



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 HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
February 28, 2019**

Senators Moore and Logan, Representatives Abercrombie and Case and members of the Human Services 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. 7168 AN ACT CONCERNING AUTISM.**

Section 1 of the bill would require the Commissioner of Developmental Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Services, to implement a coordinated, interagency effort to ensure that persons with autism spectrum disorder with developmental disabilities receive a full range of available services from DDS.

Although DDS is no longer the state's lead agency for autism spectrum disorder, we do provide services to eligible individuals who have intellectual disability and a co-occurring diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. To this end, the department would be happy to engage in interagency conversations with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to ensure individuals with autism spectrum disorder and developmental disabilities receive a full range of services. In fact, DDS often works with DSS to make certain that all available supports and services have been explored.

DDS provides funding and services to individuals with intellectual disability, as defined in section 1-1g CGS. Once found eligible for DDS services, an individual is assessed using the department's Level-of-Need (LON) assessment tool which asks whether the individual has autism spectrum disorder or other developmental disabilities. The assessment tool then goes on to ask questions about an individual's specific behaviors; personal care needs; level of communication and understanding; personal safety needs; and other areas, which will inform the development of an individual plan. Once a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder is noted in the individual's LON assessment then the individual plan will be developed to identify the services and programs that are appropriate for a person with intellectual disability and co-occurring autism. Based on the individual's LON assessment and the individual's needs for specific types of services, DDS creates a budget and provides available funding that allow the individual to receive services that are most appropriate, including services for autism spectrum disorder.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding **H.B. No. 7168 AN ACT CONCERNING AUTISM.** Please contact Krista Ostaszewski, DDS Director of Legislative Affairs at (860) 418-6066 with additional questions.