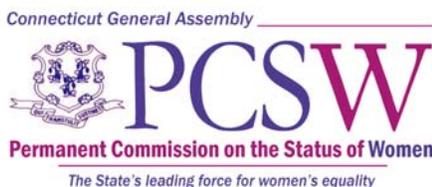


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**Testimony of  
 The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women  
 Before the  
 Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee  
 February 16, 2011**

**RE: S.B. 927, AAC Requirements for Early Childhood Educators**

Senators Bye and Boucher, Representatives Willis and LeGeyt, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in response to the introduction of S.B. 927, AAC Requirements for Early Childhood Educators, which would revise staff qualifications for state-funded preschool programs and direct the Commissioner of Education to use unexpended funds to provide professional development.

Passage of this bill would affect 7,710 early childhood educators in Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> This bill requires that early childhood educators obtain:

1. A CDA with 12 early childhood education (ECE), an associates degree with 12 ECE credits, or a bachelor's degree in ECE by 2015;
2. An associates or a bachelors degree in ECE after 2015; and
3. A bachelor's degree in ECE by 2020.

According to CT Charts-A-Course, in 2009 the majority of existing early childhood educators held the following credentials (there was no substantial change from 2008): <sup>2</sup>

<b>Credentials Held</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Gap to Fill</b>	<b>Assistant Teachers</b>	<b>Gap to Fill</b>
CDA and 12 ECE credits	82%	18%	33%	67%
Associates degree or higher	60%	40%	16%	84%

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut Department of Labor, Labor Market Research Information, Child Care Workers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Connecticut Charts-A-Course. *Program Report Card*, February 2010.

If the state expects to retain or obtain a credentialed workforce, it must provide dedicated funding for professional development, rather than rely on the possibility of the use of unexpended funds. The childcare field is a low-paying female dominated occupation. The average wage for a childcare worker in Connecticut is \$11.43 an hour,<sup>3</sup> which is \$23,500 a year for a 40 hour work week. It is unlikely that existing childcare workers will be able to afford to obtain a CDA, associates degree or bachelor's degree on these wages.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and looking forward to working with you on this important issue.

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<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1.