



DATE: Tuesday, March 6, 2018  
TO: Committee on Children  
FROM: Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy  
RE: H.B. No. 5332 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Department of Children and Families

Good morning Senator Moore, Senator Suzio, Representative Urban, Representative Zupkus and distinguished members of the Committee on Children.

My name is Ben Shaiken, Manager of Advocacy & Public Policy at the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance. The Alliance is Connecticut's statewide association of community nonprofits. Our members deliver essential services to more than half a million people each year and employ almost 14% of Connecticut's workforce.

I am here to testify **in support of Section 8 of House Bill No. 5332** "An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Department of Children and Families"

Last year, the General Assembly passed Special Act 17-21, "An Act Establishing a Working Group to Review the Licensure and Certification Process for Certain Nonprofit Community Providers." That statute called for the Office of Policy and Management to convene a working group of multiple state agencies and community providers to participate in a Lean process to streamline and standardize the State's licensure and certification processes.

The recommendations before you are the result of months of collaborative work between the provider community and representatives from OPM, DCF, DDS, DMHAS, and DPH. All stakeholders involved agreed upon and developed these recommendations to lessen the administrative burden on community providers and make available valuable resources to continue serving people in need.

**Please support Section 8**, which exempts DDS's Continuous Residential Support (CRS) homes from DCF licensing. The CRS homes are overseen by DDS Quality and Systems Improvement Division. DCF currently licenses three CRS homes that serve youth under age 18. DDS has a review process which is equivalent or higher than the DCF licensing standard.

A significant focus of SA 17-21 and the Workgroup's efforts was on eliminating duplicative and burdensome regulations with which providers have to comply. In this particular case, CRS homes dually overseen by DCF and DDS caused providers to have to comply with similar oversight from two separate state departments. Amending the statute as Section 8 does will ease the burden on providers and will free up valuable administrative time and money to focus more on providing services.

Finally, please support more of this kind of system change in the future. As directed by SA 17-21, community providers have been involved in this process every step of the way, and our state agency partners have been sincere about the need to change. There are now eight subcommittees of the Licensure and Certification Workgroup with 42 members working on implementing recommendations,



and community providers are serving on each one. **Please use this process as a model to address other redundant and inefficient systems within state government in the future.**

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me with questions or for more information at [bferraj@ctnonprofitalliance.org](mailto:bferraj@ctnonprofitalliance.org).