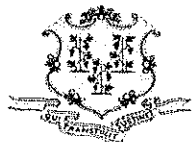


STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE
999 ASYLUM AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105



Sarah Healy Eagan
Child Advocate

TESTIMONY OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE FOR
THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE

SUPPORTING: H.B. No. 6921 AN ACT CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON A
PERSON'S CRIMINAL HISTORY

February 26, 2019

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees
Committee:

This testimony is being submitted on behalf of the Office of the Child Advocate (“OCA”) in
response to the above referenced House Bill.

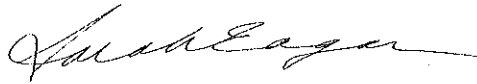
The obligations of the OCA are to review, investigate where necessary, and make recommendations
regarding how Connecticut’s state-funded systems meet the needs of vulnerable children. This
Legislature granted the OCA broad authority regarding access to information about children and
state-funded facilities and programs, which provides this Office with a unique vantage point into the
needs of at-risk, abused, neglected and special needs children and the agencies that serve those
children.

The OCA strongly supports proposed H.B. 6921, which would prohibit discrimination based on a
person’s criminal history. Many of the vulnerable children that OCA advocates on behalf of have a
parent who was at one point incarcerated. A parent’s criminal history can result in exacerbating
difficulties the parent may encounter in rehabilitating his or her life and providing meaningful
opportunities for their children. Discriminatory practices against adults with a criminal history
directly impacts children, making it harder for children to overcome the challenges created by multi-
generational poverty, racism, and lack of opportunity. Children benefit from a Second Chance
Society, where adults and juveniles are afforded a real chance to make real change in their lives and
in the lives of their families.

A non-discrimination law such as proposed here will help individuals take critical steps to improving their capacity to contribute to the community and their families, through the attainment of meaningful employment and safe and appropriate housing. OCA supports such non-discrimination requirements for both adults and juveniles.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter impacting this state's most vulnerable children. The OCA is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of Connecticut's most vulnerable children through targeted reforms that improve the system for children and families.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah Healy Eagan".

Sarah Healy Eagan, JD
Child Advocate, State of Connecticut