

Letter presented to the Government Administration and Elections Committee

Bill No. 839 An Act Concerning Mergers and Consolidations of various state agencies.

March 16, 2009

Government Administration and Elections Committee
Room 2200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Co-Chairs Slossberg and Spallone and Members of the Government and Administration Committee,

Thank you respected members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee for the opportunity to present this letter on Governor Rell's proposed Fiscal Year 2009 State Budget. I represent a Nurturing Families Network site, which represents the interests of children and families for the prevention of child abuse. The Nurturing Families Network (NFN) affords families the opportunity to explore their roles as nurturing parents through home visiting, group participation and telephone based support. This is a research based program, demonstrating a significant reduction in child abuse and neglect throughout the state of Connecticut. Increases in successful employment and education are evident among families participating in NFN. The family dynamics and positive parenting are strengthened with each milestone a family reaches in the program. Operating in twenty-nine (29) birth hospitals and in forty-two (42) locations throughout the state, the Nurturing Families Network provides more than fifteen-hundred (1500) home visits each year. This program is proven highly successful at achieving its goals and the impact on families is very empowering.

As you are aware, oversight of the Nurturing Families Network is provided by the CT Children's Trust Fund (CTF). Within this oversight are a number of beneficial components which emphasize the success of the Nurturing Families Program. Within the model of the program exists the Continuous Quality Improvement Team (CQI), a team of CTF staff and Nurturing Families Network staff from every level position (home visitors, program managers, clinical supervisors). The CQI Team has been instrumental in developing a policy manual that all NFN sites administer in their organizations so that the NFN program is delivered to families in a qualitative and uniformed nurturing manner. In addition to the CQI Team are the Network Meetings during which the Technical Assistance Leaders at Children's Trust Fund bring the networks together to support the program and to ensure the uniformity of the ideals of the program. This meeting is well received and often looked upon as an opportunity for NFN staff to share program ideas and generate support for one another and the families we serve. As aforementioned, research is a strong component to the NFN program. The collection of research data and the completion of program outcomes and reporting have demonstrated the need for the

program throughout the state of CT and the impact of the program at reducing child abuse and neglect in our state. These numbers highlight the success of the program and the importance of this component when delivering this program to families. Families report feeling safe with their home visitor and comfortable building their positive parenting skills participating in a nurturing family program.

I fully support the continuity of the Nurturing Families Network Program under the direction of the Children's Trust Fund. Each year, families participating in the Nurturing Families Program send letters to their Legislators. As you receive letters from the families participating in the Nurturing Families Program please note that each letter is individually written and spoken from the perspective of a nurturing parent. Each letter you read is beautifully written and truly demonstrates the impact that this unique program has upon families in Connecticut.

Once again, thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this letter of support for this tremendous program. I fully support the prevention of child abuse and neglect in our community and families rely upon such programs to offer enjoyable prevention services.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Tuttle, M.Ed.