

January 20, 2005

The Honorable Martha Grace, Chief Justice
Administrative Office of the Juvenile Court
Three Center Plaza, Suite 520
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Judge Grace:

First, I want to say thank you to everyone who attended our "kick-off" meeting on CHINS reform in November. It was a very productive meeting and I believe we are off to a great start. It is also a great demonstration of the importance and delicacy of the issue and how critical it is to involve the stakeholders as we proceed.

At the meeting in November we discussed having a full day working "retreat." This retreat will give us the opportunity to hear from our peers from other states who have worked through reforming their systems, as well as, work with the Vera Institute to move forward in the process, begin discussing possible changes and identifying the best practices that currently exist. **I invite you to join me for this "retreat" on February 6, 2006, 8:30am-5pm at the Boston Foundation [75 Arlington St., 10th Fl., South Boston Conference Room].** We will be providing coffee and lunch.

As we learned in November, it is imperative that all the stakeholders in the CHINS system be represented as we move forward. The expertise you have gained from your previous work and advocacy around this system is invaluable. I am looking forward to a very productive day and hope that you can be there.

Please know that space is limited, so registration is required. Please RSVP with contact information to Jill VandenBosch, jill.vandenbosch@state.ma.us, on my staff and feel free to call with any questions you may have. I look forward to working with you and seeing you on February 6th.

Sincerely,

Senator Karen E. Spilka
Chair, Joint Committee on Children and Families