

**Testimony Supporting Raised H.B. 6499: AAC The Results-Based
Accountability Program and Children's Rights and H.R. No. 11: Resolution
Memorializing Congress to Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights
of the Child**

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Committee on Children
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Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and distinguished members of the
Committee on Children:

My name is Aimee Stupak and I am a Master's degree candidate at the University of
Connecticut School of Social Work. I am here today with my classmates, Judy
Wyman Kelly and Dena Torino, to **testify in support of raised H.B. 6499 and H.R.
No. 11, which would urge the United States to ratify the United Nations
Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and establish a task force to
both track progress towards achieving the goals outlined in the convention
and promote state policies that prevent abuses to the rights of children.**

As a social work student concentrating in the area of policy, I have focused my
studies on issues related to children and their families, as well as on international
social welfare policy. In the course of my studies, I have read numerous articles and
statements about the importance of the UNCRC in moving towards a realization of
global justice for our planet's most vulnerable population – children. While the
United States may be one of only three countries that have not yet ratified, it is the
only developed country that has chosen not to do so.

The UNCRC speaks to the reality that effective child protection begins with social
policies that promote prevention, including the provision of sufficient services
related to health, nutrition, housing, safety and education. Growing up in the United
States, we are taught to take pride in the role that we play as a world leader in
developing and implementing social policy. We have to dig deeper, however, to learn
that over 3.5 million children in our country are victims of maltreatment each year¹.

Last semester, as a member of a course in comparative social welfare policy, I
engaged in dialogue with social work students from Armenia who were training to
provide services to children that are modeled after those offered in the United
States. I questioned then and I continue to now – how can we, as a country that takes
such pride in our role as a leader of the developing world, neglect to ratify a treaty
that would ensure the safety of the very people who will one day grow up to assume
that same responsibility? By failing to ratify the UNCRC, we undermine both our
international credibility and our ability to protect the rights of children. For this
reason, other states and President Obama have all called for ratifying the resolution.

I am and have always been proud to be a resident of Connecticut. As both a policy
student and intern at Connecticut Voices for Children and the Nancy A. Humphreys

Institute for Political Social Work, I have learned of many ways that our state has taken a leadership role in developing progressive programs and policies that improve the lives of our state's most vulnerable children. But still, despite these efforts, our state's rates of child abuse are higher at 12.5% than the national average of 9.1%ⁱⁱ. I see H.B. 6499 and H.R. No. 11 as an opportunity for Connecticut to continue to lead our Nation towards a world that is safer, healthier, and happier for all of the world's children.

By passing a resolution for the ratification of the UNCRC, Connecticut will join other states, organizations, and even our President, in calling for our nation to maintain its leadership in promoting a more progressive society that we can all be proud to call our home.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 6499 and H.R. No. 11. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



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ⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Children's Bureau (2011). *Child Maltreatment 2011*. Retrieved March 4, 2013 from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm11.pdf>

ⁱⁱ *Same as above*