To: Sen. Marilyn Moore, Chair  
Rep. Liz Linehan, Chair  
Sen. Kevin Kelly, Ranking Member  
Rep. Robin Green, Ranking Member  
Distinguished Members of the Committee on Children  

From: Vannessa Dorantes, Commissioner  
Department of Children and Families  

Re: Raised SB 283, An Act Extending the Age of Eligibility for Legal Representation Provided by the Department of Children and Families  

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) offers the following comments on Raised SB 283. 

The Department is not opposed in concept to youth in DCF care having continuing access to attorneys once they reach 18 years old. Many children in our care choose to remain voluntarily involved with DCF once they reach the age of majority. However, legal representation for these youth is provided for by the Office of Chief Public Defender pursuant to C.G.S. section 51-296a. The age of the children that are represented is driven by C.G.S. section 46b-120. DCF does not have a policy regarding eligibility for legal representation.  

While we support providing youth who are 18 and over legal representation, the proper statutes must be amended and additional funding must be made available to the Public Defenders.