



TORRINGTON  
CHILD  
CARE  
CENTER

Accredited by NAEYC  
National Association  
for Education of Young  
Children



March 12, 2015

To Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

Testimony for "An Act Concerning the Recoupment of State Costs Attributable to Low Wage Workers"

My name is Mary Cecchinato. I am the Executive Director of the Torrington Child Care Center, Inc. which receives funding from the OEC to run a State Funded Child Development Center and also School Readiness. I have been the Director since 1995. The center has been open for 36 years and many of my teachers have been there since the start. In other professions workers are given raises yearly and are rewarded for longevity and dedication. We cannot do this for our teachers. I presently have a Lead teacher with her BA in Early Childhood and has been employed at the center for over 34 years and her salary is \$ 33,000.00. Families cannot afford to pay more for child care so that we can give our teachers the wages they so deserve.

Our teachers plan, complete assessments, have parent teacher conferences and they individualize the curriculum so that each child can grow in areas that they need to improve. Every year there are more and more demands put on teachers with no increase in compensation. I recently hired a retired public school teacher who said she could not believe that pre-school teachers in funded centers are required to do so much work for so little pay. It is a lot of work and she never had to complete as much paper work while working in the public school. Our teachers are required to have an Early Childhood degree work 7 to 8 hours a day, plan during nap time, attend continuing Education and work 50 weeks a year for \$12.00 to \$ 15.00 an hour and many of whom have worked at the center for 5 to 35 years.

We are told that the early years are the most important years in a child's development and yet we pay those who choose this profession such low compensation their families are eligible for Care 4 Kids, and Husky. I remember when I first started at the center and I had a mom who was in the welfare to work program. She wanted to go the community college for Early Childhood Education and she was told by her case worker she needed to go to school for something else because she would never be able to support her and her family on what she would make when she graduated. That was 25 years ago and things really have not changed.

I am urging all of you to vote for SB 1044 and have the large corporations help pay fees earmarked for state funded Early Childhood programs so we can collect the monies needed to pay our teachers a living wage. Remember these children are our future and they deserve quality preschool so they will be successful learners for the rest of their lives.

We need to pay teachers a worthy wage!

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony.

*Mary Cecchinato*

Mary Cecchinato  
Torrington Child Care Center, Inc.  
338 Kennedy Drive  
Torrington, CT. 06790