

**Name:** Thomas Rogers

**Title:**

**Organization or Agency:**

**Topic:** Meeting Date Not Listed

NA

**Testimony:**

Hello Again.

I would now like to address the current Bill on the (26) and under and that is being heard soon. Let me start with the Department MISSION STATEMENT: "The Department of Correction shall strive to be a leader in progressive correctional practices and partnered re-entry initiatives to support responsive evidence-based practices geared towards supporting reintegration and reducing recidivism under the department supervision."

This is the D.O.C goal. The problem is that everyone has to have the same goal and objective to move forward. I know everyone is not always gonna agree on things. I believe everything isn't always about a fiscal equation as well. We as a State the people stand divided. We have moral and ethical thoughts. The fiscal aspect of thinking. Then the political thought, Republican against Democratic. In that process the humanity aspect gets lost! I ask that our Legislators write comprehensive and meaningful laws that aren't so vague.

This Bill has been on the table for years. The D.O.C Mission statement says it's "partnered re-entry initiatives to support responsive evidence based practices geared towards supporting reintegration." The problem with this is even if this is what D.O.C strives to be, nobody else is. Evidence based practices? This Bill is based on evidence of the brain being under developed before the age of (25). Where is the interpretation being lost here? The Mission Statement again says "CT strives to be leaders in correction." The truth of the matter is CT has already acknowledged the study. In fact, CT was one of the first States to implement a Juvenile Unit to address this issue, The T.R.U.E program in Cheshire, a unit designed to help those (25) and under with rehabilitation while using older individuals to mentor these youth. Great program and very successful in every way. Even getting recognition from CBS 60 minutes! Now when the cameras were rolling everyone was on the same page? Politicians, Governor, Judges and prosecutors!

How are we so united in front of the cameras, but so divided in chambers? To be a leader of anything we must be out front. Not in the rear. Numerous states are ahead of CT when it comes to this Juvenile Bill. How do we acknowledge the study on the front end and ignore the back end? We as a State created this system then designed the system, then put people in place to run this system. Therefore we have to believe in the system! This system works. CT went away from mass incarceration years ago. The implementation of programming, schooling, vocational education, drug rehabilitation and mental health rehabilitation is very much possible! I see it everyday, I myself came in young, uneducated, oblivious as to life in general. I'm now (55) a Grandfather, Husband, a man with a new perspective and view on life! A true appreciation of every life. After (31) years I can't credit anyone or anything else except the CT Corrections for this transformation. So ask that when any Legislature votes on this Bill. Let's do it from a humanitarian point of view. Not a political or personal view. Let's believe the system works. Remember PAROLE isn't guaranteed! All we are asking for is a chance to be heard .....Thank you