

Jewel Robinson

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To: The Education Committee and General Assembly of the Connecticut Legislature

Date: March 10, 2017

Re: H.B. No. 7253 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES

I write in support of the raised bill HB 7253: An Act Concerning various revision and addition to the education statutes for Connecticut's Marriage and Family Therapists. I graduated with my Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, the school based track in 2016. I am where I am today due to a very caring second grade teacher who went above and beyond her job description, and showed she cared for her students beyond the grades. Due to developing great relationships with positive people growing up, my dream since I was a little girl was to be able to be that positive relationship for another child. Therefore, I worked towards achieving this blessing of obtaining my Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy to put me in the best position to support children in ways teachers can't.

The past three years I have spent my training in schools along with agencies to hone my skills to best assist me in developing a safe nurturing environment for children and families. I have trained at Old Saybrook Middle School, Old Say brook Youth and Family service, in 2014-2015, then Keigwin Middle School in Middletown CT, while I also was at Wheeler Clinic Child Outpatient this past year before graduating in May. While I develop great relationships in the school, due to law and not being licensed I was unable to receive a job in the schools.

This unfortunate barrier has caused schools to lose many great relationships with the interns that have trained with, while MFT's like myself working towards obtaining their licenses than apply for the State Department of Education's Certificate.

This past year I have worked at Klingberg Family Centers, Extended Day Treatment. I took a job here to put myself in a position to continue to learn as much as possible at a higher level of care, while I work towards my goal of being employed by a school. Due to unfortunate events at my job and an unpleasant boss, I was blocked from one of very limited ways into the schools (Love Wins initiative, that was developed through the Ana

Grace project after the tragedy of Sandy Hook shooting) and achieving my personal dreams of being a Marriage and Family Therapist in the schools.

My hope and prayer is that this constraint is removed by supporting bill HB 7253: An Act concerning various revision and addition to the education Statues for Connecticut's Marriage and Family Therapist. Allowing competent, passionate Marriage and Family Therapist that just want to work and support the youth of our future, as the need of mental health teams in school's increases.

Thank you for your time on this very important matter, and God bless

Jewel Robinson, MS MFT