



Commerce Committee Public Testimony  
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund  
Submitted by Alice Pritchard, Ph.D., Executive Director  
**Raised Bill No. 305 - An Act Concerning Funding for the "Dream It. Do It."  
Manufacturing Pipeline Program.**

March 11, 2014

The Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women, girls, and their families to achieve equal opportunities in their personal and professional lives. I am writing in support of Raised Bill No. 305 to provide for "Connecticut. Dream It. Do It." (CT DIDI) a program that is actively creating and implementing activities to enhance Connecticut's current and future manufacturing workforce pipeline.

CWEALF is dedicated to providing women and girls with educational opportunities that lead to careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). A key component in growing a manufacturing workforce is attracting young people early in the pipeline – particularly during the middle and early high school years. We partner with CT DIDI to support girls' exploration of careers in manufacturing offering an annual Girls and STEM Expo at Asnuntuck Community College.

CT DIDI has led efforts to attract the next generation of the manufacturing workforce by creating a positive awareness of the educational and career pathways that lead to rewarding careers in today's manufacturing. We have worked with CCAT and CT DIDI to share this important career information with the girls who attend our Expos, their teachers and parents. These materials are provided through their affiliation with The Manufacturing Institute and the National Association of Manufacturers.

We have been happy to participate in "Connecticut. Dream It. Do It. Manufacturing Month" which gives students hands-on experience in team-based activities that replicate the manufacturing process from concept to design to fabrication to quality control. The students have the chance to talk with manufacturers about careers and the high-tech skills needed in today's manufacturing. They see what it takes to manufacture a product and learn how Connecticut-made products impact our lives every day. We believe these are critical experiences for young people and can help to promote pursuit of manufacturing careers.

I urge your support of Raised Bill No. 305. With your support, the Connecticut. Dream It. Do It. program can focus needed resources on the manufacturing pipeline and enable Connecticut's manufacturers to attract the workforce they will need to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy.