



**CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY ACTION**  
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**HB 5222, AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY IN THE CARE4KIDS PROGRAM FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES**

Date 3/5/2020

This testimony is submitted on behalf of Christian Community Action Inc. Shaunette James- Marquis. I work as a Family Coach to Homeless families enroll in our shelter services.

I am writing to support HB 5222, AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY IN THE CARE4KIDS PROGRAM FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES, to expand eligibility in the Care for Kids Program to include families experiencing homelessness.

Families experiencing homelessness often have fractured social supports. Children who experience homelessness have increased health risks, developmental delays, child welfare involvement, and behavioral health issues to name a few of the long-term, high cost consequences. National research finds that young children who have stayed in shelters have higher risk for developmental delays and higher rates of behavioral challenges (OPRE Report No. 2017-96, January 2017).

From October 2018 to September 2019, 526 children under the age of 5 were served in Connecticut's emergency shelter. The result is extreme levels of stress and trauma, especially for children, and increased use of public systems. [insert an example of a family]

Access to quality childcare for these children helps them through a difficult period, while freeing their parents to find work or sign up for needed employment training, and secure permanent housing as quickly as possible.

HB 5222 expands eligibility to the CARE4KIDS program to families with a parent or caretaker who meet category 1 (literally homeless) or category 4 (fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence) of the HUD definition of homeless, and have been seeking employment while living in a homeless shelter for at least two consecutive weeks. The program expansion will be available to them for a period not to exceed twelve weeks.

This expansion allows families the childcare support necessary while in shelter to seek and find employment and become fully eligible for CARE4KIDS. At present, I have a single mother who had (2) low paying jobs while in shelter and loss one and is in the process of losing the other all because she has NO DAYCARE Service. Not having daycare at easy access for homeless families is creating a barrier and that needs to STOP TODAY.

Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully submitted,

Shaunette James- Marquis, BS

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