

MARCIA A. LECLERC
MAYOR

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

740 Main Street
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108

Phone: 860.291.7324
Fax: 860.291.7326

www.easthartfordct.gov

HEALTH
DEPARTMENT



Hon. Toni Harp
Hon. Toni Walker
Co-Chairs
Appropriations Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
State of Connecticut
Room 2700 Legislative Office Building
Hartford CT
06106

20 MAR 13

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Walker,

Regarding Section 90 of House Bill 6354, "An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations", I implore that you to reject the consolidation of the five legislative commissions and allow the Connecticut Commission on Children to remain a stand-alone entity.

The latter commission comprises the General Assembly's battery of resident experts and advisors, they bridge and coordinate the child welfare efforts of the three branches of government on both the state and local level, they recruit the assistance of the corporate and non-profit sectors and they generate private philanthropic funding for children's health and education programs

I am writing to you as one of Connecticut's former regional directors of the USDA-funded Women, Infant and Children's Nutrition Program (WIC), as Director of Health and Social Services for the Town of East Hartford, as the former chairman of the Office of the State Child Advocate Advisory Committee and as a twelve-year member of the Connecticut Commission on Children. The latter commission is viewed as the most effective agency of its kind in the United States.

In my foregoing service capacities, I have borne witness to and participated in the development of children's policy at the highest echelons of state government and I have also carried-out and observed the implementation of scores of the profoundly effective Commission on Children-promulgated programs within the community I serve. They have included child immunizations, child obesity prevention, fatherhood, parenting, home visitation, civic involvement, positive youth development, school readiness, reading, bullying prevention, disaster planning and mitigation, pediatric mental health, child poverty reduction, the maximization of federal program benefits such as SNAP, the expansion of school-based health centers and the concept of a medical home.

I won't go into an extended litany of our manifold accomplishments however I can unabashedly say that most of our work is done on someone else's nickel. We are an exemplar of results-based accountability. We have brought in \$1.45 with every dollar expended from our state budget appropriation during the past 2 years. All of the foregoing funds from the corporate sector, non-profit organizations and the philanthropic agencies have gone directly to programs and services - not staff or administrative overhead. The Commission's annual state appropriation and staff have been greatly diminished since SFY 2009, yet we are still providing a huge bang for the buck through our partnerships with non-governmental, business and non-profit agencies.

The good work of the commission is preventive in nature and benefits children of all lineages and cultures. I would also note that in addition to our humanitarian missions, nurturing the optimal physical, emotional and intellectual development of our children yields the enormous societal benefit of future workforce development. Much of the agency's energy is directed toward leveling the playing field for children of lesser means to ensure that **all** of Connecticut's sons and daughters lead happy, healthy and productive lives.

Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

LTC James P. Cordier, MPH, RS
Director of Health and Social Services
Town of East Hartford
740 Main St.
East Hartford CT
06108
860-291-7321 jcordier@easthartfordct.gov