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**TESTIMONY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES  
TO THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

**S.B. 885- An Act Permitting Inquiry Access to the Department of Developmental Services' Abuse and Neglect Registry for Charitable Organizations which Recruit Volunteers to Work with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities**

**February 9, 2011**

Senators Stillman and Welch, Representatives Ritter and Perillo and members of the Public Health Committee. I am Commissioner Peter O'Meara of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for raising Senate Bill 885, An Act Permitting Inquiry Access to the Department of Developmental Services' Abuse and Neglect Registry for Charitable Organizations which Recruit Volunteers to Work with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

This bill would allow certain charitable organizations, such as Special Olympics, to check their volunteers against the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry upon application to and approval by the Commissioner of DDS. The reason for this proposal is to make sure that persons with substantiated abuse or neglect allegations against DDS consumers would not be able to volunteer for these charitable organizations. The process would allow approved entities which rely on volunteers, a database resource for their background checks.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today on our agency proposal, Senate Bill 885. I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have, or you may contact Christine Pollio Cooney, DDS Director of Legislative Affairs at (860) 418-6066.