Testimony regarding: S.B. No. 935 AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE

Submitted By:
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I am honored to be presenting testimony on the issue of S.B. No. 935 AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE.

This is an issue that is very important to me. I am a senior at the University of Connecticut in the Early Childhood Development and Education program. In May, I will have completed my Early Childhood Teaching Credential. I hope to start teaching preschool in Connecticut soon after graduation. Despite the fact that I understand the importance and impact of teaching young children, I sometimes question my choice to go into the field due to the low wages and benefits that early educators typically receive.

The low wages received by early educators often discourages people from obtaining a bachelor's degree in the field. This makes it difficult for early childhood centers to obtain and sustain well-trained teachers. The median salary for preschool teacher in the USA ($28,570) is nearly half of the median salary for elementary school teachers ($54,890). This salary that is made even after obtaining a bachelor's degree often makes it difficult to pay student loans and afford to pay monthly bills. I am personally concerned about my ability to support myself and am looking for a second job to subsidize my income.

This is an issue that will impact the educational well-being and future of Connecticut’s young children, and requires immediate action. This policy would create a better place for the children and teachers of Connecticut because it would work to increase teacher retention rates and acknowledge the skills that are needed to provide high quality early childhood education. High quality programs for young children have been shown to have lifelong benefits. Our children deserve to have qualified teachers that are confident in their ability to financially support themselves.
I appreciate the opportunity to testify about S.B. No. 935 AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO DEVELOP AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR COMPENSATION SCHEDULE. Thank you for your consideration.