

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 16-28

SB185

Senate 606-614, 649-650 11

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2016**

**VOL. 59
PART 2
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SENATE

April 19, 2016

THE CHAIR:

Are there any further questions? Any other further questions? Seeing none. Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President. If there's no objection, I would ask that this be put on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, ma'am. Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 3, Calendar 84, Senate Bill number 185, AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MINOR AND TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL STATUTES AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

I thank you, Madam President. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report, and I urge passage of this bill please.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, ma'am?

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

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Yes, thank you, Madam. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that reports from DCF are submitted to the committee having cognizance over them, which used to be Human Services, and as of the beginning of our last term was changed to the Department of, excuse me, to the Committee on Children. It also does some simple changes such as making appropriate gender neutrality references in our general statutes. It requires DCF to include information about sibling visitation determinations in the child's case record. It is really truly minor technical changes and confirming language changes. I do say though that the Clerk is in possession of LCO 3477, and I would ask please if he call that amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO number 3477, Senate A, offered by Senator Bartolomeo.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. This change --

THE CHAIR:

You move the adoption?

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

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Yes, Madam President, I would like to move the adoption please.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Yes, thank you. This is a very simple amendment. It simply keeps human services and adds children in one reference of the bill on line 119 and 120 and the other change that this makes is it deletes a one-time obsolete report and strikes those in sections 5, 10, 11, and 12. So I would please ask for adoption of this amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark on the amendment? Will you remark on the amendment? Seeing not, I will try your minds. All those in favor please say aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed. The amendment passes. Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Again, this is truly technical in nature, makes some conforming language changes, gender neutrality changes, other minor

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changes as far as committees of cognizance, and I would urge adoption, urge passage I should say.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Senator Fasano. Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Good afternoon, Madam President. Madam President, can I inquire if the clerk has LCO 4170?

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, 4170?

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Going once.

THE CHAIR:

It's not -- the Senate will stand at ease.

(Chamber at ease).

The Senate will stand at ease. It is not in the Clerk's hands.

(Chamber at ease).

The Senate will come back to order. Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

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Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I don't believe that LCO has made it down to the Clerk's desk, so what I'll do is --

THE CHAIR:

Just -- Senator Fasano, would you give us the numbers again on your LCO?

SEN. FASANO (34TH):

If the Clerk does have 4170.

THE CHAIR:

Four, one, seven, zero. The Clerk has it in possession.

THE CLERK:

LCO number 4170, Senate B offered, offered by Senator Fasano.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I thank Senator Bartolomeo, and I thank Senator Duff for giving me the time just to go through this amendment and wait for it. Madam President, essentially what this amendment does is set up a juvenile training school board, which has certain appointments that we typically have in this building. What it's supposed to do is review the procedures at the juvenile training school and come up with recommendations

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regarding the improvement to these facilities. Madam President, this comes as a result of many of the circumstances that I believe this Chamber as well as the General Assembly is aware of, of the problems that we have had at juvenile training schools. All this does is say perhaps we need an oversight board to take a look, make recommendations, on the way things should be, give suggestions of training of changes and training procedures. It's an objective board with objective standards. I don't think it does any harm. It doesn't cost any money, and I believe in all I think it will move the juvenile training school in a right direction and bring confidence back to a facility that perhaps one could make an argument doesn't have all the confidence of the folks who are involved in that facility. So, Madam President, I would offer this amendment in hopes of moving it forward. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further on the amendment? Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President, and through you to the good Senator. So as we were trying to get this up here, I'm quickly trying to look at it. I did not have an opportunity to review it. Senator, is the Senator asking for an additional advisory board to that which is already there? I apologize, I just haven't had the time to really look through the language on this.

THE CHAIR:

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Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I also think I made a mistake by saying I'd like to move this amendment and request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Sorry, the motion is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR FASANO (34TH):

Thank you. Yes. This is a different board. It's an independent board in which there are individuals that are appointed. It is outside the scope of DCF. It is only accountable unto itself and the recommendations it makes to the board. Once again, these are recommendations for improvements. They do not necessarily have to be followed, but it is not internal, it is external. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate that answer. I actually would advise against the adoption of this amendment given the fact that there is already an advisory board to that of CJTS and therefore Pueblo, and that advisory board, while it is true is something that is established by the Commissioner, there is a significant membership that

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is comprised of those who are outside of the system, and I have felt that it was appropriate. So with that, I would advise against the adoption of this amendment, and may I have a roll call, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

A roll call vote will be taken. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Seeing none, Mr. Clerk, please call for a roll call vote on Senate B. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call on Senate Amendment Schedule B
has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

All members have voted? All members have voted? The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

On Senate Amendment schedule B,

Total Number Voting	35
Those voting Yea	15
Those voting Nay	20
Absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The amendment fails. Senator Bartolomeo.

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SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH):

Yes, thank you, Madam President. If there is no objection, I would ask for this to be put on the Consent Calendar please?

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, ma'am. Mr. Clerk.
Oh, sorry, Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, could the Clerk -- could we stand at ease for one moment please?

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease.

(Chamber at ease).

The Senate will come back to order. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, will the Clerk now please call Calendar page 18. I think it's 18, Calendar 322, Senate Bill 90.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. Senator Duff would you repeat your call, please? It seems not to be on our --

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

THE CLERK:

On page 1, Calendar 395, House Joint Resolution number 169.

Page 1 Calendar 396, House Joint Resolution number 170.

Page 2, Calendar 67, Senate Bill 181.

Page 3, Calendar 89, Senate Bill 135.

Also on page 3, Calendar 113, Senate Bill 189.

Page 3, Calendar 117, Senate Bill 273.

Also on page 3, Calendar 84, Senate Bill 185.

Page 6, Calendar 159, Senate Bill number 309.

Page 7, Calendar 166, Senate Bill 218.

On page 9, Calendar 206, Senate Bill 220.

Page 13, Calendar 273, Senate Bill 219.

On page 18, Calendar 321, Senate Bill 87.

Page 22, Calendar 366, Senate Bill 334.

Page 34, Calendar 93, Senate Bill 211.

On page 35, Calendar 142, Senate Bill 127.

Page 38, Calendar 241, Senate Bill number 249.

THE CHAIR:

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The Consent Calendar is before the Chamber. The machine is open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call on the first Consent Calendar for today has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Members please check the board to see that your vote has been properly recorded. If all members have voted and all votes have been properly recorded, the machine will be locked. Would the Clerk please take a tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's, the first Consent Calendar for today,

Total Number Voting	35
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar is passed. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Mr. President. If we could just stand at ease for a moment.

THE CHAIR:

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**CHILDREN
PART 2
400 – 925**

2016

So, housekeeping rules, I guess. The first hour will be spent hearing testimony from legislators or agency heads. After that, we will go starting in the second hour to the public. If we have not finished with legislators and agency heads, we will flip flop back and forth between the two lists. We have our case list. Madam Clerk, do we have our list over here and we're just not seeing it? Okay, let's see. Do we have a legislator and agency head list? Probably us and not her. It usually is us. So, is Senator Fasano, I do not see, so, correct? Not yet. So we will start with Commissioner of Children and Families, Joette Katz. Hi Commissioner.

JOETTE KATZ: You know I come with an entourage, should you have any questions.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO (13TH): So you know the drill, if everyone could just identify themselves as well before you start.

JOETTE KATZ: Joette Katz, Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families.

FERNANDO MUNIZ: Fernando Muniz, Deputy Commissioner for Administration.

SUSAN SMITH: Susan Smith, Chief of Quality and Planning.

KRISTINA STEVENS: Good morning, Kristina Stevens, Administrator for Clinical and Community Consultation and Support.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS: Michael Williams, Deputy Commissioner of Operations.

LINDA DIXON: Good morning, Linda Dixon,
Administrator of Adolescent Juvenile Services.

ELIZABETH DUREYA: Good morning, Elizabeth Dureya,
Chief of Staff.

SB182 SB183
SB180 SB181
HB5140
JOETTE KATZ: Good morning Senator Bartolomeo,
Representative Urban, Senator Martin, and
Representative Kokoruda, whom I saw moments ago, and
members of the Committee on Children. My name is
Joette Katz, I'm the Commissioner of the Department
of Children and Families. I'd like to comment on
several bills on your agenda, and as you can see I
have with me several members of my team, who are
available to answer any questions that you may have
on any of the bills before you today. Four of the
bills on your agenda S.B. No. 184, 185, 186, and 187
are part of the DCF legislative agenda, and we thank
the committee for raising these bill.

The first bill that I'd like to comment on is S.B.
No. 186, an Act Concerning Child Protective Services
Worker. This bill would establish a criminal
offense of threatening a Child Protective Services
worker. We recognize that singling out one series
of job classifications, instate service for specific
criminal penalties, is somewhat unusual, but events
in Connecticut and throughout the country has forced
us to examine the extraordinary challenges that our
Child Protective Service worker face on a daily
basis. Last fall, as a result of recent direct and
indirect threats as well as assaults of some of some
of our staff, I directed a review of our existing
practices and protocol around workplace violence and
threat assessments. DCF operations are unique in
that we have some locations and functions that are
twenty-four/seven while other functions extend well

beyond our four walls into communities across the state. We have also collaborated on this issue with our peers from other east coast states, and using our own assessment along with suggestions raised by this group, Connecticut DCF is poised to enhance our responsiveness to staff-related incidents impacting the safety of our staff while executing the work of the department. The senseless death last summer of Laura Sobel, a Vermont DCF social worker, was the impetus for this critical assessment of our collective processes. Sadly, over a dozen human service professionals have lost their lives throughout the country over the past two decades. We note that other states, Michigan, Illinois, and Massachusetts, have enacted legislation addressing worker safety.

Next, I'd like to speak on Senate Bill No. 184, an Act Concerning Children in Need of Special Services. This bill changes the statutory definition of uncared for to address circumstances whereby a child or youth is beyond the parents' ability to care for due to physical, mental or emotional needs. Parents frequently object to a legal commitment of uncared for due to the connotation that they are not adequately caring for their child when in fact it is due to some circumstance well beyond the parents' control.

Regarding Senate Bill 185, an ACT CONCERNING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MINOR AND TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL STATUTES AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT. As the title implies, this bill simply makes a number of technical and minor revisions to various DCF statutes.



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Public Hearing Testimony

**Committee on Children
February 23, 2016**



**S.B. No. 185 - AN ACT CONCERNING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND MINOR AND
TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE GENERAL STATUTES AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.**

The Department of Children and Families supports S.B. No. 185, An Act Concerning Reporting Requirements and Minor and Technical Revisions to the General Statutes Affecting the Department of Children and Families.

This proposal makes a number of technical and minor changes to various DCF statutes. Most of the changes relate to amending various statutes for the purpose of gender neutrality. Other sections update various statutory reporting requirements to reflect the Committee on Children's role as the committee of cognizance over DCF.

Finally, our colleagues in Probate Court administration have suggested two additional technical changes:

- On line 661, change "Court of Probate" to "Probate Court"
- On line 735, change "court of probate" to "Probate Court"