



**State of Connecticut**  
**Latino and Puerto Rican**  
**Affairs Commission**

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Testimony of Werner Oyanadel  
Before the Human Services Committee  
Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008

10:30 A.M. – Room 2A of the LOB

In support of Raised S.B. No. 660, & Raised S.B. 666

Good morning State Senator Harris, State Representative Villano and members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Werner Oyanadel, Principal Legislative Analyst for the *Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission* (LPRAC). I am here to speak on behalf of the LPRAC in support of S.B. No. 660, “An Act Concerning Establishment of a Food Stamp Employment and Training Program”, and S.B. No. 666 “An Act Concerning the Reduction of Child Poverty.”

Raised Senate Bill No. 660 would establish the Food Stamp Employment & Training Program (FSE&T) at the helm of the Department of Social Services in consultation with the *Child Poverty and Prevention Council*. The FSE&T, according to Mr. Jeffrey Jablow, a nationally recognized expert on this issue, was created as a result of the federal Food Security Act of 1985, which was later amended by the Farm Bill in 2002. It was created to help food stamp recipients increase their ability to obtain regular employment. The FSE&T would be paid by a cost reimbursement program that may include direct or indirect costs for education, training, job placement, case management as well as for administrative costs. The LPRAC supports this endeavor as it may promote economic self-sufficiency for low-income working families and reduce the state’s Latino population living below the poverty level, which based on the latest information, is at 24%.

The LPRAC is also speaking in support of Raised Bill No. 666, which seeks to implement programs that aim at reducing child poverty in Connecticut based on the recommendations of the *Child Poverty and Prevention Council* (Public Act 06-179). The child poverty rate is reported to be at 10.4 percent from data released by the Commission on Children in 2007. Latino and African-American children in Connecticut, based on the same report, were seven times more likely to live in poverty. It is within this context that the LPRAC supports state investments, such as the recommendations provided by Raised Bill No. 666, which in our opinion could help realize the state’s ten-year goal of reducing child poverty by fifty percent.

The LPRAC was created by the Legislature of the State of Connecticut through Public Act No. 94-152, taking effect February 1, 1995. LPRAC is part of the Legislative Branch and governed by Section 2-120 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The LPRAC is mandated to review and comment on any proposed state legislation that would affect the Latino population in the state.