

Testimony in Support of HB 6359

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 6359. My name is Kathleen Hagearty. I am the Clinical Supervisor for the Nurturing Families Network program at the Health Department of the City of New Haven. I am here to express my support for creating an Office of Early Childhood.

The Nurturing Families Network program provides a coordinated, tested prevention model to educate and serve parents throughout CT, particularly those at highest risk for abuse and neglect. Beginning prenatally, we use a proactive approach to ensure greater success for our children. Our staff use best practices and evidence based research to provide information and education through intensive home visiting, prenatal and parenting groups. The program has many years of data evidencing the effectiveness of our home visiting model. Our staff use home visiting as a thoughtful planned time where a family can learn new skills and we identify and address risks. Our services include dedicated initiatives that specifically reach out to fathers.

I am truly excited at the potential for this agency's work. Both Governor Malloy to President Obama have made news highlighting the importance of early childhood education. We strongly believe that early childhood services are more than just Pre-K slots in our schools. We have reached a point in CT where there are many programs available to young children and families. This includes prenatal, infant and toddler care, home visitation, early care and education, early