

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5331

Title: AN ACT REQUIRING A SURVEY OF COURT-INVOLVED YOUTHS.

Vote Date: 3/10/2020

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/3/2020

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill would help identify the need for additional or improved services among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth interfacing with the court system. It will require the Court Support Services Division to conduct surveys of youth that interact with the courts to gather this information.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch supports this bill but would like to assist with drafting of the final language. In 2019 they implemented a pilot program to gather the information proposed by the bill. They then implemented the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identify Expression Survey (SOGIE) at intake in their juvenile probation offices in Stamford and Middletown, as well as in their Juvenile Detention Centers. The information gathered in this program has led to changes in detention policy involving searches, undergarments and prison rape elimination act classification.

Sarah Eagan, Office of the Child Advocate

The Office of the Child Advocate supports asking youth in the juvenile justice system to take a survey gathering information – anonymously, confidentially, and voluntarily – about gender identity.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut

The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut supports this legislation. This bill would help provide access to more services to LGBTQ+ individuals. They are also asking for additional language that would strengthen it by saying that justice-involved LGBTQ youths help recommend additional or improved Judicial Branch services

The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance

Offers strong support of this legislation. Conducting an anonymous survey would help identify if existing programs are providing adequate services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youths. This legislation helps make sure the data needed to ensure the justice system is treating every youth justly – and with the services and supports individualized to their specific needs and identity is available.

Ashley Davila-Marquez

Is testifying in support of this legislation. It is estimated that the LGBTQ+ population make up between 13-15% of those in the juvenile justice system. This bill is a step in the right direction for inclusivity and innovation in the juvenile justice system.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Peter Murszewski

Date: 4/3/2020