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**Public Health Committee
Public Hearing on S.B. 463 (Raised)
An Act Concerning the Development of a Facilities and Resources Plan for Persons with Intellectual
Disability
Friday, March 16, 2018, 11:00am, Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building
Submitted by: Stan Soby, Vice President, Public Policy and External Affairs, Oak Hill**

Good morning Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, Representative Betts and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee.

I am Stan Soby, Vice President, Public Policy and External Affairs, at Oak Hill. Oak Hill has been providing services for 125 years and is a leader in providing the highest quality community-based programs; through education, assistive technology, programs and advocacy, we support people at every stage of life. Oak Hill has over 20 distinct programs, with 152 program sites, classrooms, and homes located in 77 towns. Oak Hill employs over 1,700 professionals to successfully help meet the changing needs of close to 40,000 people with disabilities each year.

I am here to testify in opposition to S.B. 463, An Act Concerning the Development of a Facilities and Resources Plan for Persons with Intellectual Disability.

The first attempt to 'de-institutionalize' Mansfield Training School in the early '70s consisted of a process of moving people into nursing homes. It was a substitution of one segregated setting for another. It was only after *CARC v. Thorne* that people had the opportunity to move into community settings and thrive as individuals.

I say the following to honor the person who lead me to this field. She was a resident of MTS who had moved to a nursing home in Manchester. I met her there as a volunteer. She saw something in me that I didn't and lead me to understand what my life's work should be. After losing touch for a while, we re-connected in the 80's when, in the implementation of the *CARC v. Thorne* consent decree, Oak Hill was able to provide a community residence for her. We support her to this day.

I fully appreciate the plight of families looking for supports, having spoken with many over time. I have family members with disabilities that require various levels of support. But most relevant is that I have also seen the deleterious effects of living in a nursing home on a relative, in comparison to his life in the community.

It is notable that Connecticut has made great strides in re-balancing services for our elders and others from nursing homes to their own homes in the community, making use of Community First Choice and Money Follows the Person.

There are many options available and emerging to support people with intellectual disabilities that move us forward as a society, not backward. The process outlined in S.B. 296 and Commissioner Scheff's testimony, can help us in that forward direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Our Mission: Oak Hill sets the standard, partnering with people with disabilities, to provide services and solutions promoting independence, education, health and dignity.