

Testimony Regarding HB5306

AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Marie Monahan, Director

Saint Mary's Hospital Child Development Center

100 Jefferson Square

Waterbury, CT 06706

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and distinguished Members of the Education Committee:

I am testifying today in regards Sec. 6. Section 17b-749e

The Office of Early Childhood shall within available appropriations; support programs providing child care services to achieve accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The office shall set priorities for receipt of support under this section.

I have been a director of an accredited center since 1989, my first center was number 06. Throughout my career as director of centers, they have all been accredited. I have served as a validator for the National Association for the Education of Young Children and now serve on the North West AFP advisory board as well as the state advisory board for the AFP. I have read applications for centers that applied to be part of the Accreditation Facilitation Project. I am deeply vested in the importance that this project has in helping centers work towards the accreditation process.

The Accreditation Facilitation Project as it stands now is highly regarded nationally. Connecticut is ranked 3rd in the country of the number of accredited programs. This happened over time with the excellent guidance of a team of facilitators led by Deb Flis. She has carried the torch of excellence in leading her staff, implementing policies and data gathering and being a staunch supporter of quality for the programs and children of Connecticut.

The existing language that has been cut from the Section 6. Section 17b-749e of the general statute regarding the structure of the Accreditation Facilitation Project needs to be kept so the integrity of the project is not lost and the children and centers of Connecticut are not short changed by the vagueness and lack of specifics of the new language.