



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 &
Child Protection
Susan.Hamilton@jud.ct.gov

Testimony of Christine Perra Rapillo, Chief Public Defender

Raised Bill 248 **An Act Concerning Access to Identity Documents by** **Homeless Youth and Young Adults**

Committee on Public Health - March 6, 2020

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports *Raised Bill 248 - An Act Concerning Access to Identity Documents by Homeless Youth and Young Adults*. This proposal will allow homeless young people to get access to their birth certificate free of charge. Homeless youth confront many barriers as they emerge in to adulthood. Certified birth certificates are often required in order to enroll in post high school education programs or apply for jobs. Young people, particularly those experiencing homelessness will not have easy access to these documents. Our staff regularly assists clients obtain identity documents to enter treatment programs or obtain other needed support services. Removing the barrier the fee requirement imposes on these young people is a good step forward to helping them become successful adults. The Office of Chief Public Defender respectfully urges this Committee to act favorably on this proposal.