
In favor of: Bill 39, Bill 244, Bill 245, Bill 246,
Opposed: Bill 38

**Submitted by: University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in
Developmental Disabilities (UConn UCEDD)**

My name is Molly Cole and I am the Acting Training Director for the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). There are 67 UCEDDs across the country, with at least one center in every US state and territory. This national network of UCEDDs is authorized under Public Law 106-402 (The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 or "DD Act") and their core federal funding is administered by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). The UConn UCEDD works with people with disabilities, members of their families, state and local government agencies, and community providers in projects that provide training, technical assistance, service, research, and information sharing, with a focus on building the capacity of communities to sustain all their citizens. Our activities are guided by a belief in individualized supports, inclusion, self-determination, natural supports and collaboration with organizations to address critical policy issues and systems change.

The center is opposed to Bill 38, An Act Concerning The Provision Of Services To Persons With An Intellectual Or Developmental Disability. This bill appears to promote the continued operation of the remaining regional centers and Southbury Training school in an effort to prevent disruption of services to this population. The UCEDD is fully committed to closure of the remaining regional centers and Southbury Training School, both as cost saving measures and more importantly to promote current best practice in providing community based person centered services to people with disabilities in their communities. We have reviewed extensive research on this and know that it is time for Connecticut to close these outdated services and provide quality, cost effective community based services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Therefore we oppose this bill.

The UCEDD supports Bill 244: An Act Improving Services For Persons With Developmental Disabilities; Bill 245 An Act Concerning Protecting The Interests Of Persons With Developmental Disabilities; and Bill 246 An Act Concerning A Statewide Waiting List For Residential Placement. All of these bills promote the development of plans and timelines to ease the waiting list and promote better planning and use of current resources, including regular reporting of state-wide census and the status of the waiting list. **HOWEVER**, none of these bills offer a closure timeline for Southbury Training School or the regional centers. While there is good intent to engage with stakeholders and promote better planning in these bills, the state must lead the way by setting a firm timeline for closure of Southbury Training School and the regional centers. The UCEDD would support these bills with the inclusion of a timeframe for closure.

The UCEDD supports Bill 39, The Public Private Partnership To Provide Quality Supports And Services For Persons With Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities.

We heartily endorse the goal of this bill to provide care options, improve jobs and reduce the waiting list for services and better plan and provide supports for person with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is critical that the state engage both the public and private sectors in this process and we believe that this bill shows good promise for a plan that will lead to good lives in the community for all our citizens, including those with disabilities.

Please feel free to contact the UCEDD if we can offer further assistance.

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