

Committee on Children
S.B. No. 209 (Raised) An Act Concerning Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program
Public Hearing
Legislative Office Building (LOB), Room 1E
300 Capital Ave.
Hartford, CT

January 27, 2015

Dear Committee Members,

As a Pediatrician at Burgdorf/Bank of America Health Care Clinic in Hartford, Connecticut I speak for myself and for my colleagues in support of S.B. No. 209 (Raised) An Act Concerning Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program.

The health care providers at our Burgdorf Pediatric Clinic, which serves approximately 750 children from the low-income population in northern Hartford, are deeply committed to the ROR philosophy of promoting literacy as a standard and critical component of primary health care for our children. ROR is a nonprofit organization that trains and supports medical providers who give books to children, age 6 months to 5 years, and advice to parents about the importance of reading to their children. Hartford has the lowest adult literacy rate of any city in the country. Clearly it is critical that early literacy programs, such as ROR be vigorously supported as critical steps in breaking the cycle of school failure and economic hardship among our children.

We are fortunate to be already witnessing some of the early positive impacts of the program on our families. ROR is an evidence-based program, and multiple published research studies demonstrate the significant advantage of preschool children served by the program on vocabulary tests, preparing them to enter kindergarten ready to read, learn, and succeed. Research also shows that children who start school on track are more likely to reach their full educational, social, and life potential.

My colleagues and I most enthusiastically request that you please support Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program. These are our children! These are our citizens!

Sincerely,

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