

Testimony of Kathleen Hagearty, LCSW, Clinical Supervisor
City of New Haven, Health Department, Nurturing Families Network
Appropriations Committee Public Hearing

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Good evening, Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and honorable members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Kathleen Hagearty. I am the Clinical Supervisor for the Nurturing Families Network program at the New Haven Health Department. I am a resident of the City of New Haven and a member of our community's Early Childhood Council. I am here today to testify before this committee concerning the Governor's FY16-17 biennium budget plan as it relates to services for pregnant and postpartum woman and early childhood services. I urge you to support the Healthy Start Program as well as funding for Early Childhood collaboratives.

As part of the early childhood and home visiting community I have been excited to see Connecticut lead the way with the development of The Office of Early Childhood. The recent Federal award to build our Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program is indeed wonderful news. However, those funds will not serve some of the smaller programs being cut. As you know, the Community Plans for Early Childhood funding supports local Early Childhood Council work and are part of a unique public-private partnership which leverages additional private funding. Our clients and the community at large have benefited from the work of the Council. We have created community connections and ensuring collective impact on Early Childhood matters with a myriad of activities and initiatives.

In our home visiting program we value our work with fathers and recognize the Family Empowerment Program (FEP) as enabling agencies who receive this funding to provide support to at risk fathers.

Lastly, I would like to express my support for funding The Healthy Start Program. This program, funded through DSS, serves almost 1000 pregnant and postpartum women and children in our office. Every day I witness women and their families try to access health care coverage and the work of the Healthy Start staff to assess their risk, connect them to services including home visiting, and ensure they properly enrolled. Their work is not something which can be easily replicated by our home visiting models. I hope in the coming weeks you may be able to meet with your constituents who directly benefit from the Healthy Start program as well as the programs of the Office of Early Childhood. Thank

you very much for your attention and consideration. If you would like any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

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