

**Testimony to the Select Committee on Children
In Opposition to RHB 5303**

Submitted by Michelle Doucette Cunningham
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Good morning, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Select Committee on Children. My name is Michelle Doucette Cunningham, and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut After School Network, a statewide alliance representing parents and providers across the state. The Network's goal is to have high quality, affordable after school programs available to every Connecticut child and youth so that they grow up safe, healthy, educated, connected and employable.

I am here today, on behalf of the After School Network, to raise questions concerning one part of Raised House Bill 5303, *An Concerning Childhood Obesity* which would negatively impact school-age child care programs.

Section 1. (2) (c) applies a limit to the amount of 100% juice allowed in child care setting for all children over the age of nine months. However, because child care centers as defined by C.G.S. 19a-77 include after school and summer programs serving children up through age 12, this cap of a single serving goes against the research about increasing fruit and vegetable intake.

While this limitation makes sense for toddlers and preschool age children, this bill as currently written applies equally to 100 pound, five foot tall seventh graders who have drastically different needs. **To make this clause age-appropriate, we recommend the following language:**

“. . . and (2) no child four years of age or younger receives more than eight ounces of juice per day, and no child between the ages of five and twelve receives more than sixteen ounces of juice per day.”

We applaud the intent of this bill to help reduce childhood obesity, but we ask that you use U. S. Dept. of Agriculture and U. S. Academy of Pediatrics age-appropriate guidelines on juice consumption to make this policy work for school-age children. Thank you for addressing this issue.

