



Hartford Foundation
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Testimony Regarding S.B. 932, An Act Concerning the Staff Qualifications Requirement for Early Childhood Educators

**Education Committee
March 6, 2019**

Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is grateful for this opportunity to submit **written testimony regarding Senate Bill 932, An Act Concerning the Staff Qualifications Requirement.**

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region. As a community foundation, we manage, grow, and distribute approximately \$1 billion in assets to promote equitable opportunity for all residents in our region, particularly in the areas of education, community safety, and community and economic development. Since 1987, we have invested more than \$40 million in early childhood in the Greater Hartford area. It is our goal to ensure that all children, especially those most vulnerable, have access to high-quality early childhood experiences, based on national research that confirms that early childhood experiences are key to children's and families' life-long success. The Foundation has focused on supporting early childhood policy, funding and program quality, recognizing their importance to ensuring optimal safety and learning outcomes for children, and pathways to economic security for their families and caregivers.

When considering bills like Senate Bill 932 which impact credential requirements for the early childhood workforce, we **urge the committee to consider ways to support this pipeline, particularly for bilingual educators.** The early childhood field is diverse both in the children and families in need of child care and in the professionals who serve them. Data from the Hartford region shows that over one third of family child care providers requested information to be delivered in a language other than English. Language-diverse educators benefit families, many of whom prefer

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bilingual child care providers or providers who can communicate in the language they speak at home.

In recognition of the need for high-quality, culturally appropriate early childhood settings, the Hartford Foundation has invested in providing access to credit-bearing courses towards a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for adults whose first language is not English. The CDA is just the first step towards a bachelor's degree, but it is one that many providers struggle to attain. Programs and legislation regarding provider credentials should consider ways to **increase the number of bilingual students, particularly Spanish-dominant Latino students, who progress along the track towards the required bachelor's degree in early childhood areas.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our staff at policy@hfp.org or 860-548-1888.