



*Written Testimony before the Children's Committee  
Department of Social Services  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025*

Good afternoon, Chairs Maher and Paris, Ranking Members Martinez and Dauphinais; and distinguished members of the Children's Committee. I am Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS).

I am pleased to offer remarks on House Bill 6841:

**HOUSE BILL 6841**: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME PILOT PROGRAM.

This bill requires the Department of Social Services to design and implement an unrestricted cash transfer pilot program for residents in five Connecticut communities. DSS appreciates the intent of this bill and is interested in learning more about the potential positive impact of direct cash transfers and guaranteed basic income on populations that the Department serves. The Department observes that the term "universal basic income" is used in this proposal, whereas the Department would respectfully consider the proposed legislation to be a form of "direct cash transfer" because the proposed pilot program is targeted to a limited population with specific income and household construct parameters.

There are currently numerous pilot programs that are in operation in Connecticut or that are planning to start operations imminently that are designed to explore the impact of direct cash transfers within various population groups. These programs are currently funded with no state dollars, are testing the same concepts proposed in this bill, and will be collecting and examining the same data as recommended in this bill. DSS seeks to support the implementation of these pilot programs in Connecticut at no state cost, primarily by ensuring that pilot program participants can benefit from these pilots without the loss of other essential benefits and services. DSS looks forward to learning from the experiences of these pilot programs that are targeted to many of the same populations recommended in this bill and would like to support these pilot programs by ensuring that they are aligned to DSS program eligibility rules.

While DSS appreciates and supports the intent of this bill, because this proposal would require additional staff and system resources to implement and would also require the state to fund the program operations and benefits, none of which are currently provided for in the Governor's budget, the Department cannot support this bill at this time.