



Testimony to the Education Committee

February 15, 2013

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

My name is Cheryl Burack and I am the Executive Director at Family Centered Services of CT (formerly Coordinating Council For Children In Crisis, Inc.). I would like to strongly support HB 6359, An Act Concerning an Early Childhood System. HB 6359 will create an Office of Early Childhood to coordinate early childhood programs and services, including the early home visitation programs now funded by the CT Departments of Public Health and Social Services. Coordinating these services is overdue. Consolidation into one Department will avoid problems currently caused by multiple funding streams, missions, and governance. It will prevent fragmentation and duplication of services, help to identify and fill service gaps and provide more comprehensive information needed to make informed policy decisions. It will help to ensure that each family is directed to the program that will best meet their needs. It will promote a common set of outcomes, and tracking the results across programs can give us a stronger and much clearer picture about how we are doing in CT to meet the needs of infants, toddlers and their families.

As a provider in the Children's Trust Fund's Nurturing Families Network, I am especially pleased that this program will be a part of the Office of Early Childhood. I would like to thank the Governor for preserving this program that works with Connecticut's first-time parents at highest risk for child abuse or neglect.

This proposal, with an Office of Early Childhood that reports directly to the Governor, will give early childhood services and programs the focus and attention they deserve. I would like to thank Governor Malloy and the Legislature for the vision to pass an Act (11-181) that called for the development of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development leading to an Early Childhood Plan, with great thanks to the Planning Team and Governor.

Submitted by:



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