

**Flynn, Eileen**

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**From:** Karen Brennan <Karen.Brennan@uwwesternct.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 1:30 PM  
**To:** HSTestimony  
**Cc:** Rep. Simmons, Caroline; Rep. Miller, Patricia; 'Terry.Adams@cga.ct.gov'; Rep. Tong, William; Rep. Fox, Dan; zRepresentative Livvy Floren  
**Subject:** SUPPORT LOW WAGE WORKER PROPOSAL

**SUPPORT LOW WAGE WORKER PROPOSAL**

**Testimony of Karen B. Brennan on behalf of  
Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative  
Before the Education Committee  
February 26, 2015**

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Committee,

My name is Karen Brennan and I am the Director of the Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative (SECC), a community partnership in Stamford of over 40 organizations committed to improving the quality of life for all children. Our mission is to prepare all children birth through age eight for a lifetime of learning by engaging families, fostering community, and advocating for resources and results.

I am writing today about wages for early childhood teachers. The SECC believes that the early childhood wages legislation would improve the quality of education and care provided to all children. Research clearly demonstrates a strong relationship between the education, experience, and compensation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers and the quality of teaching and care the children receive.

We are a committed partner of the Stamford School Readiness Council and continually advocate for more School Readiness funding and opportunities for our families. With the new Early Childhood Teaching Credential soon to be in place on July 1, it is imperative that we support teachers who are being asked to pursue higher education degrees and increase their level of education and experience.

It is clear that the early childhood workforce wants to increase its knowledge and skills through our nation's higher education system. The key is accessibility...having the money, the time and the support to make it possible. However, it is both unrealistic and unfair to expect the workforce to go back to school while they are working full time without help and without the promise of better wages and benefits.

We have learned that with sufficient investment in the workforce, you can improve education and retention. Money makes the difference. When teachers are living on poverty level wages and barely able to support their families, then leaving the job they love becomes a matter of necessity. Low education, poor compensation and high turnover are workforce issues across our state. It is time to address them with a state targeted investment.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We hope you will support this legislation moving forward.

Sincerely,

Karen B. Brennan

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Karen B. Brennan  
Director

Stamford Early Childhood Collaborative  
United Way of Western Connecticut  
1150 Summer Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Stamford, CT 06905  
[karen.brennan@uwwesternct.org](mailto:karen.brennan@uwwesternct.org)  
(203) 883-6700 (Direct Dial, Office)  
(203) 219-0628 (Cell)  
[www.uwwesternct.org](http://www.uwwesternct.org)  
[www.stamfordearlychildhoodcollaborative.org](http://www.stamfordearlychildhoodcollaborative.org)  
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