

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee
December 9, 2009

My name is Karen Edelson. I am the Executive Director of the Town of Enfield Child Development Center. I am submitting testimony today to express my extreme concern about all of the proposed cuts by Governor Rell that will impact Early Childhood programs. In particular, I would like to address the \$3,970,275 reduction in funding for State Funded Centers found within the proposed line item entitled "Reduce Non-Entitlement Grant Accounts by 25%."

My child care center is a Department of Social Services State Funded Center. We have been funded by the Department of Social Services for over forty years. We are a NAEYC accredited center which has been accredited since October of 1999. I presently have 112 families who utilize our services between two sites. This proposed cut would not only force 121 children from my program, it puts the entire center at risk, as we are a non-profit organization that relies heavily on this funding, around \$683,000 per year, along with private paying parents and funds from School Readiness. Simply put, my Center would have to close and leave 225 children without a place for a quality, early childhood experience, which then would force 180 parents to lose their jobs.

Throughout my experience as Director of a State funded center, I have seen the benefits of having affordable, quality child care available to many single parents and low income families. There are many success stories, but one most recently comes to mind, of a single mother, who had two preschool children and was working part time at a donut shop and putting herself through nursing school. She was paying the minimal amount at that time, around \$18.00 for both children. Now, four years later, she has received her degree, got a nursing job, is making around \$60,000 and now is paying full fee for her children. Had she not had the services of a state funded center, she probably would have had to go on welfare and never have had the opportunity to go to school and receive an education. As I mentioned, she is just one of many similar stories that have happened at my center as well as many other state funded centers.

The most valuable resource we have for the future is our children. An Early Childhood Education and experience is a critical component of the future success of all children.

Respectfully Submitted,



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