

3 SL P98 Line 10

Testimony of Ahysa Baez
Waterbury High School Graduate
Supporting Raised Senate Bill 1195
Submitted to the Legislative Appropriations Committee
March 24, 2011

Good Evening Honorable Chair Toni Harp, Honorable Chair Toni Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Ahysa Baez and I am from Waterbury, Connecticut. I received my high school diploma from Crosby High School and this summer I will attend Naugatuck Community College. I plan to study Hospitality and I would like to become a chef. One day I hope to own my own restaurant in Waterbury. I am here to testify in support of Raised Senate Bill 1195, An Act Concerning School Finance.

I was born in Puerto Rico and moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut when I was in elementary school. Elementary and middle school were very difficult for me because, as an ESL student, I was constantly pulled out of my lessons to practice my English. By the time I got to high school, I realized that I was very behind. It would have been nice if my school had extra staff or an after-school program to help me with my English instead of taking me out of class.

No one ever asks students how we should spend funds for education. The only field trip that I ever went on was to Nature's Classroom in Connecticut. Kids in Hartford are able to go to Washington D.C. I think we should make sure that all students have experiences outside of Connecticut. Also, I believe we should have more college prep classes. After graduating from high school, I did not feel prepared for college. I loved my teachers, but they were making due with the little resources they had.

When I found out that Bridgeport students and Waterbury students received less funding than other districts I was angry. All kids are made equal, and although you can't put a price tag on kids, you can put one on their education. My price tag says that I am not worth as much as kids in New Haven and Greenwich. Is that the message you want to send kids in Connecticut?

It's time to fund students fairly no matter where they're from, and we really need to make sure our black and Latino students don't fall further behind. Although this bill does not affect me directly, I care about all students in Connecticut and everyone should be able to attend a great public school. Please pass Senate Bill 1195 so that all students can get the education they deserve.