



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Committee on Children

February 27, 2014

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Senate Bill 48: An Act Concerning Nutrition Standards for Child Care Settings

As indicated in DPH's most recent study on the prevalence of obese and overweight kindergarten children and the DPH Every Smile Counts and Obesity Survey, a total of 29.8% of kindergarteners were obese (13.9%) and overweight (15.9%). Hispanic (22.6%) and non-Hispanic black (18.3%) kindergarteners were significantly more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic White (10.1%) kindergarteners.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Children's Food Environment State Indicator Report, 2011 cites the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and recommends limiting consumption of added sugar. The leading source of added sugar among children is sugar-sweetened drinks. CDC suggests that addressing policy, environment and behavior can reduce childhood obesity. The CDC estimates that approximately 75% of all children under six years of age participate in some form of organized child care outside the home, including family day care. States vary in the degree to which they address nutrition in these settings.

This bill would establish Connecticut nutrition standards for child care settings and early education programs which would be in alignment with CDC's Report findings and would address the DPH findings that of 29.8% of Connecticut's kindergarteners are obese and overweight.

The committee, however, should keep in mind that increasing the regulatory responsibilities of the Department of Public Health's child care licensing program could create a fiscal impact to the Department and then the Office of Early Childhood Education for additional staff to monitor and follow-up with issues of noncompliance.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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