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H.B. 7020, AAC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND INITIATIVES
Education Committee
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Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Children Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is John Cattelan and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs. The Alliance represents 23 YMCAs across the state of Connecticut.

I'm here today to urge the members of this committee to support H.B. 7020, An Act Concern Early Childhood Educators and Initiatives.

The Connecticut Alliance in particular supports two provisions in the bill:

- Allowing early childhood education credits earned at an out-of-state institution of higher education that is regionally accredited and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children to count towards the staff qualifications requirements for the purposes of school readiness program staffing.

- Requiring preschool programs offered by magnet schools and charter schools to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

However, the Alliance would request that the Education Committee strongly consider adding “grandfathering” language for Head Teachers to the proposed legislation. We would ask that a teacher with over 20 years of experience be allowed to serve as a head teacher until his or her retirement.

As a non-profit provider of the Connecticut School Readiness Program, we are already finding it difficult to fill head teacher positions. The Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs strongly believes that experience and commitment to our organization should allow our teachers to work with us past 2020.

In many instances, when one of our teachers has received the proper accreditation, he or she leaves the Y to teach at a public school, which has the ability to pay them a higher wage.

I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.