



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

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DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

March 5, 2014

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and members of the Public Health Committee. I am Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D., Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of our agency bill [H.B. No. 5328](#) - **An Act Concerning Advisory and Planning Councils for State Developmental Services Regions and a Change in Terminology.**

[H.B. No. 5328](#) updates the statutes of various councils that the department has under its auspices. In section 1 of the bill, it allows members of the department's Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) to continue to serve past their term limit until a successor is appointed. This change will help with the on-going functioning of the RACs and is consistent with term-limit provisions in other councils under the department's purview.

Section 2 of [H.B. No. 5328](#) would increase the membership on the Council on Developmental Services from 13 to 14 by adding a member who is receiving or has received services from the department's Division of Autism Spectrum Services. This addition of a person with autism spectrum disorder to the Council is in line with DDS's Mission to involve the persons who receive services from DDS in all aspects of department decision-making. This section also opens up appointments to the Council on Developmental Services to relatives of persons with intellectual disability, not solely parents of those individuals. In keeping with DDS's family focus we feel that this change would allow other members of an individual's family to participate in Council discussions and would reflect the changing nature of family support of individuals with intellectual disability. The last change in section 2 would require the Council to meet at least six times a year but would allow members flexibility in not requiring Council meetings to be bimonthly.

Section 3 of the bill makes changes to one section of statute that was overlooked in last year's [Public Act 13-139](#) that changed the term "Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (ICF/MR)" to "Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID)" to conform to federal terminology. Department staff have been made aware that section 10 of the Governor's Bill [H.B. No. 5052](#) - **An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for Human Services Programs** before the Human Services Committee also amends section 17b-244 of the Connecticut General Statutes for other purposes

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and does include the appropriate reference to ICF/IID. If these two bills were to move forward, DDS would not need section 3 of **H.B. No. 5328** if the **Governor's Bill No. 5052** were to pass both the House and the Senate. Our staff will keep the Public Health Committee aware of the progress of both bills.

Finally, after the department submitted this proposal to the Public Health Committee, we were asked if it would be possible to add two new appointments to the Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council established in [Public Act 13-20](#). One of the new appointments would be of a physician with expertise in autism spectrum disorder and the other would be an additional advocate for persons with autism spectrum disorder. These additional appointments would bring the membership of the Advisory Council to twenty-five. The Department of Developmental Services would welcome these additional members and, if you allow us to add these appointments, we will work with the Public Health Committee to draft substitute language for **H.B. No. 5328**.

Thank you again for your continued support of DDS, persons with intellectual disability and individuals with autism spectrum disorder in Connecticut. My staff and I would be happy to answer any questions that you have on House Bill 5328. Please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs, at (860) 418-6066 if you would like additional information from DDS.