

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1311

AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT
Title: OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Vote Date: 2/25/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/20/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

SB 1311 combines multiple concepts recommended by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, designed to address shortcomings in current state law, across six key areas.

The first section of the bill would modify existing state statutes to allow the state to continue to fully align with current FBI federal background check standards. The second section of the bill would make a clerical modification to existing statutes that would codify a process that allows youth between the ages of 18 and 21 to voluntarily return to DCF beyond 120 days of their 18th birthday and allow the state to claim Title IV-E reimbursement in such cases. The third section concerns current procedures on record sharing and would enable DCF to share information with the Department of Developmental Disabilities without a release. The fourth section of the bill concerns childcare facility licensing. The fifth section of the bill would codify a state Foster Parent Bill of Rights. The sixth section of the bill would have the state accept the updated 2009 language of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

This bill seeks to update and codify current practices across DCF to better serve the children of Connecticut.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Connecticut Department of Children & Families, Commissioner, Jodi Lilly](#) supports the bill, it assists in codifying many of the current practices of the agency and helps to align their office with current statutes.

[Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate, Acting Child Advocate, Christina D. Ghio, JD, CWLS,](#) supports section two of the bill, because it provides that youth who have aged out of DCF care may

return to DCF care up to 120 days before their 21st birthday. The OCA feels children who are aging out of DCF care need the department's support to transition into adulthood. The OCA further supports section three of the bill because would allow DCF to share information with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) for the purpose of labor relations investigations conducted on behalf of DCF.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Foster Parent, Marian Russo](#), supports the bill because they feel a "Foster Parents Bill of Rights" is long overdue and needed in the state of CT, where they say many foster parents give up their license due to a perceived lack of rights in the face of a powerful and complex bureaucracy.

[State of Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services, Office of Chief Public Defender, Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Renee Cimino](#)

[State of Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services, Office of Chief Public Defender, Assistant Public Defender, Chris Oakley](#), supports section two of the bill because the bill codifies the existing DCF policy that permits certain youth to voluntarily re-enter care after attaining the age of 18, up to age 23. They state that on occasion, committed young adults decline to consent to remain in care or voluntarily enroll and then subsequently disenroll prior to age 21. SB 1311 allows voluntary re-entry services would help protect vulnerable young adults, who lack family support, by providing housing, education services, and other care services.

[Goldsby Law, PLLC, Founding Attorney, Aigné Goldsby Wells, Esq.](#), supports bill 1311 but has a suggestion for improvement. While the bill as-written, provides a pathway for youth to request re-entry into DCF care before turning 21, Goldsby adds that this protection should be expanded by allowing the child's attorney or Guardian ad Litem to file the motion for re-entry. Goldsby says while their autonomy should be respected, the state must also recognize that these young adults often have advocates, their attorneys and GALs, who can act in their best interest.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed.

Reported by: Alex Sferrazza

Date: 3/11/25