



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

18-20 Trinity Street
 Hartford, CT 06106
 Tel. (860) 240-8330
 Fax (860) 240-0315
 E-Mail: lprac@cga.ct.gov
 Web Site: www.cga.ct.gov/lprac

Testimony Regarding Governor's Bill HB-6825

Orlando J. Rodriguez

Associate Legislative Analyst, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

Appropriations Committee

April 21st, 2015, Hartford, CT

Chairperson

Richard A. Cruz

Vice Chair

Elena Trueworthy, M.S.

Secretary

Emamuela Palmares-Leaf

Treasurer

Yolanda Castillo

Commissioners:

Ramón L. Arroyo

Migdalia Castro

Ana González

Jay González

George Hernández

Dr. Ruby O'Neill

Dr. Agnes Quiñones

Ruben Rodriguez

Dr. Eugene M. Salorio

Christian Soto

Pablo Soto

Feny Taylor

Danny Torres

Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

Special Projects Director

Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández

Associate Legislative Analyst

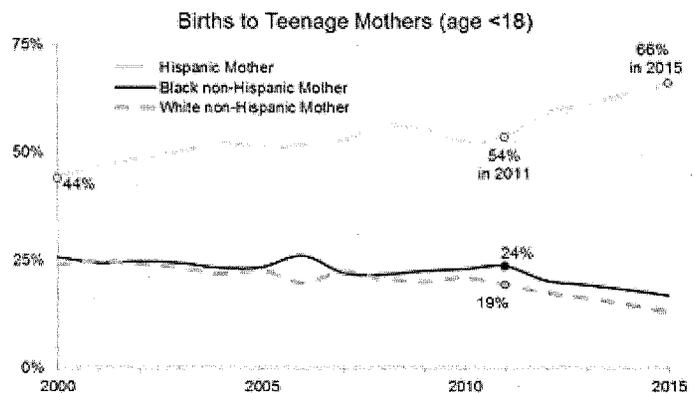
Orlando Rodríguez

Senior Legislative Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

Good afternoon Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Orlando Rodriguez and I am an Associate Legislative Analyst with the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC), which opposes Governor's bill **HB-6825 AN ACT MAKING DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATIONS AND ADDRESSING THE DEFICIT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2015**. LPRAC is well aware of the difficult fiscal situation in which the state finds itself; however, some programs have long-term considerations that should not be undervalued.

LPRAC recommends maintaining full funding for programs that will reduce future state spending. In particular, LPRAC opposes cuts to the Department of Social Services (DSS) for Teen Pregnancy Prevention (T314) and Teen Pregnancy Prevention – Municipal (T316) totaling \$98,759. Currently, more than half of all births to teenage mothers (age <18) in Connecticut are to Latinas.¹ These DSS programs help at-risk Latinas to complete high school and delay motherhood until they become financially self-sufficient, and not become dependent on state services. They also reduce the incidence of second pregnancies to teenage mothers. We also oppose cuts to Human Resource Development – Hispanic Programs (T307 Safety Net Services), which enable community-based organizations to provide culturally sensitive outreach to low-income Hispanics.



Currently, more than half of all births to teenage mothers (age <18) in Connecticut are to Latinas.¹ These DSS programs help at-risk Latinas to complete high school and delay motherhood until they become financially self-sufficient, and not become dependent on state services. They also reduce the incidence of second pregnancies to teenage mothers. We also oppose cuts to Human Resource Development – Hispanic Programs (T307 Safety Net Services), which enable community-based organizations to provide culturally sensitive outreach to low-income Hispanics.

LPRAC opposes a cut of \$4,750 from the English Language Learner Scholarship (T386) in the Office of Higher Education. Connecticut has the worst outcomes in the country for English Language Learners in 8th grade math. Part of the reason for such unacceptable education outcomes is a severe shortage of bilingual education teachers.² Just last month, Speaker Sharkey's English Language Acquisition and Educational Equity Work Group recommended: "The Department of Education should work with teacher credentialing organizations ... to incentivize and grow the number of ELL/bilingual teachers."³ Only 28 days ago, this type of program was considered necessary to reduce the shortage of bilingual teachers in Connecticut.

¹ Sources: 1998-2011 births from CT DPH tbl 4; 2012-2015 births using forecast function in Excel; population percentage from ACS 2011 1-yr tables B01001 and B01001.

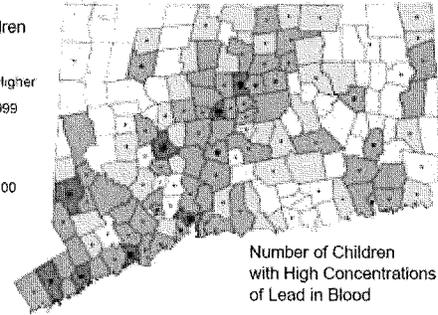
² <http://www.ct.gov/trb/cwp/view.asp?Q=276124&A=1598>

³ Report to the Speaker of the House the Honorable Brendan Sharkey, English Language Acquisition and Educational Equity Work Group, March 2015

LPRAC opposes a cut of \$3,618 to Childhood Lead Poisoning (T252) in the Department of Public Health. This disproportionately affects Latino children in urban areas where there is still a high incidence of lead in the blood of children. The recently released study *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice 2015* reports, "... the incidence of high blood lead concentrations is highest in urban areas, which also have the largest populations of young children in Connecticut."⁴

Number of Children Age 0-5

- 5,000 and Higher
- 1,000 to 4,999
- 500 to 999
- 100 to 499
- Less than 100



Source: *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice 2015*, p.100, fig.11

Number of Children with High Concentrations of Lead in Blood

- 100 and Above
- 50 to 99
- 25 to 49
- 1 to 24

We ask this committee to consider the tangible long-term consequences of shortsighted budget reductions that would disproportionately affect the health, education, and economic future of Latinos in Connecticut.

⁴ Connecticut Department of Housing at <http://www.ct.gov/doh/cwp/view.asp?a=4513&q=530462>, p.100, fig. 11