



Committee Bill N. 5144-An Act concerning an appropriation to expand the Nurturing Families Network

My name is Billie Terry and I have been involved in the Nurturing Families Network program since I was five months pregnant with my daughter, Shyann. Shyann is now two years old. My home visitor, Milvia has been coming to see me since I enrolled in the program. My home visitor comes to see me on a weekly basis, but is flexible with my busy schedule since I am back in school and also working.

During our visits Milvia brings out activities that help my daughter's gross motor development. Milvia also brings out the Ages and Stages which looks at how my daughter is developing. I find the curriculum really helpful because it covers topics such as, discipline, common behavior for toddlers, safety, child development and bonding.

The program also has a group available to parents, which is called The Parent's Café. I really like this group because it covers topics such as Budgeting, Potty Training and Discipline. The best part about this group is that I get to meet other parents going through similar experiences as me. I have become friends with some of the other moms in the groups. This group helps me to see that I am not alone in what I am going through.

In addition, Nurturing Families has connected me with other resources in the community that assist me with my needs. The program provides a food pantry if I need assistance with groceries and also food around the time of the holidays. At Christmas the program provides gifts through the holiday giving tree, which helps me a lot because I am a single

parent. The program has really fun activities such as a summer picnic, pictures with Santa at Christmas, pictures with the Easter Bunny and last summer we got to go to the Children's Museum where both my daughter and I had so much fun. This was an experience that I would not have been able to do because of money if it weren't for the program.

The best part about the program is the strong relationship that I have with my worker and the other NFN family staff. She provides so much emotional support for me when I'm feeling down and like giving up. Through setting goals, she's encouraged me to go back to school and work. I think it's a really good thing to expand the program to all parents regardless of if they are a first time parent. As a single parent I know first hand how difficult it is to raise a child. I know my life would be a lot different if this program had not come into my life.

I think if Children's Trust Fund is eliminated some parents may not want the services because they will be afraid about DCF getting involved in their lives. Children's Trust Fund had made Nurturing Families what it is and how successful the program is at helping families. Thank you for your time and consideration in this bill to expand Nurturing Families to all families.