

**TESTIMONY OF CARMEN GIBSON  
TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 6325,  
AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE REENTRY AND EDUCATION**

February 23, 2011

My name is Carmen Gibson and I support Raised Bill No. 6325, *An Act Concerning Juvenile Reentry and Education*. Based on my experience, I believe that **this bill is important to ensure that students are not discouraged from continuing high school.**

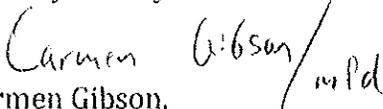
I am a junior at Hartford High School. When I was in tenth grade, I went to placement at the Touchstone Program in Litchfield, Connecticut for one year. While at Touchstone, I attended school there and excelled in all of my classes. The curriculum was challenging, and seemed to pick up where my old school had left off. In the year I spent there, I received full credit in all of my classes, completing my eleventh grade year. When I entered Hartford High School this fall, however, I was told that my credits from Touchstone would not be counted, and I would have to repeat the eleventh grade. Additionally, it took several weeks for me to get the services I was supposed to receive because Hartford High told me that they did not have my records from Touchstone.

When I was told that I would have to stay back a year, I was both angry and upset. I had worked so hard at Touchstone, and I couldn't understand why my high school was completely ignoring all of that hard work. **I did better academically at Touchstone than I ever had in my entire life, yet my new school refused to acknowledge my improvements.**

Despite getting no credit for my work at Touchstone, I tried to make the best of the situation by repeating the eleventh grade at Hartford High School, so that I could eventually graduate. I have to say, though, that repeating this year has not been easy for me. It has been very difficult to find my place in a different age group of students. Because of that, school has been a very negative experience for me since I returned from Touchstone. I often find that when I wake up in the morning I get a lump in my stomach because of going to school. I never got those feelings before having to stay back. I used to enjoy learning and going to school and I hope that sometime in the near future I start to enjoy it again. School is so bad for me right now that I have considered dropping out on a number of occasions. So far, however, with my family and friends' support, I have been able to push myself to stay in school. **I am working really hard to continue my education, but I understand why some students would be so frustrated that they would leave school.**

I fully support Raised Bill No. 6325, *An Act Concerning Juvenile Reentry and Education*, because this bill will make sure that credits earned by students like me in placement are counted when they return home. I hope that you understand **how important it is to help students like me continue our educations and stay in school.**

Thank you for your time.

  
Carmen Gibson.

c/o Liz Reid  
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