

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-155 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Vote Date: 2/24/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/17/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Committee on Children, on behalf of the Department of Children and Families

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill raises the proposals from the Department of Children and Families regarding improvements to existing policy and procedure for the Department. This includes streamlining the mandated reporting process by establishing an annual legislative report to increase efficiency and address the staff's confusion on reporting timelines. Additionally, the Department suggests changes to state law to clarify when DCF must notify state and federal law enforcement regarding missing children, which includes eliminating the need for DCF to notify the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) because they do not have access to that agency and therefore are required to do an incompletable task.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

LCO 1798: The substitute language removes a section from the list of repealed sections and amends it by removing references to the Commissioner of Children and Families. This is to avoid eliminating reporting requirements pertaining to other state agencies. Additionally, it adds a new Section 9 that makes technical changes to an existing statute.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Department of Children & Families, Interim Commissioner Susan Hamilton:

The Department of Children & Families supports the bill, requesting favorable action on three sections. The first is to create a new annual report that merges eight existing statutory reporting requirements into one comprehensive write-up. The second amends a section to account for DCF's participation in the Behavior Health Partnership report in collaboration with

the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS) and the Department of Social Services (DSS). The third clarifies that the Department must notify state and federal law enforcement of missing children.

Department of Children and Families, Legislative Liaison Mike Carone: Mr. Carone states that this bill would address confusion amongst staff and between divisions of the Department regarding deadlines. The new due dates allocate more time to the Department to review activity from the fiscal year and meet the reporting deadline. The bill would also eliminate the requirement of notifying the FBI's NCIC database, which is unachievable for the Department since they do not have access to it.

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Commissioner Nancy Navarretta: The Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services supports this bill. They establish that the Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership (CT BHP) is shared among DSS, DCF, and DMHAS members and considers Section 2 a helpful measure, as it would establish a clear reporting deadline and consolidate reporting requirements into a single, comprehensive annual report.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Erin Paranzino, M.Ed., CAGS (ABA): Ms. Paranzino is a trauma-informed curriculum specialist who is currently enrolled in CT's Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program due to safety concerns. She states that she experienced many structural, longstanding, and preventable failures that put herself and her children in harm's way when trying to escape domestic violence. She emphasized that the issue was not with one singular judge, guardian ad litem, or DCF worker, but rather the structural deflection of accountability across our judicial and executive branches. She sees this bill as an opportunity to provide necessary accountability and oversight that would better enable DCF to handle situations of domestic violence.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Connecticut Voices for Children, Research & Policy Director Dr. Emily A. Knox, PhD.: Ms. Knox testifies that the consolidation changes in the reporting mandates can improve transparency with the Department and recommends that it include standardized definitions, consistent rate calculations, and documentation of any methodological changes. She states that the bill should include requirements for year-over-year comparability to improve longitudinal analytic capacity. She also voices concern about the bill's "results-based accountability measures" due to the lack of clarity on how parity will be measured, what baseline comparisons will be used, or how progress will be assessed. She recommends the addition of clear definitions and benchmarking. Due to the Department's history of failure to meet certain statutory reporting requirements in full, she cautions the implementation of the consolidated framework until there are more dedicated investments in data capacity, standardization, and analytic staffing.

Sarah Dzialo: Ms. Dzialo opposes SB 155 and finds that the bill expands government program oversight and is an administrative burden on entities like DCF. She advocates for alternative support sources such as nonprofits and private foster care agencies.

**Reported by: Mia Giglietti, Zachary Robinson,
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Date: 3/6/2026