

Darlene C. Ragozzine Testimony for Human Services Committee, February 5, 2009
RB No 5841 An Act Concerning Uniform Reporting for Preschool and Child Care Programs
RB NO 5426 An Act Concerning Child Care Child Care Subsidies for the Unemployed Under
the Care 4 Kids Program



5841
5426

To: The Honorable Paul Doyle, Senate Chair
The Honorable Toni Walker, House Chair
Members of the Human Services Committee

From: Darlene C. Ragozzine, Executive Director, and Connecticut Charters-A-Course

Re: ***Raised Bill No 5841 An Act Concerning A Uniform Reporting Form For Preschool
and Child Care Programs***
***Raised Bill No5426 An Act Concerning Child Care Subsidies for the Unemployed
Under the Care 4 Kids Program***

Date: February 5, 2009

Senator Doyle, Representative Walker and Members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Darlene Ragozzine and I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and to offer you comments regarding ***Raised Bill No 5841 An Act Concerning A Uniform Reporting Form For Preschool and Child Care Programs and Raised Bill No5426 An Act Concerning Child Care Subsidies for the Unemployed under the Care 4 Kids Program.***

I would like to take most of my time today to speak in support of ***An Act Concerning A Uniform Reporting Form for Preschool and Child Care Programs.***

As Executive Director of ***CT Charters-A-Course (CCAC), the state's career development, Registry and program improvement system for early care and education,*** I support the intent and purpose of this bill, as it clearly will help to consolidate many of the required reports that publicly funded preschool program administrators must now submit to multiple state funding

agencies. Currently, DSS, SDE, HS and DPH¹ all have different systems of reporting their requirements.

Over the past year, the CCAC Registry has captured funding information on all of CT's DSS and SDE publicly funded child care and preschool programs, as well as most of the state's larger Head Start programs. We have asked these programs to indicate their sources of funding. **Our data shows that 53% of the DSS centers, 19% of School Readiness and 81% of Head Start are multi-funded, this means that their funding is a combination of DSS, SDE and State and Federal Head Start.**² Currently, programs administrators must report out program and staff information using a variety of systems and tools in order to meet the current requirements of state law. These result in administrative time spent on duplicative reporting to the various agencies. A more uniform, streamlined and consolidated approach would release program administrators from reporting tasks and allow them to re-direct this time to program quality issues.

In addition, I would respectively like to submit some other **No Cost Actions**, which if incorporated into this bill would result in further streamlining of reporting across sectors, program efficiencies and a more widely used systems approach:

1. SDE should make an immediate change in policy as a result of the Accreditation Crosswalk Project work, which recommended reducing the number of accreditation/ approval systems used by SDE from 5 to 2, therefore scaling down the time and paper work associated with multiple approval systems.

¹ Department of Social Services (DSS) State Department of Education (SDE) Head Start (HS) Department of Public Health (DPH)

² February 2009 CT Charts-A-Course Registry data on program funding.

2. Assess the necessity for yearly mandated repetitive professional development training requirements (same topics each year) and reporting of such training for School Readiness Programs, therefore reducing the time and energy involved in the documentation of this training by School Readiness programs.
3. Explore regional coordination of professional development training with already established systems; such as the 5 Regional Accreditation Facilitation Projects the RESCs and other training organizations in order to reduce duplication and gain efficiencies.
4. Agree on one assessment: what do we really want to know about program quality and student outcomes (children). Use the EC Cabinet Accountability committee or other existing state-wide groups to come to some immediate decision about common standards and indicators across sectors and a subsequent common metric and instruments to measure them , until such time that the state is able to fully execute and fund a QRIS system.
5. Establish the CCAC Registry as the depository for all information of staff working in publicly funded programs. Reports generated from the Registry could then be used for universal reporting of staff qualifications as it relates to program quality.

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Care 4 Kids Program.*

Very briefly, I also lend my support to this bill. There will other today who will speak in more detail regarding the importance of passing it. Many will you tell you that the Care 4 Kids Child Care Subsidies Program is a critical component of the funding of child care programs in our state. Just linking it to welfare families is a short-sighted approach. Many of our DSS programs serve children from low income working families who are struggling in this down turned economy because parents have lost their jobs. The Governor's budget released yesterday level funded the Child Care Services line item in 2009 -10 and decreased it by 8 million in 2010-11. I would ask that during the difficult budget negotiations that loom ahead, you pay particular attention to the needs of the unemployed working families of our state by passing this bill.

Multiple funding for EC programs

