

Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5556 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING COMPLEX CARE SERVICE DELIVERY FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH CO-OCCURRING MENTAL HEALTH AND INTELLECTUAL

Title: DISABILITY OR AUTISM DIAGNOSES.

Vote Date: 3/19/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/17/2026

File No.: 440

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill implements interdepartmental recommendations from a study concerning complex care for young adults with co-occurring diagnoses. Banding together five state departments and their respective commissioners (featuring Children and Families, Developmental Services, Education, Social Services, and Addiction Services), proposed legislation would coordinate services relevant to the disability statuses and mental health conditions of adolescents and young adults. As raised, the bill has received no opposing testimony.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Connecticut Department of Social Services, Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner:

Defers to sister agencies' expertise on the bill, supporting OPM-funded recommendations from a 2024 report. The Department accepts that newly established definitions would impact the Autism waiver (in light of the next steps that were previously identified).

Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services, Amy Porter, Commissioner:

If necessary, the Department would appreciate contributing to the planning of employment services and activities for young adults.

Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Susan Hamilton, Interim Commissioner:

Vows to “remain an active planning participant for the children and youth that will be served in such facility.” The Department looks forward to ensuring that this population receives the treatment and services they need and closes with a suggestion to change the report date to 2/1/2027.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Hospital Association: Prefaces that hospitals across Connecticut are caring for a growing number of adolescents and young adults. CHA says these individuals vary between the ages of 17 and 22, and often have clinical needs that overlap with numerous state systems, “including behavioral health, developmental services, child welfare, and education.” CHA has spotted a stronger bond between young adults and hospitals as a result of failed community placements.

Connecticut Community Nonprofit Alliance, Emmeline Franklin, Public Policy and Advocacy Associate: Notices that gaps exist in the transition from youth to adult services, which warrant a coordination framework. Ms. Franklin states that collaboration among departments will lead to delivering appropriate and timely support. Her testimony includes four recommendations, which start by looking to decrease the bed count from ten to six under the psychiatric treatment option. The remaining recommend extending the age eligibility from twenty-two to twenty-six, encouraging attention to the broader group of young adults with ASD, and clarifying the role of state agencies in the proposed program.

National Alliance on Mental Illness Connecticut, Thomas Burr, Public Policy Manager: Strongly supports the bill, believing it’s of utmost importance to coordinate between state agencies to address young people’s needs. NAMI also applauds the Committee’s plan to create a facility of, at most, 10 beds for Medicaid reimbursement.

Center for Children’s Advocacy, Sarah Eagan, Executive Director: Supports the bill, as it’s based on vulnerable young adults who deserve opportunity, service delivery, and community support. Ms. Eagan finds that more comprehensive strategies ensure that “these youth and their families are not consigned to isolation, bankruptcy, and despair.”

The Arc Connecticut, Danielle Middlebrooks, Director of Advocacy and Public Policy: Supports, noting young adults with co-occurring intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental health conditions fall between service systems. The Arc considers a coordinated approach to complex service delivery “essential” to ensuring young adults receive appropriate support.

Connecticut Children’s, Melissa Santos, Head of Pediatric Psychology: the bill represents an important step toward improving service delivery for vulnerable adolescent and young adult populations. Ms. Santos shares that improved access benefits pediatric patients and families alike, further strengthening systems, improving health outcomes, and establishing long-term well-being.

MBraces, Pradipta Mazumder, Orthodontist: Supports the bill and states that, to keep up with inflation and costs, Medicaid should increase its reimbursement rates.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed.

Reported by: Zachary Robinson

Date: March 31, 2026