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**COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
FEBRUARY 7, 2017**

PROPOSED S.B. No. 637 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CHILD WELFARE OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of Proposed S.B. No. 637 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CHILD WELFARE OVERSIGHT COUNCIL. This proposal creates a body within the Office of the Child Advocate to monitor, report on and make recommendations to improve a number of specific programs within the Department of Children and Families. The proposal would also require the Council to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature on recommendations aimed at the overall operation of DCF. It is important that a group of stakeholders and partner agencies work together to improve and monitor the child welfare system. The Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee serves this purpose for the Juvenile Justice system. The Office of Chief Public Defender suggests that the list of members be expanded to include child welfare system practitioners and contracted service providers, and that the Council be generally tasked with making recommendations for reform of the child welfare system in Connecticut.