

Testimony of David Chambers, Principal

Hartford Public High School –

Academy of Nursing & Health Sciences

Statement to the Children Committee

**State of Connecticut General Assembly– Raised Bill 6331
February 21, 2013**

Chairpersons Representative Diana Urban, Senator Dante Bartolomeo and Members of the Children Committee:

My name is David Chambers. I am the Principal of Hartford Public High School – Academy of Nursing and Health Sciences. I am here today to support Raised Bill 6331 which would lower the donation age to 16.

The Nursing Academy at Hartford Public is based on the concept of CARE – Character, Accountability, Responsibility and Excellence and Making Learning Come Alive. The American Red Cross blood drives we sponsor at the high school emulate the CARE concept and not only make learning come alive, but actually help shape the lives of our students while they are helping to save lives.

Since 1984, the Academy has sponsored 56 blood drives and is responsible for over 3,000 donations. Since I have been principal, I have watched the teamwork of our student recruiting teams as they carefully plan and organize a blood drive, encouraging volunteers to help register donors and signing up students to donate. Our students are provided with information to make sure they have a successful donation. They make sure they have eaten a healthy breakfast or lunch and are well hydrated. The students encourage each other and are so proud when they make their first donation and are even happier when they are able to make a repeat donation. Our students take pride in helping others. At the Nursing Academy, our students aspire to careers in nursing, health care and community service.

Our students have also learned that rare blood types which hospitals need are often represented in higher numbers in ethnic communities and that there is a need for increased representation of diverse groups in the blood supply. Our diverse student population helps ensure that much needed blood types are available and that perhaps their specific type might be needed to help save a life.

Our story at the Nursing Academy is one of students wanting to donate blood because they know and understand that lives can be saved as a result of donating blood, however, many of our students can not because of their age.

I believe that we can double our totals if we can include 16 year old students who have their parent's permission to donate.