



**Testimony of  
CEA  
Before the Education Committee**

**Submitted by Susan Heller Williams**

**Connecticut Education  
Association**

**Governance**

Sheila Cohen, President  
Jeff Leake, Vice President  
Cheryl Prevost, Secretary  
Thomas Nicholas, Treasurer  
Kathy Flaherty, NEA Director  
Pat Jordan NEA Director

**Executive Office**

Mark Waxenberg  
Executive Director

**Government Relations**

Vincent Loffredo, Director  
Capitol Place, Suite 500  
21 Oak Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-8001  
860-525-5641, 800-842-4316  
Fax: 860-725-6362  
[www.cea.org](http://www.cea.org)

Affiliated with the  
National Education Association

**HB 6502 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONAL ADVISORY  
COUNCIL**

**Monday, March 4, 2013**

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Ackert and members of the Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to express CEA's support of HB 6502 An Act Concerning The School Paraprofessional Advisory Council. Many classroom teachers rely on school paraprofessionals to support their work in their classrooms and with individual students who have unique needs.

The council was established by statute in 2007 as a result of universal recognition that the role of paraprofessionals was quickly evolving and their importance in the classroom growing. The act required the education commissioner to establish a paraprofessional advisory council made up of one representative from each of the statewide unions representing school paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities. No other designees were named, nor were they prohibited. CEA supported the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council as originally envisioned, made up of school paraprofessionals. Over time, as the number of people on the council has grown, and the voice of paraprofessionals has been diminished.

CEA has long advocated for a teacher professional standards board with a majority of teachers. It is our belief that there is no expertise greater than that of those who do the work day to day. This philosophy holds true for school paraprofessionals as well.

CEA supports of HB 6502 An Act Concerning The School Paraprofessional Advisory Council with the changes suggested by AFT-CT, and asks that you pass the bill.