



Connecticut Association for Human Services
237 Hamilton Street · Suite 208
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
www.cahs.org

Casey McGuane, President
James P. Horan, Executive Director
860.951.2212
860.951.6511 fax

2/7/17

Testimony before the Human Services Committee

Emmanuel Adero, Policy Analyst, Connecticut Association for Human Services, February 7th, 2016

Good Afternoon Senator Moore, Senator Markley, Representative Abercrombie, and Members of the Human Services Committee,

My name is Emmanuel Adero, and I am a Policy Analyst for the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS). CAHS is a statewide nonprofit agency that works to reduce poverty and promote economic success for children and families through both policy and program work. We appreciate the opportunity to present our policy direction for this legislative session and as we move towards the future.

CAHS is deeply grateful for your continued understanding of how important Care 4 Kids is to low income working families, and your continued efforts to address the problem of insufficient child care. While recent changes to the Care 4 Kids Block Grant positively impacted families' stability within the program—and aligned with similar changes implemented in other states—the changes in Connecticut did not come with the a sufficient level of federal financial resources necessary to fund them. Care 4 Kids began this fiscal year with a structural deficit of \$33 Million, which has already resulted in the program closing to many families as of August, become further restricted to all but TANF recipients in January, and 2,500 families being placed on the waiting list since then. This comes at a time when the cost of childcare to families can already exceed that of in-state tuition to state colleges.

While we applaud your efforts to remedy these funding issues, CAHS does not support moving the funding from OEC to DSS, as is proposed in R.B. 7006. The OEC was established to support a system of all early childhood program initiatives, with Care 4 Kids being a substantial part of the budget. Under the proposed Bill, Care 4 Kids and several other programs that are also integral to a system of early childhood education, would be moved out of OEC. It has taken several years to bring the vision of a dedicated system to fruition. It will also take time for the office to fully integrate. We believe that transferring the early childhood programs to DSS would effectively dismantle this system before there is a chance to fully implement its goals and for us to evaluate its success.

Rather than transferring the OEC programs to DSS, we ask that you explore other options to either:

- Appropriate enough money to allow Care4kids to reopen
- Target TANF funds to Care4kids



Connecticut Association for Human Services
237 Hamilton Street · Suite 208
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
www.cahs.org

Casey McGuane, President
James P. Horan, Executive Director
860.951.2212
860.951.6511 fax

- Find other ways to facilitate the transfer of federal funds between DSS and OEC to pay for Care4kids.

CAHS supports R.B. No. 774, which extends the Temporary Family Assistance Benefits to Encourage Employment. As we know, the promotion of job preparation, with the aim of reducing families' dependency on the state, is one of the central purposes of the TANF program. As it is now, TANF families are encouraged to find work as soon as possible. However, the employment opportunities available to adults in these families are often low-wage, part time, offer few benefits, and do not provide them the means to fully support their families.

We at CAHS support any policy that helps working families achieve financial independence. An extension to TFA benefits that allows working families additional eligibility prior to transitioning off, can both further reward their continued employment, and ease what otherwise would have been a financial cliff when their benefits finally do cease.

Beyond this bill, CAHS will continue to explore policies to enhance education and career training for workers on the margins, to assist them in qualifying for higher-paying, stable work that can ensure multigenerational stability.