



State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

Office of Chief Public Defender
30 Trinity Street, 4th Floor
Hartford, Connecticut
(860) 509-6405 Telephone
(860) 509-6495 Fax

Christine Perra Rapillo
Chief Public Defender
Christine.Rapillo@jud.ct.gov

Susan I. Hamilton
Director of Delinquency Defense and Child Protection
Susan.Hamilton@jud.ct.gov

TESTIMONY OF SUSAN I. HAMILTON
DIRECTOR OF DELINQUENCY DEFENSE AND CHILD PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
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Proposed H.B. No. 6997
AN ACT PROHIBITING BOARDS OF EDUCATION FROM DISCLOSING STUDENT RECORDS
TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS WITH PENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHARGES

The Office of the Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports the presumed intent of **Proposed H.B. No. 6997 – AA PROHIBITING BOARDS OF EDUCATION FROM DISCLOSING STUDENT RECORDS TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS WITH PENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHARGES**, but would offer some helpful amendments to tailor the language more closely to the goal of promoting child welfare.

As currently written, the bill would preclude a local or regional Board of Education from disclosing any educational, medical or similar records to *any* parent or guardian with *pending charges* of domestic violence regardless of whether the child was present or otherwise identified as a victim. This language is overly broad and could have the unintended consequence of prohibiting a custodial parent from accessing his or her child's records even if that parent or guardian was identified as an alleged *victim* in the domestic violence incident (but was also arrested). The OCPD would suggest narrowing the language to *convictions* involving domestic violence where the child was present or otherwise identified as a victim *and* where the sentence remains pending. This would tailor the language to the intended goal of protecting children without unnecessarily interfering with a non-offending custodial parent's ability to access information regarding his or her child's educational needs and services.