

NEW HAVEN EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL

...creating universal access to affordable, quality early care and education

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 264

Monday, March 1, 2010

Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Denise Duclos and I am the New Haven School Readiness Project Director. I am here to represent the New Haven Early Childhood Council in our support of SB 264 AN ACT PROHIBITING SMOKING IN LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES.

The intent of this bill is to further protect the children in licensed child care centers, group day care homes and family child care homes from the health risks associated with second hand smoke.

The current licensing regulations do not go far enough to protect our youngest children in group care. The Department of Public Health's Day Care Licensing regulations now allow child care centers and group day care homes to designate areas—both inside and outdoors as smoking areas. For licensed family day care homes, providers may smoke as long as they are not in physical contact with the infants, toddlers and young children in their care. Given all we know about the risks associated with second hand smoke, these regulations are inadequate. Second hand smoke does not stay in "Designated Smoking Areas". I have been to day care centers where I can see and smell the cigarette smoke of those puffing away outside the classroom window. Imagine the impact that has on the tiny lungs of an infant, toddler or young child!

SB 264 will prohibit smoking in, or on the grounds of, a child care center or group day care home. For family day care homes, it will prohibit smoking in the home, or on the grounds of the home, during the "customary business hours".

I urge you to vote to pass this bill and further protect our children from this preventable danger.

Thank you for your consideration.

Denise Duclos

New Haven Early Childhood Council
c/o School Readiness Office, 3rd floor
54 Meadow Street, New Haven, CT 06519
Phone:203.946.7874 fax:203.946.2297