

2008 Legislative Wrap-Up

May 7th, 2008 adjourned the Connecticut Legislative Session this year. To wrap up this year's legislative session, below you will find a wrap-up of bill's the association has supported, followed and/or reported on this session. You will also find reports and links to other information as the session came to an end. Unfortunately HB5497, HB5498, HB5102 and SB159 all died in the Appropriation Committee this year. HB5536, a bill supported by CAFAP now awaits approval from Governor Rell.

Bills Supported by CAFAP:

- **HB5002 An Act Concerning Cost-Of-Living Adjustments For Private Providers Contraction with the State**
This bill was to provide a three per cent rate increase to private providers contraction with the state in appreciation of the services provided to the state's less fortunate citizens.
- **HB5102, An Act Providing Equal Payment Per Child for Relative Caregivers Receiving Child Only Benefits Under the Temporary Family Assistance**
This bill aimed to "help elevate children out of poverty by paying a subsidy from the Department of Social Services to certain persons participating in the Department of Children and Families' subsidized guardianship program".
- **HB5298, An Act Concerning a Cost-Of-Living Adjustment for Not-For-Profit Providers Who Provide Services on Behalf of State Agencies**
This bill would assist not-for-profit providers who contract with state agencies by providing a cost-of-living adjustment to such providers to ensure that quality services are delivered to the citizens of the state.
- **HB5497, An Act Concerning Adoption and Subsidized Guardianship Assistance**
HB5497 would provide a higher education tuition at an appropriate school for a child adopted through the public child welfare system in Connecticut regardless of the date the child was adopted. The bill would also allow the extension of a subsidy for the child until the age of 23 if the adopted child (as above) were still attending an appropriate school. The bill would also provide a higher education tuition for children in subsidized guardianship. HB5497 also includes a provision to "establish an adoption subsidy rate schedule that sets out a base amount regardless of the date the adoption was approved". To read the full text of this bill you can go to <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2008/TOB/H/2008HB-05497-R00-HB.htm>.
- **HB5498, An Act Concerning a Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Program**
This bill would have established a separate account within the General Fund to be known as the "Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund". The funds would allow for payment or reimbursement of medical and related expenses of children with catastrophic illnesses to create a safety net for families who have excessive expenses related to a child's medical needs. The funds would have been accessible to the families in need when medical expenses

not covered by public or private insurance or some other source and exceeded 10% of a family's income.

- **HB5536, An Act Establishing the Connecticut Health Care Partnership**
This bill would allow state funded private non-profits to participate in the state health insurance plan which would reduce the out of pocket expenses that these non-profit employees incur as well as giving private state funded non-profits the ability to recruit and retain competent employees". Cost-of-living increases for these non-profit agencies has been virtually non-existent in past years while health insurance rate increases soar year after year for these agencies.
- **SB159, An Act Concerning Foster Placement and Education**
SB159 aimed to establish more school stability for foster children, allowing them to stay in their school of origin, but also considering if this is in the best interest of the child.

The above listed bills have died in the Appropriation Committee this session with the exception of HB5536 which now only needs approval (signature) by Governor Rell. Please keep in mind that the State Budget is not "set in stone" yet. The Governor has stated that rescissions may still be made to the budget.

Bills Reported on During the Session:

HB5002, An Act Concerning Cost-Of-Living Adjustments for Private Providers Contracting with the State

HB5102, An Act Providing a Subsidy From the Department of Social Services to Persons Participating in the Department of Children and Families' Subsidized Guardianship Program

HB5298, An Act concerning a Cost-Of-Living Adjustment for Not-for-Profit Providers Who Provide Services on Behalf of State Agencies

HB5488, An Act Concerning an Increase in Temporary Family Assistance Benefits for Grandparents and Other Caretaker Relatives Raising Children

HB5489, An Act Concerning the Rights of Parties in Juvenile Matters

HB5497, An Act Concerning Adoption and Subsidized Guardianship Assistance

HB5529, An Act Concerning Youth Who Run Away

HB5536, An Act Establishing the Connecticut Health Care Partnership

HB5618, An Act Concerning Revisions to the HUSKY Plan

HB5699, An Act Improving Outcomes for Children Under the Custody, Care or Supervision of the Commissioner of Children and Families

HB5708, An Act Concerning the Expansion of the Care 4 Kids Program

HB5921, An Act Concerning Reasonable Efforts to Prevent a Child's or Youth's Removal From the Custody of a Parent or Guardian

SB7, An Act Concerning an Increase in Temporary Family Assistance Benefits for Subsequent Children

SB37 An Act Concerning Computer Crimes Against Children

SB66, An Act Concerning Support and Tax Relief for Grandparent Caregivers

SB158, An Act Concerning Studies conducted By the Department of Children and Families

SB159, An Act Concerning Foster Placement and Education

SB177, An Act Concerning Funding for Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee Concerning the Department of Children and Families

SB269, An Act Establishing a Penalty for Falsifying Records in a Juvenile Matter

SB325, An Act Concerning the Commission on Child Protection

SB338, An Act Concerning Permanency for Children

SB345, An Act Providing Adult Adopted Persons with Access to Information in Their Original Birth Certificates

SB609, An Act Concerning Mandated Reporters

Links and Resources:

Connecticut General Assembly

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/>

CAN Budget Document: Highlights of the Final Budget SFY09 (Related to DCF Funded Providers
<http://www.cafap.com/documents051408CanBudget2.pdf>

CAN Budget Document: Final SFY09 Budget as Passed in SFY08-SFY09 Biennial Budget (June
2007)
<http://www.cafap.com/documents051408CanBudget2.pdf>

Center for Children's Advocacy: KidsCounsel
<http://www.kidscounsel.org/legislative.htm>