

Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, and distinguished members of Higher Education. I am attending this hearing today to support funding for [SB 1034](#), An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment And Retention

Becoming a certified teacher is a lifelong dream of mine. You see, my passion for teaching started when I became an older sibling. Growing up in a single-parent household, you assume a mother's responsibilities while your mom works. So, you are to ensure that your youngest is being fed, clothed, and most of all educated. This working experience sparked my first interest in becoming a teacher and defined the kind of mom I am today.

As a native in Haiti's inner city, where poverty and despair are critical aspects of the landscape, I was one of the lucky few to survive childhood with my spirit and ambition intact. That was because of my passion for education. Back then, being educated was the social status. I had to stay focused on my education and siblings as well.

For me, pursuing an advanced degree in education in the United States is not a challenge but an opportunity. It is a personal crusade. I have been an educator, an advocate, a mentor, a trainer, and a counselor throughout my thirty-something years in Connecticut.

Education was always my top priority, and it became more of a focus when I became a mother of three who had the opportunity to homeschool my kids from birth to five. Circle of life, huh! They said people are not born teachers. I beg to differ! I believe teaching is in my DNA. So, earning my graduate degree shows my persistence, determination, intellectual prowess, and ability to handle challenging environments. However, becoming a certified teacher is the icing on my cake. It will tell employers and my professional peers that I am well-qualified and take my career seriously.

So, Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, and distinguished members of Higher Education. I am attending this hearing today to support funding for [SB 1034](#), An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment And Retention.

This CT Teacher Residency Program is ideal for a minority like me who is willing to learn and will be able to teach generations to come. You see, I have been trying to fulfill this lifelong dream for the past ten years, but I could not be due to financial obligations. There are no minor scholarships or grants for me since I already have a master's degree and many scholarships are not for advanced degrees, such as Masters, Ph.D., JD, etc.

Funding for this bill is necessary for me and many others to struggle financially to achieve their dreams. Finance for the CT Teacher Residency Program will help solve the educational inequality. It will also minimize barriers to the traditional certification admission process. Provide hands-on training for underemployed or unemployed adults with a pathway to a lifelong career and economic stability.

Funding for this bill is closing the education gap. It is to provide a pathway for our children to succeed in the 21st century. Whenever you have a few seconds to read, please read this [About Us – CREC Teacher Residency Program \(ct-trp.org\)](#).

They said COVID-19 has made inequality in education worse. No, COVID-19 puts the spotlight on educational inequality. Funding for this CT Teacher Residency Program will help address that problem. If we continue this path, our nation's already high educational inequality levels will reach irreversible heights for a generation of students.

I had a successful IT and corporate training career before ending up as a stay-at-home mom for nine years. I was leaving the American dream, had two houses, a car, and emergency funds. The company I worked for was the number in the market. You know what they, what goes up, must come down. Acquisition, department reduction, laid off from my ten-year position, lost my houses, filed for bankruptcy, and ended up pregnant with my third child. Because of all this happening, my son was born prematurely, which caused me to stop my studies and take care of him without support. My kids and I faced a dramatic change in lifestyle following the loss of all. We have been living at the poverty level ever since.

So, you see, supporting fund this CT Teacher Residency Program is critical to me. Now that all three of my kids are in school full-time. I am ready to take on a full-time career in educational technology. However, I need financial assistance to attend school and to become a certified teacher. Finance for this program will allow me to participate in this training that I desperately need. My kids will now see how important education is and how you can achieve your dream through perseverance and hard work in the land of opportunity of ours.

This single mother of three-story is the perfect example for our minority students to learn from and see that they can overcome any obstacles. We do not want to have teacher diversity for many years, and we want to make it permanent.

I want to continue to be proud to be from Connecticut, and I hope we can continue to take pride in our existence as "the Constitution State."

Thank you for considering my testimony. I support SB 1034 and hope the committee will vote favorably.

Thank you for your time,

Karline Augustin, Mother of Three!