Middlesex Coalition for Children

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Testimony from Izzi Greenberg, Director, Middlesex Coalition for Children

S.B. No. 931 (RAISED) EDUCATION. 'AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENTS TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Good afternoon Sen. McCrory, Rep. Sanchez, and members of the Education Committee,

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide testimony on this and the grouping of early childhood bills before the committee today. I run the Middlesex Coalition for Children, which works to improve outcomes for children and their families in Middletown and Middlesex County. Our coalition includes a wide range of families, schools, programs, and early care and education programs.

I’m submitting testimony on S.B. No. 931 (RAISED) EDUCATION. 'AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENTS TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS', which would require Care4Kids program payments to be at least equal to the seventy-fifth percentile of the market cost of child care; require that any increase in funding to child care centers and school readiness program providers are to be used for increasing educator salaries; and to reestablish school readiness grant rates in the general statutes and to increase such rates.

This bill is vitally important to the state’s early care and education system. A few things to know:

- Since 2002 there has only been a 3% increase in C4K payment rates, but a disproportionate 39.6% increase in inflation.
- Payment rates need to increase to the federally recommended 75th percentile market rate and moving forward, Increased rates should be indexed to increases in minimum wage to maintain the balance of the system.
- Early childhood educators are professionals that should be paid in a manner that reflects their important public value. Many early childhood providers make roughly $30,000 a year and Increase in C4K funding will be used to increase educator’s salaries.
- With increases in the minimum wage likely to continue over the next few years, the bottom line for ECE providers will be challenged. The payment rates to child care providers needs to be tied to the increases in minimum wage.
- Early Childcare Educators are professionals who should be paid in a manner that reflects the importance of their profession
  o ECE professionals are helping our future students learn and grow in an environment that will prepare them for success in K-12 schools. We need to recognize the public value of these positions through compensation. This bill begins that process.

The most important development happens between birth and kindergarten. Quality care establishes the basis for a healthy and productive life, and teachers that are supported and compensated supports quality.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my perspective,

Izzi Greenberg
Executive Director

Improving the lives of children in Middletown and Middlesex County.