

February 18, 2009

Dear Legislators,

The Commission on Children, under the direction of Elaine Zimmerman, has been a vital force in the improvement of reading instruction for Hartford student and students all over this state. We have had first hand experience with the work of this commission on the behalf of children. We can not afford to lose this agency which is focused on closing the achievement gap and health gap between rich and poor in our state. We still have the largest academic achievement gap in the country in reading. Recent accomplishments supported by the work of Elaine Zimmerman include the reading test for new teachers.

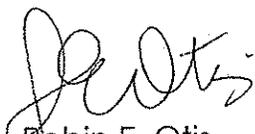
According to the initial report in the Hartford Courant on cuts in state government, the Commission on Children generates enough grant money to support its own work. Therefore, it is really surprising that it would be on the chopping block. This agency supports poverty reduction in every way it affects children. It speaks up for parents as partners in public policy. We know without the work of the Commission on Children, there would fewer children reading at grade level at Rawson Elementary School and Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School where we teach. The support of the Commission to promote the Early Reading Success legislation and the work of the Haskins Literacy Initiative resulted in funding by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to support schools in Hartford to improve early reading instruction.

The Commission on Children brings together the people needed to make things happen for *all* children. Without it, our future is in jeopardy.

Sincerely,



Linda Liss-Bronstein
Reading Specialist – Hartford Public Schools
32 Harwich Lane, West Hartford



Robin E. Otis
Reading Specialist – Hartford Public Schools
150 Nott Street, Wethersfield