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## **Connecticut Passes Crucial ID Bill for Youth Experiencing Homelessness**

Housing advocates are celebrating passage of Connecticut House Bill 6666, which includes a crucial provision that allows youth experiencing homelessness to obtain a copy of their birth certificate and state ID at no cost.

“This bill is a vital step toward ensuring access to housing for our youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness and housing instability,” said Kiley Gosselin, Executive Director of the Partnership for Strong Communities.

Many unaccompanied minors and young adults experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless do not have access to identity documents, which can be a significant barrier to accessing housing. According to the 2020 Youth Outreach and Count Report, last year an estimated 7,800 Connecticut youth and young adults experienced homelessness and housing instability.

Identity documents are often required as a precondition for employment. Approximately 58% of homeless and housing-unstable youth and young adults reported being unemployed in 2020. By passing this important bill, Connecticut joins Florida, Texas, and California in providing fee waivers for youth experiencing homelessness.

Connecticut-based advocacy groups and youth leaders with lived experience have consistently called attention to the need for access to identity documents over the past few years. The Youth Action Hub and the Center for Children's Advocacy have led the advocacy movement through the Reaching Home Campaign, a coalition of over 200 partners dedicated to ending homelessness in Connecticut.

“Young people told us what they need to move out of homelessness. We advocated for their needs, the state agencies responded positively, and we were able to bring it to the finish line,” said Stacey Violante Cote, Director of Operations for the Center for Children's Advocacy. “Once signed by the Governor, this new legislation will allow young people experiencing homelessness to get faster access to housing, employment and support services.”