



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE HOUSING COMMITTEE**

March 4, 2014

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Butler, and members of the Housing Committee. I am Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D., Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testify in support of [Raised Bill No. 364](#) – An Act Concerning the Department of Housing’s Recommendations for Revisions to the Supportive Housing Initiatives Statutes.

DDS supports the revisions of the supportive housing initiative statute which adds DDS to the list of agencies collaborating on such initiatives. DDS’s mission is to support lifelong planning and partner with others to promote meaningful opportunities for individuals to fully participate as valued members of their communities. The establishment of permanent supportive housing initiatives and our activities in concert with other agencies as member of the Interagency Committee on Supportive Housing align with this agency mission. Through a deepening commitment as member of the Interagency Committee DDS gains the ability to more fully participate in the development of criteria used for prioritizing development of appropriate housing models for the individuals we support as we take on the responsibilities of evaluating proposals for housing development with our partner agencies.

Specifically, DDS supports the removal of the language in section (b) of 17a-485c. While this language served to prioritize needs of specific populations, it did so in such a way as to potentially limit applicability to other groups who may arise as a priority. The language establishing eligibility in section (a) is both sufficiently targeted to match priorities of all member groups and citizens of Connecticut, yet broad enough to not limit eligibility or unduly prioritize needs of one population above another. In changing times it is beneficial to have latitude in establishing priorities from year to year or as needed.

As DDS strives to meet the needs of individuals transitioning from restrictive 24-hour support models to inclusive, community-based supports in the least restrictive manner, the opportunity to advocate for scattered site development and to participate in the selection process of such developments is essential.

We look forward to continued collaborations such as these and appreciate the opportunity to participate and contribute.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on Raised Bill No. 364. Please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative Affairs at 860 418-6066 if you have any questions for us.

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