



**Testimony by Melissa Rowe, LCSW in Support of
Proposed Bill No. 258: An Act Concerning Infant Safe Sleep
Practices**

Committee on Public Health
February 20, 2015
Submitted by Melissa Rowe, LCSW

Senators, Representatives, Distinguished Members of the Committee on Public Health:

My name is Melissa Rowe and I have been a licensed clinical social worker at Yale-New Haven Hospital (YNHH) for twenty seven years.

For the last ten years I have been the manager of one of the state funded Nurturing Families Network (NFN) sites which has been at YNHH since 1998. NFN is governed by the Family Support Services Division of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. We provide community based weekly intensive in home parent education to new mothers and fathers.

Our staff of certified parent educators/home visitors routinely educates first time prenatal and postpartum parents about safe sleep practices with accompanying curricula and printed materials.

In spite of this intensive education my staff has observed potential and unsafe sleeping practices in some of the homes of their clients because of:

Mixed messages from providers, family, friends, social media and retailers
Family cultural and ethnic legacies and histories of parenting experiences and preferred practices
Parent concerns about:
Infant crying if left in the crib
Infant's comfort in a crib...being too cold if not covered in blankets
Infant (parent) needing stuffed animals and bumpers in the sleep space
Nursing at frequent intervals so infant co-sleeps with parent

Last year our program had a new parent enrolled in NFN. Between the first and second planned home visit the seven week infant died as a result of co-sleeping with the mother.

An Act Concerning Infant Safe Sleep Practices will provide Connecticut hospitals with the tools for sending out a universal and standardized message across all disciplines, both verbally, and in printed materials for all parents who leave the hospital with a cherished newborn infant.

For the reasons above, I support SB Bill No. 258.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Rowe, LCSW
Program Manager and Clinical Supervisor, Nurturing Families Network
Department of Social Work
Yale-New Haven Hospital
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20 York Street
New Haven, CT 06510