

FACT SHEET IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. 1913

PLACING THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES (DYS) UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

PROBLEM The proposed bill, **H.B. 1913**, transfers the Department of Youth Services (DYS) from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to the Executive Office of Public Safety (EOPS). **This would be a detriment to both youth and public safety** as it would sever the important partnership between DYS and the other EOHHS agencies providing related services to the youth in its care.

HISTORY The Weld/Cellucci Administration vetoed a similar measure in July 1992, and the legislature defeated two similar bills in March 1999 and February 2000.

REASON FOR OPPOSITION **The Bill harms the important working partnership of DYS with the other agencies at EOHHS that serve the same youth:** Over 50% of the youth in the custody of DYS were previously involved in the Department of Social Services; between 50- 75% of the youth in DYS have a diagnosable mental illness, requiring close cooperation with the Department of Mental Health. The human service agencies must work closely together on individual cases as well as system-wide initiatives to effectively address the needs of *all* our youth.

The Bill's proposed creation of a Commissioner's Advisory committee is a woefully insufficient substitute for the daily cooperation among the various agencies under EOHHS.

The Bill threatens public safety. If children and youth in the juvenile justice system are deprived of the resources they need to grow up to be law-abiding adults, then they will simply "graduate" into the adult criminal justice system.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? Contact the Chairmen of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security and tell them you join Citizens for Juvenile Justice in opposing HB 1913!

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Or, make your voice heard in person! Come to the legislative hearing at the Massachusetts State House on **Wednesday, June 22, 2005 at 10 AM, Room A-2.**