



Educating, Engaging and Mobilizing Parents to Take Action on Issues that Matter Most To Them...

Testimony before Appropriations Committee
Public Hearing regarding Governor's Proposed FY 2016-2017 Biennial Budget
Testimony by Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director
Connecticut Parent Power
Thursday, March 5, 2015

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

I am Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director of Connecticut Parent Power a statewide parent-led organization that engages, educates and mobilizes diverse parents from across the state to act on issues that matter most to them improving outcomes for all children in areas of early childhood, care, education, health care reform and K-12 school systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the following commissions:

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC)
African American Affairs Commission (AAAC)
Asian Pacific American Commission (APAC)
Commission on Children (COC)

All whom have functioned with such integrity to ensure that all voices of our melting pot state are heard at the local and statewide level, as each of them has accomplished the following collectively to date by:

- Reviewing and commenting on any proposed state legislation and regulations that would affect the aforementioned diverse populations in the state, especially parents and their children;
- Advising and providing information to the Governor on the state's policies concerning diverse/multicultural communities;
- Advising the Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs serving the diverse/multicultural population;
- Maintaining a liaison between diverse/multicultural communities and governmental entities;
- Encouraging and reaching out to diverse representation at all levels of state government, including state boards and commissions;
- Securing appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of the diverse population of the state; and
- Preparing and submitting to the Governor an annual report concerning its activities with any appropriate recommendations concerning the diverse populations in our state.



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Connecticut Parent Power would like to take a moment to commend the appropriations committee for their shared vision in passing legislative laws that promote the wellness of all children and their families to be able to access quality care and educational services that truly promote preventative benchmarks to ensure that all families succeed. For the past four years, Connecticut Parent Power, alongside statewide partners and most importantly parents have worked together to produce a plan for early childhood that would continue to cultivate a system that works for all diverse children and families to fully establish the Office of Early Childhood. Without the commissions sharing this vision our significant growth and statewide support would not have been a reality today!

As you know, the establishment of the Office of Early Childhood was only the first step to streamlining costs and the first stage to building a one point of entry for our diverse parents to begin navigating our system with ease that is more family centered/friendly. Therefore, sustaining such effective commissions is essential as we know diverse parents and constituents need timely information on what is happening in their culturally rich communities, as they continue raising young children to promote a greater cultural sense of self and community richness lifting more similarities than differences to promote a healthier living state for all!

CT Parent Power is so very proud to continue its work with such reputable commissions that are doing the right thing for our diverse children, parents, families and constituents (i.e., Latino, Asian, Black, etc.) of our state to make timely contributions that add value to the collective impact that each of us contributes to at the grassroots level, locally and statewide for all of our children to grow up becoming loving, nurturing, healthy, social and emotionally productive and contributing citizens.

Our commissions have proven to be significantly effective and supportive by working more intentionally together and being the guide of reason for and with our people and state government based on what is really happening in our communities with our Latino, Asian, African American, etc. populations to have a voice and gain more knowledge on what really affects various people from multicultural walks of life to gain the tools necessary to overcome adversity and discrimination of any kind by becoming involved with a commission that understands and is willing to learn more to promote the health and wellness of all through shared information, planning and actionable steps for all to succeed...

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you in full support of our exemplary commissions.



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