



**Testimony Regarding S.B. 183: An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the  
Department of Education**

Lauren Ruth, Ph.D.

Advocacy Director, Connecticut Voices for Children

Education Committee

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Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, Representative Flesichmann, Representative Lavielle, and esteemed members of the Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Lauren Ruth, and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Connecticut Voices for Children supports the intent of S.B. 183 to reduce the use of restraint and seclusion as disciplinary procedures in schools. However, as voiced within the testimony of the Office of the Child Advocate and the Alliance for Children's Mental Health, we are deeply concerned by *any* use of restraint or seclusion for children. We support the proposed clarification to the definition of restraint to include forcible movement of a child, but we think a stronger clarification would include that *any use of force* with a child constitutes a restraint.

We also urge the Committee to further clarify the definition of "exclusionary time out" so that it is not confused with "planned seclusion." At minimum, this should include four additional mandates:

- 1) A definition of spaces that can be used for "exclusionary time outs" to ensure that children are not being enclosed in closets or other cell-like spaces;
- 2) A method for documenting the use of "time outs" and compliance with state laws;
- 3) A requirement that students be assessed for unmet educational needs following the use of a "time out" that appears to exacerbate a student's behavior, and documentation of recommended supports to meet these needs; and
- 4) A method for documenting that the educator or administrator recommending the "time out" for that student has expertise in trauma-informed behavioral supports.

Furthermore, we urge the Committee to include language stating that seclusion shall not be used as a planned intervention in a student's treatment or Individualized Education Plan.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony regarding S.B. 183. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. I can be reached at [lruth@ctvoices.org](mailto:lruth@ctvoices.org) or (203)498-4240 x 112.