



**Vermont Citizens Advisory Board  
to the Department for Children and Families**

March 28, 2022

Dear Senator Lyons and Members of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee,

We are writing to you regarding H.265 - An act relating to the Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate. On behalf of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families (VCAB), we would like to request that VCAB have a formal role related to the OCYFA, specifically with the proposed Oversight Commission.

VCAB, founded in 2004, fulfills the federal mandate for our child welfare system to have a citizens review board. It is established to examine policies, practices and procedures of the state's child protection agency and, where appropriate, review specific cases to evaluate the extent to which the agency is discharging its responsibilities.

While we understand the concern that specific agencies and organizations not be designated in law to serve on the Oversight Commission, no other entity in Vermont has this federally mandated role and responsibility. For that reason we believe that a formal role for VCAB be included in this legislation.

We will be discussing H.265 in more depth at our upcoming VCAB meeting on April 6th. We would appreciate the opportunity to offer additional input to your Committee should there be additional recommendations from VCAB following our meeting.

We have been impressed with the range of testimony you have heard as you consider this important piece of legislation, and we appreciate your consideration of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Borden', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Sally Borden, M.Ed.

VCAB Co-Chair

Sallyb@kidsafevt.org

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Metz', written over a light blue horizontal line.

James Metz, MD

VCAB Co-Chair

james.metz@uvmhealth.org