



**Select Committee on Children
Public Hearing - February 22, 2011**

**Testimony Presented by United Way of Connecticut
on
S.B. 983 An Act Concerning Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism**

My name is Richard Porth. I serve as the CEO of United Way of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of S.B. 983, AAC Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism.

United Way of Connecticut (UWC) helps meet the needs of Connecticut residents by providing information, education, and connection to health and human services. We have been partners with the State of Connecticut for many years; and we are proud of our service together with the state government to tens of thousands of Connecticut residents through 2-1-1 services, 2-1-1 Child Care services, HUSKY Infoline, Child Development Infoline, and Care 4 Kids. UWC's 2-1-1 Child Care assists parents and child care providers by providing information and referrals for child care options and by maintaining a database of all licensed and license-exempt programs in Connecticut.

Recently, 2-1-1 Child Care has been working with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Social Services, the Connecticut Commission on Children, the Department of Public Health, and Save the Children to develop an emergency response plan for young children and child care facilities across the state. This project, funded with federal stimulus money, is making good progress. One component of the plan would establish 2-1-1 Child Care as the communication hub for information exchange for child care providers and parents of enrolled children in the event of an emergency.

S.B. 983, AAC Children Affected by Disaster and Terrorism will help to sustain this important disaster planning effort for young children after the initial plan is completed in DEMHS, as part of its larger disaster preparedness and response efforts on behalf of all the residents of Connecticut.

United Way of Connecticut/2-1-1 Child Care supports the strategy outlined in S.B. 983 and looks forward to working with DEMHS and other state leaders to protect Connecticut's young children in the event of disasters or emergencies.

Thank you.