

# State Interagency Coordinating Council

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RESTORING FUNDING IN THE STATE BUDGET FOR HELP ME GROW OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

March 3, 2015

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

**Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.**  
*ICC Chair/Pediatrician*  
**Sharri Lungarini**  
*ICC Vice Chair/Parent*  
**Janet Brancifort**  
*Dept. of Public Health*  
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*Parent*  
**Nancy DiMauro**  
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**Corrine Griffin**  
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**Gerri Hanna, alternate.**  
*Center for Excellence in DD*  
**Cynthia Jackson**  
*Children's Therapy Services*  
**Lynn Skene Johnson**  
*Dept. of Developmental Services*  
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*State Senator*  
**Erin Lamb**  
*Parent*  
**Jennifer Miner**  
*Insurance Department*  
**Ginny Mahoney**  
*Dept. of Social Services*  
**Anne Giordano**  
*Education Connection*  
**Lorna Quiros-Dilán**  
*Office of Protection and Advocacy*  
**John Reilly**  
*DORS - Board of Education and Services  
For the Blind*  
**Carol Pelitier**  
*American School for the Deaf*  
**Maria Synodi**  
*State Dept. of Education*  
**Louis Tallarita**  
*SDE-Homeless Children*  
**Elisabeth Teller**  
*SARAH-Kidsteps*  
**Alice Torres**  
*Early Head Start*  
**Myra Watnick**  
*Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.*  
**Carol Weitzman, M.D.**  
*American Academy of Pediatrics*  
**Vacant**  
*House of Representatives*

My name is Dr. Mark A. Greenstein and I am the current chair of the State of Connecticut's Interagency Coordinating Council (Birth to Three Council) as well as Professor of Pediatrics in Genetics and Child Development at the UCONN School of Medicine. I am giving this testimony on behalf of the Birth to Three Council and strongly urge your support of restoring state budget funding for Help Me Grow (HMG) and its central portal of entry, Child Development Infoline (CDI) in the Office of Early Childhood.

Supported in every biennial budget since 2002, HMG/CDI are critical components of our evolving system in support of the healthy development of Connecticut's children. You may be aware of the role that Birth to Three services provide for eligible children and their families in terms of early intervention, family support, advocacy and effective transitions to other services, including special education at around age 3. CDI is the entry point for multiple services and HMG has served an important (and crucial role) in helping families when a child is not eligible for Birth to Three services. In addition, they have followed along to make sure that children can be monitored in case their needs increase and they need reassessment. As you may know, HMG promotes the early identification of children at risk for development delays and behavioral problems and the connection of these vulnerable children to community-based programs and services that promote school readiness. We want to emphasize the value and importance of the role that HMG plays in the network of services that provide support for young and vulnerable children here in Connecticut, linking them and their families to community-based programs and services. As part of the network here in Connecticut that serves children and families, the Birth to Three Council wants to emphasize the critical role that HMG and CDI play in the State's work to enhance children's health and development. We also wish