



*Division of Public Defender Services
State of Connecticut*

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COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

**PROPOSED BILL 398 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Proposed Bill 398, An Act Concerning the Administration of Juvenile Justice Facilities, Programs and Services seeks to move the administration of all juvenile justice services to the Judicial Branch. Currently, services are bifurcated. The Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division, is responsible for all aspects of supervision and service provision to children in the juvenile justice system prior to adjudication and while they are supervised in the community on probation. When the juvenile courts determine that a child cannot be maintained in the community, they commit the child to the Department of Children and Families to be placed in a facility such as CJTS.

The Office of Chief Public Defender believes that the issue of how juvenile justice services should be administered is a complicated question that deserves further study before a decision is made. The issue of which state agency is the most appropriate to manage juvenile services has been raised before. There have been prior proposals to move all services to CSSD. There has also been debate over whether DCF would be the more appropriate agency to handle all issues relating to children. The Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University was commissioned to study Connecticut's juvenile justice system and determine its capacity to take on 18-21 year olds. In a report to the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee in December, the Kennedy School researchers recommended that Connecticut consider establishing a standalone agency that would manage all juvenile justice services. The JJPOC recommended that the issue be studied further before endorsing any proposal to reorganize juvenile services. The Office of Chief Public Defender agrees that the options need to be explored in more detail before choosing the best path for Connecticut's children and suggests that the General Assembly refer the issue to the JJPOC to develop a comprehensive proposal.



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