

12-18-2008

Joint investigative DCF public hearing

Commissioners,

Please give weight to my oral testimony, and accept & review the attached pages. In brief they correspond to necessary legislative changes that are needed. The nonprofit contact page reflects costs for 6 month group home, in addition to their other contracted functions.

I look forward to your findings from these hearings & hope for more efficient, transparent, and safe practices of DCF.

Thank you
Arlene Lucian
170 Midland Rd.
Waterbury, CT. 06705

Subj: (no subject)
Date: 12/16/2008 9:38:59 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: Stonewall1978
To: Stonewall1978

Forwarded Message:

Subj: **Group Homes - Request to Access Info and Empanel Blue Ribbon Commission**
Date: 6/19/2007 3:58:15 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Fctopresident
To: Governor.Rell@po.state.ct.us

June 19, 2007

To: Governor Jodi Rell
State of Connecticut
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
Governor.Rell@po.state.ct.us
(860) 566-4840

Dear Governor Rell,

GROUP HOMES

Accessibility to Information Regarding Group Homes

Proposal to Empanel a Blue Ribbon Commission to Review the Awarding of Contracts, Management Of, and More relating to Group Homes

The growth in the public-private partnership between the State of Connecticut and nonprofit, private sector contractors continues to grow. Millions of taxpayer dollars fund these contracts where transparency has been an issue.

In November, 2006, the Courts supported the release of information sought by you relating to HMO's managing the State's Husky Program. The decision stipulated "as state contractors they perform a governmental function". The decision was also hailed by many who seek to expand government's transparency with private contractors. Connecticut Legal Services said the decision sends a clear message that "public contractors are accountable for the millions of tax dollars paid to them each year."

With the understanding that you initiated the release of the information on the HMOs, I am

asking that you immediately intercede to keep that momentum of transparency growing.

Groups Homes are rapidly surfacing in neighborhoods throughout Connecticut. The majority of Group Homes are allowed to bypass local zoning laws and are managed by non-profit, private sector businesses at the cost of millions of dollars to taxpayers with little to no public oversight.

It was recently reported that the Department of Children and Families agreed to a \$10 million federal class action lawsuit wherein "DCF has agreed to complete 43 new special therapeutic group homes to serve 173 mentally ill youths."

In addition to Group Homes in Connecticut serving trouble youths they also house drug addicts, alcoholics, sex offenders and/or those released from the prison system. Controversy has surrounded some of the existing group homes from the awarding of contracts to incidents reported by the press.

One group home was anticipated to be purchased for \$1 million to house 6 teenage girls prior to the release of a report by the State auditors containing the following excerpt:

We believe this cannot be considered a fair, open and competitive process because it was tainted by the premature discussions that took place between a representative of the Children's Trust Fund and the winning not-for-profit agency. Also, we believe that the winning not-for-profit should not have received the award because it did not submit a complete application by the deadline specified in the RFP. Further, we believe the many other questions raised above should be addressed in any future RFP evaluations.

The Journal Inquirer newspaper recently reported on a 25 year old autistic man from East Hartford who drowned in a pond at Elizabeth Park. The drowning victim was a resident of an East Hartford group home run by the non-profit Community Residences Inc. of Southington. Journal Inquirer - Autistic EH man drowns in WH park pond, investigation under way

Where you were successful in generating the release of information on HMOs, residents abutting group homes have not been as successful.

Attempts by Arlene Lucien of Waterbury to have your agency, Department of Children and Families, release information on the number of and dates of incident reports at a group home in her area resulted in the following response:

Forwarded Message:

Subj: RE: FW: FOI Request
Date: 6/8/2007 11:49:09 AM Pacific Daylight Time
From: LISA.FLOWER-MURPHY@ct.gov
To: Stonewall1978@aol.com
Sent from the Internet (Details)

Ms. Lucien- as was stated in the phone message I left for you today, the incident reports with just dates are also not disclosable via CGS 17a-28. Thanks Lisa Flower

Again, please note that Ms. Lucien was simply seeking the release of the number of incidents and the dates of those incidents at a particular group home. She never asked for nor expected to receive the names of those involved or even a detailed explanation of the incident. If the information cannot be disclosed to Ms. Lucien, then it would appear that it would not be accessible to you as well if we rely upon the aforementioned by Ms. Lisa Flower.

Request for Opinion by Attorney General Blumenthal

I am asking that you seek an opinion on the interpretation of CGS 17a-28 by Attorney General Blumenthal to determine if he supports Ms. Flower's findings. If Ms. Lucien or you, as the Governor, could not gain insight into a simple, non invasive question relating simply to the number of incident reports filed and the dates of those reports on one group home, then I question how you as the Governor can monitor these private sector facilities.

Empanel Blue Ribbon Commission

I further suggest that you empanel a Blue Ribbon Commission to review and improve the process of

- contracting to purchase group homes,
- contracting to manage group homes,
- providing management and financial oversight of group homes for the benefit of the taxpayers, the public living in close proximity to the group homes and those inhabiting group homes,
- public notification of the establishment of group homes in neighborhoods to include the name of the contact person responsible for oversight of the group home,
- greater public disclosure of noninvasive information such as the number of incident reports stemming from group homes as recently sought, etc,

I further suggest that a website be provided which clearly defines the costs associated with each group home as well as full disclosure of all principals and investors of LLCs which have been awarded contracts to manage group homes and will reap the financial benefits of State contract awards.

Thank you in advance for your attention to the aforementioned.

I look forward to your response. Susan Kniep

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Subj: **Group home legislation**
Date: 4/18/2007 2:20:27 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Stonewall1978
To: Governor Rell@po.state.ct.us

April 18, 2007
Governor Jodi Rell,

I write to you today, with great concern as a taxpayer. It is most difficult to express the level of frustration encumbered by a negligent legislature. At topic is an ill attempt by my State Representative, Selim Noujaim to address numerous issues with State law adversely affecting taxpayers in regard to group home usage by various State agencies. A Bill put forward by Selim , 6916, which was in total content with one exception, a draft of a questioner that I posed to the Waterbury delegation, "died" in committee as Andy Woodcock, legislative aide to Senator Handley, Chair of Public Health Committee reported

As a wife of 29 years, and mother of three daughters; two in college, one in high school, I attest that neglect of one or more family members concerns, by individual or multiple members destroys its unity, affecting all. As is the case with government.

I'll attempt now, to focus for you, the compounded & unjust burdens to taxpayers which are being ignored by the State, in relation to the scheme of contracting non-profit vendors to operate residential group homes by various State agencies to administer State funded programs under current State law. To begin, one State practice afflicting taxpayers, is that the funded purchase costs of properties rarely are below, or at the median household income level. Generally, funding well exceeds that. With the turbulent economic struggle taxpayers face daily to sustain their property rights, it is ludicrous that the State assumes that taxpayers should support that which they, themselves, could not afford.

Adding insult to injury, the State does not confirm group home vendors as quasi-public agencies, though they obtain over a billion dollars of contracts annually. The vast majority of State contracted non-profit vendors have operating costs which are 75% or more State funded. They should be confirmed by law as quasi-public agencies under Freedom of Information laws.

The State does not govern construction & renovation bids. It should. The State does not have a public master registry to support compliance with statutes 8-3f (1,000 ft buffer zones), and 19a-507b (municipal percentage scales). It should. The State does not require re-licensing inspections of vendors which should be held annually by an outside review panel separate from the program agency. It should. Residents should not need to get approval from their local governmental boards to petition for license revoking, nor the programs Commissioner. There should be an outside State office to administer & review petitions.

I pray that I will receive your response soon, with intent to delegate reviews or changes to the facts I have presented to you.

Respectfully,
Arlene Lucian
170 Midland Rd.
Waterbury, Ct. 06705

Department of Children & Families

Contract Cover Sheet

Contractor Information		Reason for Contract Action					
Contract Number	04DCF0048	New (Check box below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amendment Number	4 of 4
Contractor Legal Name:	Child Guidance Clinic of Greater Waterbury, Inc.	RFP	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prior Contract Total			\$8,295,568
Contract Period	07/01/03 - 06/30/06	Site Source	<input type="checkbox"/>	COLA	<input type="checkbox"/>		\$0
Address:	70 Pine Street	Other (Explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Explain)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		\$0
City	Waterbury			Add new Group Home effective 10/01/05			5543,434
State	CT			Increase EMPS & HCAPS effective 07/01/05			\$809,800
Zip:	06710						
Tax ID:	060669107						
				Revised Contract Total			\$9,648,802
Director	Gary M. Steck, LMFT	Phone	(203) 756-7287 X102	Fax	(203) 596-0722	Email	gsteck@waterburychildguidance.com
Program Contact	John Berube, LMFT	Phone	(203) 756-7287 X206	Fax	(203) 596-2789	Email	jberube@waterburychildguidance.com
Fiscal Contact	Marcia L. Geddes	Phone	(203) 756-7287 X202	Fax	(203) 596-2789	Email	mgeddes@waterburychildguidance.com

Contract Amount by SID & Program							
SID	Service Type	Funding Period	SFY '04	SFY '05	SFY '06	SFY '07	Total
16024	Child Guidance Clinic	07/01/03 - 06/30/06	550,546	557,153	559,355		1,667,054
16024	EMPS Care Coordination	07/01/03 - 06/30/06	218,687	221,311	222,186		662,184
16141	EMPS Care Coordination	07/01/03 - 06/30/06	1,391,313	1,408,009	1,733,574		4,532,896
20190	EMPS Care Coordination & Enhancement	08/01/04 - 06/30/05		80,000			80,000
20575	EMPS Care Coordination & Enhancement	08/01/04 - 06/30/05		213,333			213,333
12304	EMPS Care Coordination & Enhancement (Clinical Psych.)	02/15/05 - 06/30/06		75,000	200,000		275,000
16141	HCAPS	07/01/03 - 06/30/06	200,000	202,400	693,000		1,095,400
30278	HCAPS	07/01/04 - 06/30/05		90,000			90,000
16141	HCAPS	07/01/04 - 06/30/05		50,000			50,000
20190	HCAPS	07/01/04 - 06/30/05		45,000			45,000
16064	Parent Aide	10/01/04 - 06/30/06		169,072	225,429		394,501
16138	Group Home - Start - up	10/01/05 - 12/31/05			91,590		91,590.00
16138	Group Home	01/01/06 - 06/30/06			451,844		451,844.00
Total by Year			2,360,546	3,111,278	4,176,978		9,648,802

Signature Authorizations	
Fiscal Contracts Staff	Date
Bureau Chief	Date
Bureau Chief	Date
Bureau Chief	Date
Bureau Chief	Date
Fiscal Analysis	Date
Chief Fiscal Officer	Date
Director of Grants & Contracts Management	Date
Deputy Commissioner	Date

Signature: Linda L. Conway Date: *8-30-05*

Signature: [Handwritten] Date: *4/18/05*

Signature: [Handwritten] Date: *4/18/05*

Signature: [Handwritten] Date: *4/18/05*

Signature: [Handwritten] Date: *4/18/05*

**DCF Employee Foster Care Licensing
Private Provider Agency Contractors**

A Better World Adoptions

125 Park Road
West Hartford, CT 06119

Boys and Girls Village

528 Wheeler Farms Road
Milford, CT 06460-1874

Child Adoption Resource Association / CARA

2 Union Plaza, Suite 300
New London, CT 06320

Community Residence, Inc.

732 West Street, Suite 12
Southington, CT 06489

Jewish Family Service, Inc.

2370 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Klingberg Family Centers, Inc.

370 Linwood Street
New Britain, CT 06052

Wheeler Clinic Inc.

91 Northwest Drive
Plainville, CT 06082