

TESTIMONY to SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1044

I have been actively involved in the Early Childhood field for 39+ years. As director of Bloomfield's oldest Preschool Program for 25 years, I have been a part of the evolution. We were the Pioneers in the Early Childhood Education System as we know it today. We were one of the first to become NAEYC Accredited and one of the first School Readiness Programs.

We have kept abreast of all local, state and national legislation, regulations and educational requirements of our teachers (and administrators).

Each year we put many teachers through school to meet or exceed current required education levels and provide continued professional development. AND each year we lose many wonderful teachers because they cannot live on the salaries we are able offer them. Many have to work second jobs to make ends meet.

Sadly, many of our teachers that hold Bachelors and Masters Degrees meet the same income guidelines for subsidies available to help struggling families make ends meet.

We have always strived for excellence, meeting evolving regulations and legislation that come down from the top. However the financial burden is placed upon Preschool Programs with limited resources. Financial assistance offered by the state have been helpful but are not enough to help programs thrive and retain our excellent teachers.

Please support Senate Bill 1044, and use those funds to increase funding for early care and education and social services. We need to address low wages in the early childhood field, and need to have more funding to increase compensation.

Sincerely,

*Deb Huebner*

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