

Committee on Children

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-6

AN ACT CONCERNING RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR INFANTS,

Title: TODDLERS AND DISCONNECTED YOUTHS.

Vote Date: 3/6/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/4/2025

File No.: 199

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

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REASONS FOR BILL:

SB 6 enhances early childhood education, nutrition, and support services for infants, toddlers, and disconnected youth. It expands access to federal meal programs, strengthens school readiness through Kindergarten Preparatory Academies, and increases funding for preschool programs. The bill also improves data collection on at-risk youth and mandates greater oversight of youth camps. Additionally, it provides workforce support for teenage parents and strengthens early childhood development tracking.

This bill seeks to strengthen and provide a stronger foundation for our states children and invest in their long-term success. SB 6 promotes equitable solutions and intends to improve coordination of multiple state resources for vulnerable populations.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Office of Early Childhood, Commissioner, Beth Bye](#) opposes this bill in its current form. They disagree with section 1 that administration and oversight should be transferred of the Child and Adult Food Program (CAFP) from the State Department of Education (SDE) to the Office of Early Childhood. They believe it should remain as it is now. They also believe the new state structure outline in section four is not necessary to accomplish the goals outlined in that section. Section five is also not necessary because the goals outlined there can be satisfied by the current structure. Section six would require funding be given to municipal camps for those camps to meet the requirements outlined in the section. That money is not included in the Governor's recommended budget. They support section eight. Regarding section ten, they have concerns about the staffing required of them to comply as well as possible FERPA and HIPAA violations that would come with complying with those orders. They believe they already do the work outlined in section eleven. They also believe that Sparkler is not the appropriate tool to collect the data required by section twelve. While they agree with the goals in sections one and two, they have a different approach on how to reach them. They would prefer to use their approach. They believe the timeline in section three needs to be expanded to be met.

[Office of Policy and Management Chief Data Officer, Scott Gaul](#) opposes this bill because there are not currently enough resources to do the data collection this bill requires.

[Office of the Child Advocate, Acting Child Advocate, Christina Ghio](#) supports this bill because it would ensure the safety of municipal camps. They suggest that all forms of municipal childcare, not just camps, be held to licensing standards. If licensure is too expensive, they recommend at least that background checks should be required.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Mystic Seaport Museum, Director of Education, Sarah Cahill](#) supports this bill and the revision language to include reports of disconnected youth. They also encourage increasing funding levels for CT Youth Employment program.

[Domus Executive Director, Michael Duggan](#) supports this bill because having data on disconnected youth is an important step is reconnecting them.

[Community Children's Health at Connecticut Children's Hospital Vice President, Paul Dworkin](#) supports this bill because there is a behavioral health crisis, and this bill would help families with disconnected youth get access to better resources.

[United Way of Connecticut Director of Advocacy, Daniel Fitzmaurice](#) supports this bill because the data collected will help secure a better future for Connecticut.

[YMCA Senior Director of Early Learning and School Age Programs](#) supports this bill because it provides resources for disconnected youth as well as creates pathways and provides educational grants for them.

[Dr. Sherry Skyler Kelly](#) supports this bill because the establishment of kindergarten preparatory programs will help the many families with five-year-olds who are unable to begin kindergarten yet.

[Logan Consulting Lead Consultant, Alison Logan](#) supports this bill because it clarifies the role of the Office of early Childhood as well as clarifying requirements for municipal camps. It also emphasizes the importance of resources for early childhood.

[Horizons CEO, Chris McNaboe](#) supports this bill but recommends that the requirements for camps be added on a yearly basis instead of requiring them all right now. They believe all of the mandates are important, but it is unfair to put all of them on these camps at once with no warning.

[Connecticut Library Consortium Executive Director, Ellen Paul](#) supports this bill and expresses strong support for the appointment of a librarian to the Early Childhood Cabinet.

[Connecticut Education Association Director of Policy, Research, and Government Relations, Ray Rassomando](#) supports this bill because it gives children too young to be in kindergarten a place to go. This is important because kids who start kindergarten too young are dysregulated, but raising the start age left some parents without childcare.

[Compass CEO, Jaquelyn Santiago Nazario](#) supports this bill because it is a step towards helping disconnected youth get the resources they need.

[Hartford Foundation Senior Public Policy Officer, Chris Senecal](#) supports this bill because it provides support for children from birth to age five as well as for disconnected youth.

[Connecticut Voices for Children Research and Associate, Sheth Ruchi](#) supports this bill because it provides resources for early childhood education which can help families overcome obstacles when their children are still young.

[Center for Children's Advocacy Deputy Director, Stacy Violante Cote](#) supports this bill and requests that specific data be collected on struggling LGBTQ youth.

American Heart Association Director of Government Relations, Jim Williams supports this bill because it is important for their health that children are taken care of in early childhood, and this bill helps support children from birth until age five.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Randall Adkison](#) opposes this bill because their family relies on summer camps, and they feel that adding requirements for summer camps this close to camp season will leave those summer camps unable to properly plan for the season.

[Anonymous](#) opposes this bill because these requirements would cause many camps to shut down, leaving parents without the much-needed support these camps provide.

[Town of Enfield Recreation Department Recreation Manager, Alison Alberghini](#) opposes this bill because it imposes several unfunded mandates on these camps that the camps will have

a difficult time complying with. The camps already work hard to maintain a safe space for children, and they believe these mandates are unnecessary and too much of a burden.

[Anonymous](#) opposes this bill because they believe it will increase camp costs, and camps will then no longer be affordable for their family.

[Town of Newtown Community Center Director, Matt Ariniello](#) opposes this bill because municipal camps are already under supervision and these mandates are unnecessary to improve the safety of these programs. These mandates will ultimately raise costs for families because of the strain they will put on the budget.

[Town of Essex Parks and Recreation Social Services Director, Mary Ellen Barnes](#) opposes this bill because it imposes excessive burdens on summer camps. These mandates would have consequences on the costs of attendance for these camps, and they are unnecessary because the camps already hold themselves to adequate safety standards.

[Town of Killingly, Town Manager, Mary Calorio:](#)

[Town of Killingly Parks and Recreation Board Member, Fay Beriau](#) opposes this bill because it would be too expensive for camps to keep up with. They would need to raise costs for families and hire more people than they would be capable of finding. Municipal camps have been exempted in the past because they already have safety protocols in place. They have had no issues thus far, so the mandates are not necessary.

[Town of Rocky Hill Director of Parks and Recreation, Craig Bowman:](#)

[Town of Goshen Recreation Director, Erin Reilly:](#)

[Newington Parks and Recreation Chairman, Donald Woods:](#)

opposes the bill because it would drive up operation costs. This would make camp less affordable for families. It is also unnecessary because camps already go above and beyond the safety standards, so getting licensed would not improve camp safety.

[Haddam-Killingworth Recreation Department Director of Recreation, Robyne Brennan](#)

opposes this bill because it would force camps to raise registration fees. This would prevent towns from providing reliable and inexpensive childcare for families.

[Town of Hebron Parks and recreation Director, Craig Bryant](#) opposes this bill because it will not make camps safer like it intends. Instead, it will make them more expensive and limit opportunities for children served by the camps.

[Laura Shulman Cordeira](#) opposes this bill because their family relies on summer camp both for childcare and as a space for their children to have access to fun activities.

[Newington Parks & Recreation Board Member, William DeBlasio](#) opposes this bill because summer camps are vital for kids and this bill would make them less affordable.

[Town of South Windsor Retired Director of Parks and Recreation, Ray Favreau](#) opposes this bill because it unfairly singles out municipal camps when they have been safer than other camps have been in the past.

[Ledyard Parks, Recreation, & Senior Center Director, Scott Johnson](#) opposes this bill because it is important for families to have safe, affordable, and local forms of childcare, and these camps will not be affordable with new licensing requirements.

[Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Advocacy Manager, Hannah Lemek](#) opposes this bill because it will increase prices of camps for families. Even a small increase may make these camps unaffordable for some families.

[Deep River Parks & Recreation Chairman, Christopher Marra](#) opposes this bill because it will be a significant financial burden on town camps, and if they cannot handle the costs, families will not be able to send their kids to camp.

[The Connecticut Project Action Fund Policy and Advocacy Strategist, Coralys Santana](#) opposes this bill because they think the funds to create a new pre-kindergarten program would be better used by providing additional funding for existing preschools.

[Paren, Laura Cordeira:](#)

[Bruce Dinnie:](#)

[Melissa Miller:](#)

[Luke Pappalardo:](#)

[Clay Pedigo:](#)

[Ms. Robin Lofquist:](#)

[Lori Zornado:](#)

[Daniel Calhoun:](#)

[Maggie Winiarski:](#)

oppose Sections 6 and 7 of Senate Bill 6 because they would increase costs for summer camps run by local Parks and Recreation Departments, making them less affordable for families. Increased costs could force families to seek less structured or lower-quality alternatives, putting strain on both parents and children. They urge to protect affordable access to these critical summer programs.

[Town of Stonington, First Selectman, Danielle Chesebrough:](#)

[Town of East Haddam, Recreation Direction, Lisa Conroy:](#)

[Town of Killingworth, First Selectman, Eric Couture:](#)

[Town of Harwinton, First Selectman, Michael Criss:](#)

[New Milford Parks Recreation, Secretary, Denise Del Mastro:](#)

[City of West Haven, Director Youth & Family, Diane Dietman:](#)

[Town of Portland, Parks & Recreation, Director, Andy Dionne:](#)

[Town of Darien, Parks & Recreation, Jennifer Fava:](#)

[Town of Avon, Parks & Recreation, Director, Jennifer Filer:](#)

[South Windsor, Parks & Recreation, Nathan Foley:](#)

[South Windsor, Director of Parks & Recreation: Molly Keays:](#)

[Town of Glastonbury, Recreation Supervisor, Liz Gambacorta:](#)

[Newington, Parks & Recreation, Supervisor, Nancy Glynn:](#)

[Town of Ellington, Director of Recreation, Dustin Huguenin:](#)

[Killingly, Parks & Recreation, Member, Michael Lehoux:](#)

[Town of Killingly, Recreation Director, Bucky Lohbusch:](#)

[Town of Killingly, Board Member, Kevin Mahan:](#)

[Newtown, Parks & Recreation, Director, Amy Mangold:](#)

City of Norwich, Director of Human Services, Kate Milde:
Town of Oxford, Director Parks & Recreation, Kyra Nesteriak:
Colchester, Parks & Recreation, Director, Tiffany Quinn:
Town of Avon, Town Manager, Brandon Robertson:
Ledyard, Parks & Recreation, Office Assistant, Courtney Sizer:
Town of Simsbury, Director of Parks & Recreation, Thomas Tyburski:
Town of Killingly Parks & Recreation Committee Member, Vance Carter:
Town of Groton Parks & Recreation Program Supervisor, Eileen Ciccheese:
Town of Bolton Recreation Department Director, Stephanie Crane:
Newington Parks and Recreation Department Superintendent, Bill DeMaio:
Town of Colchester First Selectman, Bernie Dennler:
Town of Glastonbury Parks & Recreation Program Coordinator, Geordie Emmanuel:
Town of Brookfield Parks & Recreation Supervisor, Daniel Gagne:
Town of Guilford Parks & Recreation Director, Pamela Gery:
Vernon Parks & Recreation Supervisor, Julie Halpin:
Town of East Lyme Parks and Recreation Department Director, Jerry Lokken:
Town of Newington Recreation Advisor, Hadeel Madjoub:
Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association Board President, Elizabeth Mayne:
Town of New Canaan Assistant Recreation Director, Zack Philippas:
Ledyard Parks & Recreation Camp Coordinator, Megan Rosen:
Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department Supervisor Josselyn Salafia:
The City of Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth, and Community Services Recreation Supervisor, Amry Shelby:
Town of Preston Parks, Recreation, & Youth Services Director, Mark Simmons:
Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association Executive Director, Valerie Stolfi Collins:
Colchester Parks and Recreation Department Recreation Supervisor, Lindsay M Warfield:

Oppose this bill because the increased burden on municipal camps would make it necessary for those camps to raise their prices. The number of additional staff they would need to hire would not be possible for them to currently afford. This would reduce families' access to affordable childcare and prevent children from getting the opportunities they would get at these camps. The bill is also unnecessary because current guidelines already ensure the safety of children at these camps, and additional licensing would not increase safety. This bill would cause camps to close or delay opening which would cause a struggle for people who rely on them for childcare.

Reported by: Christian Talariski & Julia Cabral Date: 3/25/2025