

Testimony for Raised bill 112

Thank you to Senator Slossberg and the members of the education committee for allowing me to submit testimony on Raised Bill 112.

My name is Merryl Eaton and I would urge you to pass raised bill 112 AN ACT PROVIDING CHILD CARE FOR ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS ENROLLED IN APPROVED HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

I work for Christian Community Action in New Haven Connecticut, a 49 year old faith based social service organization. Our mission is to provide emergency shelter and transitional housing, food, and system change advocacy training to those who are poor, in particular families that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. CCA seeks to encourage families and individuals in their efforts to attain economic self-sufficiency and financial independence and to work with them to change systems that perpetuate poverty and injustice. 90% of families living in CCA housing are female heads of households.

Families moving into CCA do an initial intake and screening overview of the family's needs. There is a follow-up within ten days to assess employment, education and child and family needs. All residents are expected to be employed, in school or in a job training program. I would like to be clear here. All of our residents want a better situation for their families and want to do what it is they need to do to make that happen but, one of the biggest barrier our tenants and residents face is a lack of affordable childcare.

Life has changed and grandma or even a kind neighbor is no longer available to watch the children while mama or dad tries to improve their lives by working on their GED, or going to school or a job training program. For those folks with children in school, professional development days or early dismissals often cause them to miss precious days in their job training programs whose attendance requirements cause them to drop out.

The education committee did the right thing in 2014 when they made job training programs an allowable work activity for TANF participants. Please take this next step that would be so integral for our parents to be able to move into self-sufficiency.

We understand the difficult decisions that need to be made with an enormous budget deficit, but, helping people who are poor get better situated to be working is an investment that pays off.

Thank you.

