



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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### Testimony of State Representative Minnie Gonzalez To the Public Health,

**In support of: House Bill 6268, *An Act Concerning Pediatric Vision Screening***

**Public Hearing March 4, 2015**

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Committee on Public Health. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of all children of the state of Connecticut in support of House bill 6268. *AN ACT CONCERNING PEDIATRIC VISION SCREENING*; which will require vision screenings for young children.

Research has suggested that 1 in 10 to 20 will have vision disorders which can lead to permanent vision impairments, such as amblyopia (lazy eye), strabismus (misaligned eyes), and abnormal refractive errors which consist of hyperopia, myopia, astigmatism, and anisometropia. Often times, parents are unaware of their children having vision problems and children are unaware of what is normal sight; especially if they have blurry vision issues, and because these defects do not cause pain, the only way to detect any problems is through a vision exam. If these

disorders are detected and treated early, before the age of five, it will ensure proper and corrective treatment outcomes for children.

In my personal experience, I have suffered from such conditions as lazy eye and misalignment of the eye. This was not noticed by my parents when I was young and no exam was ever conducted to detect such problems. My family did not have the resources or a health plan. When I got my first job at 18 years of age and was able to pay my first exam, I found out that I didn't have any vision in my right eye. I paid for my first pair of glasses and years later, now with a health plan, I found out that I was experiencing another disorder. I visited my doctor and received the bad news; my disorder was a rare one. Finally, doctor Thorquiest of Trumbull came to testify for another bill and we met at my office and he noticed my problem, then he gave me his business card and a month later after our session he performed three surgeries on my right eye to correct some of my problems, but not my vision because it was too late. I have vision only on my left eye because I was never tested at a young age. Earlier detection and treatment increases a child's chance of preserving one of our most precious senses - our ability to see correctly. I respectfully urge you to consider this bill and again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



**Minnie Gonzalez**  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> District