Written by Kearns & Kearns
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West Hartford, Connecticut, June, 2011 – Attorney Jay Kearns has been appointed by the Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to serve as a member of the state's independent Division of Autism Spectrum Services Advisory Council (DASSAC).

The mission of DASSAC is to advise the Division of Autism Spectrum Services (DASS) and Commissioner of DDS regarding the research, design and implementation of the delivery of appropriate and necessary services and programs for all residents of Connecticut with autism spectrum disorders.

DASSAC also submits reports to the Commissioner, Governor and General Assembly with regard to legislative and funding requirements for these services.

Within the Advisory Council, Kearns also serves on its Bylaws/Governance Committee.

"Autism Spectrum Disorders are an urgent public health concern," says Kearns, echoing the findings of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "An average of 1 in 110 children have an ASD, and, for unclear reasons, the odds are growing even higher. Families are hit hard by it. Parents need early intervention programs and ongoing therapies for their child. And what happens when these kids aren't kids anymore? Certain assistance programs need to be in place for these individuals to ensure they are productive, contributing members of society. It's imperative that Connecticut be prepared to serve the needs of this diverse and exploding population – not just today, but for all our residents in the future."

This independent, all-volunteer Advisory Council is comprised of representatives from Connecticut's Departments of Developmental Services, Children and Families, Public Health, Education, Mental Health and Addiction Services, as well as the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Office of Policy and Management, the Connecticut General Assembly, and organizations that provide services to adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) or their families. DASSAC also relies on expert resources from The Office of Workforce Competitiveness, Department of Social Services, Department of Labor, Office of Protection and Advocacy, and The Commissioner of Higher Education.

To ensure fair and accurate representation of the needs of individuals with ASD, at least 51% of DASSAC members are parents, guardians or relatives of a person who has ASD or themselves a person who has ASD.

Councilmembers are appointed to serve a two-year term without compensation.

“I am honored and eager to serve on the Advisory Council,” enthuses Kearns. “In my private legal practice, my job is to improve the lives of my clients with special needs. This appointment gives me a unique opportunity to do that for the entire state of Connecticut.”