

# Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-193

AN ACT AUTHORIZING DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ELIGIBILITY

**Title:** WORKERS TO ADMINISTER OATHS.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2022

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/8/2022

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Human Services Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This legislation allows for the Department of Social Services (DSS) personnel, including eligibility workers, specialists, and supervisors, to administer oaths for affirmation or acknowledgement of parentage. These affirmations or acknowledgements are often required for assistance programs administered by the department. The addition of DSS personnel into this legislation would alleviate the issues surrounding staff depletions in regional offices, thus providing a quicker, more efficient process to provide families with important benefits, such as Temporary Family Assistance (TFA).

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

### **Diedre S. Gifford, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Social Services**

Commissioner Diedre S. Gifford and the CT Department of Social Services (DSS) are supportive of this bill and urge its passage. The testimony expresses that many a lack of notaries and child support investigators, due to court appearances and other duties, have led to depleted numbers of staff in regional offices available to witness affirmations or acknowledgements of parentage. Commissioner Diedre S. Gifford posits that this bill would alleviate that issue by allowing DSS eligibility workers and supervisors to administer oaths in connection with the taking of an affirmation or acknowledgement. Without this bill, Commissioner Gifford noted that DSS regional offices would struggle to facilitate the taking of affirmations or acknowledgements of parentage, possibly delaying Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) benefits for families in need.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Allison Weir, Policy Advocate and Attorney, Greater Hartford Legal Aid**

In the testimony submitted, Ms. Weir expresses support towards SB 193. She notes that the bill would allow many employees from DSS, including supervisors and eligibility workers, to administer oaths. Ms. Weir emphasizes the importance of this bill as it would streamline the application process for benefit cases within the Department of Social Services.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**David Godbout**

Mr. Godbout submitted testimony to oppose SB 193. He suggests that all proposed bills within the Connecticut General Assembly are being written and heard in violation of citizens 4th amendment rights. Mr. Godbout also noted that restrictions to certain spaces in the Capitol and Legislative Office Buildings, as well as public hearings via Zoom, should nullify the validity of the Human Services Committee's bills as well as all other bills of the General Assembly.

**Reported by: Madison Chain**

**Date: 03/18/2022**