

**Testimony from  
Dr. Timothy Black, director, and  
Dr. Marcia Hughes, assistant director  
of the Center for Social Research at the University of Hartford**

**to the  
Human Service Committee  
regarding Bill No. 666  
An Act Concerning the Reduction of Child Poverty**

Good afternoon, I am Marcia Hughes, the assistant director of the Center for Social Research at the University of Hartford, where I work with Tim Black, the Center's director. Our testimony this afternoon will focus on our research concerning fathers of vulnerable first-time mothers participating in the state's Nurturing Families Network Program, managed by the Children's Trust Fund, as well as research we conducted on non-custodial fathers involved in the Department of Social Services' Fatherhood Initiative Program.

The Center has researched home visitation in Connecticut for the past 13 years. The Nurturing Families Network program reaches the most vulnerable first-time mothers in the state and offers intensive home visitation to members of these households to strengthen parenting, connect household members to state and community services, and reduce the prospects for child maltreatment. Unfortunately, fathers often exist in the shadows of these programs. Mothers and children are the focus and home visitors are women.

At program entry or around the time of the child's birth in 2006, fathers were racially and ethnically mixed (with about one-half Latino); around one-half had completed high school or its equivalent; 60% were working (39% full time); 44% had arrest histories; 11% were currently incarcerated; 10% married; about 1/3 had no relationship with the mother while another 1/3 lived in the home, and 70% were considered to be at least somewhat involved with child.