



National Council of Jewish Women

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Dear Co-Chairs Musto and Urban, Vice Chairs Meyer and Jarmoc, Ranking Members Boucher and Hovey, and other members of the Select Committee on Children:

My name is Audra Weisel and I represent the 4 sections of National Council of Jewish Women, CT as their State Public Affairs Chair. I would like to speak in support of Raised Bill 5360, *An Act Concerning Children in the Recession*.

NCJW believes that a democratic society must fulfill its obligation to provide for the needs of those unable to provide for themselves. As such, NCJW has, through the years, worked on behalf of public policies that address the needs of low-income and working Americans. While the American Dream promises economic opportunity and hope for a better future, many people in this country face a very different reality. In the United States, poverty -- not prosperity -- is the reality for millions of individuals and families who daily make difficult choices between food, rent, medical bills, and other basic expenses. Though their faces and stories are often unknown, millions in this country go without food because they cannot afford it.

NCJW's Greater Hartford Section is in the process of creating a "Teen Iron Chef Program" which would specifically target teen-aged children in West Hartford who qualify to receive summer food. This program is being designed to teach these teens life-long lessons about the food they are receiving from the Food Bank and how to make safe, sanitary, nutritious, healthy, and interesting meals for their families. It is our hope that with your support of RB 5360 and the establishment of outreach programs for Child Nutrition within the CT State Department of Education that there would be more awareness of, access to, and participation in such crucial programs as school breakfast, summer food, after school snacks, and daycare/childcare meals.

NCJW supports laws, policies, and programs that provide a level of services and

income that meet basic human needs while encouraging self-sufficiency. RB 5360 reflects the values and priorities of our state by prioritizing domestic concerns, like the unmet needs of low-income working families, public schools, and health for the growing number of individuals who have no access.

Thank you for your consideration.

The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) is a volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works to improve the quality of life for women, children, and families and to ensure individual rights and freedoms for all through its network of 90,000 members, supporters, and volunteers nationwide.