

Testimony in support of the Connecticut Commission on Children

I am the president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, an organization of over 800 pediatricians with the mission to improve optimal physical, mental, social health and well being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults in Connecticut. I am writing today in support of the Connecticut Commission on Children.

Since its establishment in 1985 the Connecticut Commission on Children (COC) has been an important voice advocating for public policy in the best interest of the children of Connecticut. The record clearly shows that the effectiveness of the commission far outweighs the small investment of tax dollars.

Pediatricians see the positive effect of COC's programs, research and model policy every day. This work touches the lives of all our patients and their families in some way. The Zero to Three Home Visitation initiative, a statewide anti-bullying program, the promotion of early childhood literacy and education, lead poisoning prevention legislation, and providing immediate help to the children and families of Newtown are just a few examples of what COC has done.

The ability to focus all of its efforts on all children and only children has been crucial for the successful work of COC. Combining the Commission on Children with 5 other commissions would significantly limit the ability of COC to continue their exemplary work. It is imperative that children have a voice in public policy that is solely focused on their needs and best interest. Too often what is best for children is not a priority in decisions driving policy.

We ask that the decision makers clearly show that children's needs are a priority by retaining the Connecticut Commission on Children so it can continue its important work for children and their families.

Thank you,

Sandra Carbonari, M.D. FAAP