



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. 5456](#) - **An Act Concerning the Department of Developmental Services Abuse and Neglect Registry**.

[H.B. No. 5456](#) is a companion bill to our agency bill [S.B. No. 362](#) **An Act Concerning Mandatory Reporting of Abuse and Neglect of Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the Definition of Abuse**. The bill makes more accurate references to whose name is being placed on the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry. It makes specific that persons whose names appear on the registry are “former” employees who have been terminated from their employment because of substantiated abuse or neglect of an individual receiving services or funding from the Department of Developmental Services. This also makes clear that those employees who work with individuals with autism spectrum disorder receiving services from the department’s Division of Autism Spectrum Services are also covered under the provisions of the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry statutes.

As background for the committee, the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry is maintained by the department for the purpose of allowing DDS and its provider agencies, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), and charitable organizations which recruit volunteers to work with persons with intellectual disability to check to see if a potential employee or volunteer has been placed on the Registry because of a substantiation of abuse and neglect. The Registry provides a safeguard that could prevent employees terminated for abuse or neglect from getting re-employed working with persons with intellectual disability or other persons who may be at increased risk of abuse or neglect. The DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry does provide procedural rights for employees to challenge the placement of their name on the Registry.

The substantiation of abuse or neglect is done through the investigative processes of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (OPA), as well as those of DCF and the Department of Social Services (DSS) in collaboration with DDS’s Division of Investigations. These investigations of abuse and neglect may lead to criminal charges against an employee but a substantiation of abuse and neglect can also lead to administrative sanctions up to and

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including termination of employment and placement of a former employee's name on the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry.

My staff and I would be happy to answer any questions that you have on House Bill 5456. Please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs, at (860) 418-6066, if you would like additional information from DDS.