



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
March 6, 2020**

Senators Flexer and Sampson, Representatives Fox and France and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I am Jordan A. Scheff, Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **H.B. No. 5411 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE PROPERTIES REVIEW BOARD.**

As written, **H.B. No. 5411** would move the State Properties Review Board from the Department of Administrative Services to the Legislative Department, and would expand its purview in terms of what state actions must be reviewed and approved by such Board.

DDS is particularly concerned with section 5 of this bill, which would require any property that DDS represents the state in the leasing of such residential property to be reviewed and approved by the State Properties Review Board.

DDS regularly leases properties to our qualified nonprofit providers to provide community-based residential services to individuals with intellectual disability. As part of the department's continuum of services, residential supports are a priority for many of these individuals and their families.

Unfortunately, the department is unable to provide residential services to everyone in our system that has expressed a residential need. As of December of 2019, DDS had 1,859 individuals on our waiting and planning lists for residential services. DDS continues to work in partnership with other state agencies, the legislature, and our network of community providers to come up with innovative solutions to support as many individuals as possible, within available funding. The ability to lease properties to nonprofit providers has provided the department an ongoing opportunity to create necessary community residential services that include, but are not limited to, emergency transitional housing, step down units and other necessary community residential settings.

If implemented this bill would delay the process in which DDS works with nonprofit providers to create and provide residential services, by adding an additional step to the process. Any delay would greatly hinder the department's ability to provide necessary residential services in an efficient and timely manner and would negatively affect the movement of individuals off the DDS residential waiting list.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding **H.B. No. 5411 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE PROPERTIES REVIEW BOARD.** Please contact Krista Ostaszewski, DDS Director of Legislation, Communications and Regulations at (860) 418-6066 with additional questions.