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HB 7344 AN ACT CONCERNING RECRUITMENT
OF TEACHERS

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.

My name is Regina Terrell, and I serve as the Managing Director of Human Resources at the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), which represents the 35 school districts in the capitol region. I am testifying today on House Bill 7344, An Act Concerning Recruitment and Retention of Teachers.

There are a number of factors that contribute to the shortfall of qualified minority teachers. Comparatively low salaries, crowded classrooms, and students' lack of respect for teachers can discourage both minority and white teachers alike from the teaching profession. Teachers, especially in urban areas often contend with the lowest student achievement levels, the highest dropout rates, the lowest amount of teacher resources, the highest number of discipline problems, and the lowest levels of teacher control over curricular decisions.

For HR professionals, this is a challenge because the result is a very small pool of qualified candidates from which to draw from and school districts competing against one another to attract qualified candidates. It is our role to meet the needs of our school districts by recruiting the best of the best and retaining those in our employ, especially minority teachers. In order to make this happen, it will take funding.

The Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruiting Alliance has developed comprehensive strategies to help reverse this trend. Many of these strategies were derived from the Developing a Diverse Teaching Force in Connecticut Minority Teacher Recruiting Symposium, coordinated and funded by the members of the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance. Unfortunately, funding for the RESC Minority Teacher Recruiting (MTR) Program has declined from \$210,000 in the year 2000 to no funding for the past four years.

I implore you to reinstate the funding for the RESC MTR program so that we may help ensure a legacy of racial and cultural literacy that will impact the academic, social and economic success of our children and their families through the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony and thank you for opportunity to speak before the committee.