



**Testimony in Support of SB 6 An Act Concerning Supports for Children and Families**  
Children's Committee

March 3, 2026

**Mendi Blue Paca**  
**President & CEO, Fairfield County's Community Foundation**

Senator Maher, Representative Paris, Representative Dauphinais, Senator Perillo and esteemed members of the Children's Committee, Fairfield County's Community Foundation is grateful for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **SB 6 An Act Concerning Supports for Children and Families**.

Fairfield County's Community Foundation serves the 23 towns and cities of Fairfield County. We partner closely with community organizations, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropists to address challenges, identify opportunities, and build a Fairfield County where everyone has a fair chance to thrive. Informed by three decades of community partnership and service, the Foundation has awarded more than \$420 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond.

The Foundation has a longstanding commitment to promoting social and economic mobility in our region. Each year, we invest more than \$1 million in organizations advancing economic opportunity through multiyear general operating support and proven programs. Establishing a permanent refundable child tax credit of \$600 supports this work by giving families greater financial stability and the flexibility needed to meet their goals.

We also maintain a long-standing commitment to supporting young people in Fairfield County, investing more than \$1 million annually in organizations that help youth and young adults graduate from high school and prepare for postsecondary education or employment. Our funding prioritizes programs that provide comprehensive wraparound support - **such as mental health services and food assistance** - because these are essential to achieving strong educational outcomes.

Establishing a Connecticut Child Tax Credit and providing no-cost school meals acknowledges the financial reality of raising children today. We commend the committee for recognizing the vital role these programs play in family well-being. In the face of rising food insecurity across Connecticut, we strongly support ensuring all students have access to school meals at no cost. Eliminating stigma and ensuring all children are well-nourished are critical to their ability to learn, grow, and thrive. Research consistently shows that free school meals reduce absenteeism and bullying while improving students' focus, engagement, and academic performance.

A child tax credit is neither new nor untested. The federal Child Tax Credit has existed since 1997 and has historically enjoyed broad bipartisan support. A state-level credit builds on this well-established policy framework and complements existing state and federal tax credits. Decades of research show that families typically use child tax credit funds to cover essential expenses such as housing, food, utilities, childcare, and education-related costs. These investments lead to measurable improvements in



children's health, educational outcomes, and long-term economic mobility.

The Foundation believes that establishing a permanent refundable child tax credit, paired with no-cost school meals, would deliver meaningful improvements in family financial well-being and student success, and represent a critical step toward a fairer, more economically secure Connecticut.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **SB 6 An Act Concerning Supports for Children and Families**. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Lutonya Russell-Humes, Vice President of Grants and Programs, [lrussell-humes@fccfoundation.org](mailto:lrussell-humes@fccfoundation.org), 203-750-3223.

Sincerely,

Mendi Blue Paca  
President & CEO