

February 19, 2013

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and the Members of the Appropriations Committee:

I am happy to have the opportunity to identify for you some of the many ways the Commission on Children has left lasting change in communities across our state. My work coordinating the Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs in Connecticut dovetails beautifully with the Commission's school readiness and parent engagement work.

Parents as Teachers is a nationally recognized home visitation program that has been embraced by the State Department of Education and nurtured through over 100 Connecticut PAT programs - Family Resource Centers, Nurturing Families Networks, Early Head Starts and others. The Commission has been the prime catalyst in systems innovation in our home visitation system. The Commission led a workgroup of home visitation providers and leaders through a process of examining best practices, exploring quality standards, and identifying measurable outcomes as a way to build a better coordinated system for home visitation in our state.

The Commission is a visionary partner in creating children's policy and refining the service delivery systems that serve children and families. The linkages that have been created across and between service providers have been critical in developing the trusting relationships necessary for honest program assessment and system transformation.

I've seen the work of the Commission first hand and want to commend the staff for their willingness to go the extra mile. The Commission's work in the national forefront of home visitation helped guide the work here in Connecticut. Having access through the Commission to national experts was instrumental in the highly successful forum on home visitation that was hosted at the LOB last spring.

The home visitation work is on-going but we are now in the process of formulating a comprehensive bill to reform home visitation practice on Connecticut. The support of the Commission on Children was instrumental in this effort. In recognition of this support ConnPAT will be awarding Elaine Zimmerman the 2013 ConnPAT Champion of the Year award. You should take great pride in how well the Commission represents the Legislative Branch in its work.

Sincerely,

Pam Langer, State Leader

ConnPAT (CT State Office of PAT)