



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

DANNEL P. MALLOY
GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

June 13, 2018

BILL NOTIFICATION
RELEASE No. 16

For Immediate Release

Governor Dannel P. Malloy vetoed the following legislation of the 2018 Regular Session on June 13:

SB 188 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE STATE OVERSIGHT COUNCIL ON CHILDREN
PA 18-140 AND FAMILIES.

This bill had an effective date of July 1, 2018. The Governor vetoed the bill.

***Scroll down to read the Governor's veto message.*

As of this date, the Governor has signed one hundred and sixty-three (163) bills, vetoed five (5) bills, and left unsigned one (1) bill of the 2018 Regular Session.

and responsibility to make and execute decisions with respect to operational and fiscal management thereby violating the independence of the executive branch. The Council is to make recommendations on the agency budget to the Appropriations and Children's Committees, as well as ensure that DCF has implemented, as required, its recommendations.

DCF has hundreds of policies promulgated and revised frequently to conform to legislation at the federal level and national best practices; it would be difficult for an Oversight Council comprised of appointed volunteers to be informed and responsive to the degree needed to fulfill the obligations established by this legislation. Nor will it yield any benefit to the vulnerable children and families served by the Department.

Finally, the Department of Children and Families is subject to some the most exhaustive forms of oversight compared to any other state agency, including by the Office of the Child Advocate. There is also legislative oversight by the General Assembly's Committee on Children as well as 34 legislatively mandated reports. In addition, as Connecticut's child welfare agency, DCF has extensive federal oversight by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families.¹ And since 1991, the Department has been under federal court oversight pursuant to the *Juan F.* Consent Decree; however, this administration has seen significant improvement and recognition of DCF's progress in moving Connecticut closer to ending this oversight. On December 13, 2017, the U.S. District Court approved a new agreement to the *Juan F.* Consent Decree that will ensure adequate staffing and streamline outcome measures that make ending the 26-year-litigation far more achievable in the near future with an exit plan that recognizes the significant progress made by the department (reducing 23 measures actively measured to 6). The new plan also will allow DCF to focus efforts on case planning and better meeting the physical and mental health needs of children in the care of the Department. This bill would divert the Department's focus by requiring it to respond to significant information and data requests to comply with the Oversight Council mandate, including *any* information and data the council deems relevant.

I would urge the proponents to adopt a revised version of this bill, consistent with the draft agreed upon, that would avoid violating the separation of powers that insures a check and balance against overreach by the co-equal branches. For these reasons, I disapprove of Substitute Senate Bill 188, *An Act Establishing the State Oversight Council on Children and Families*. Pursuant to Section 15 of Article Fourth of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, I am returning Senate Bill 188 without my signature.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

¹ Federal oversight by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families includes, but not limited to: Child and Families Services Reviews (CFSR), Title IV-E reviews; the Community Mental Health Block Grant (CMHBG), the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARs), the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), and the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS).