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**Testimony in support of:
AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN’S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Senator Maher, Representative Paris, Senator Martin, Representative Dauphinais, and Members of the Children’s Committee, I write today to testify in strong support for H.B. No. 6951, An Act Concerning Children’s Behavioral Health Services.

It is no secret that our children are facing mental health crises as we have emerged from the pandemic and schools have been tasked with bridging social development and learning gaps. It is vital that we address our children’s behavioral health needs so that they can thrive in school and life.

Specifically, at a roundtable I hosted last year with Senator Maher and Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner Manisha Juthani, it was brought to our attention that DPH only collects data on less than one third of the school-based health centers (SBHCs) in Connecticut.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, my office convened a “Healthcare Cabinet,” which brought key policymakers, stakeholders, practitioners, and advocates together to discuss healthcare challenges facing various demographics across Connecticut. The cabinet comprised subcommittees based on population groups that sought solutions to these challenges, including potential legislation. **This year the Cabinet recommended expanding data collection to all SBHCs in Connecticut.**

As policymakers, we make our best decisions when we have the most information. Standardizing reporting requirements for SBHCs will enable DPH and the legislature to make the most appropriate funding allocations, optimizing the healthcare services SBHCs offer that so many children and families rely on.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with the committee on this bill to protect our states most valued assets, our children.

All the best,



Sean Scanlon

State Comptroller