



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*



EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
February 29, 2008

**TESTIMONY OF  
MARK K. MCQUILLAN, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**

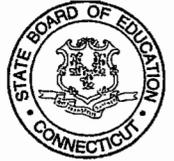
**ON  
RAISED BILL 435  
AN ACT CONCERNING COMPETITIVE SCHOOL READINESS GRANTS**

The Department of Education administers a competitive grant program to provide spaces in school readiness programs for eligible children who reside in areas served by priority schools or certain former priority schools and in the 50 lowest wealth rank towns. Grants awarded pursuant to this program are in the amount of \$107,000, except that if there are unused funds, the Commissioner of Education may provide grants in excess of \$107,000 to towns with two or more priority schools. Raised Bill 435 proposes to allow the Commissioner of Education, when there are unused funds, to provide competitive school readiness grants in excess of \$107,000 to all towns that are eligible for competitive school readiness grants, and not just to towns with two or more priority schools.

Since there have been some years in which appropriated funds are not expended because there is no additional capacity in those towns with two or more priority schools, the Department of Education supports this bill as it will result in more children having access to school readiness services.



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**ON  
RAISED BILL 402**

**AN ACT CONCERNING AUTHORIZATION OF STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR  
SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS AND CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE  
STATUTES CONCERNING SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

Raised Bill 402 contains the school construction priority list that the Department of Education submits annually to the General Assembly for approval. The Department of Education supports this bill, but notes that a few minor edits are necessary.