



State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

Testimony of
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Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
FEBRUARY 17, 2015

Raised Senate Bill 863
AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of **Raised Senate Bill 863, An Act Concerning Juvenile Justice Risk and Needs Assessment.** This proposal would make a technical amendment to Connecticut General Statute Section 46b-140, which currently requires the Department of Children and Families to use a risk and needs assessment to ensure that the male children who enter the Connecticut Juvenile Training School truly present the highest risk. Male children at CJTS are specifically referenced because young women are statutorily barred from that facility. This proposal would ensure that risk and need assessment tools be used before any child, regardless of gender, was placed in a secure facility. The Office of the Chief Public Defender respectfully suggests that language be added to this proposal to require that the risk and needs assessment be scientifically validated for use on a juvenile justice population and that the Department of Children and Families work with the Judicial Branch to explore a single assessment that could be used across the juvenile justice system.