



**Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 111, An Act Concerning Funding For Child Care Programs**

**Appropriations Committee
March 18, 2022**

Good afternoon, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is grateful for this opportunity to submit testimony on **Senate Bill 111, An Act Concerning Funding For Child Care Programs**.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region. As a community foundation, we manage approximately \$1 billion in assets. In the past two years, the Foundation has distributed a record-breaking \$97 million in grants to promote equitable opportunity for all residents in our region. Made possible by the gifts of generous individuals, families and organizations, the Foundation has awarded grants of more than \$894 million since its founding in 1925.

In Greater Hartford, there are a number of good paying jobs available, but there is misalignment between the skillsets required and the skills of the current workforce. The Foundation's efforts focus on preparation, hiring and retention of residents with significant barriers to employment, including returning citizens and youth disconnected from school and work. This work includes 2Gen programs that take a family-centered approach and considers childcare and supports for both the parents and children, allowing parents to focus on their education and job training.

Public commitment must address the interplay of basic human needs including access to food, mental and physical health care services, housing, childcare, and other needs, and provide adequate support to the nonprofit organizations providing these services.

It is our goal to ensure that *all* children, especially those most vulnerable, have access to high quality early childhood experiences. Since 1987, the Foundation has invested more than \$40 million in early childhood development across the Greater Hartford area. The Foundation has supported early childhood policy, funding, and program quality, recognizing their importance in ensuring optimal safety and learning outcomes for children and pathways to economic security for their families and caregivers. As part of its COVID response efforts, the Foundation provided support to childcare providers, including assistance in applying for federal Paycheck Protection Program funds.

In January 2016, the Foundation launched the Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) that integrated education programs, support services, and career development to assist adult learners and expand their academic and job skill levels as a way of reaching self-sufficiency. CPI included an [extensive evaluation](#) of its various programs and outlined some of the challenges and success of the initiative. One of the key findings was that **childcare was the most frequent and costliest barrier to address**. While several of the CPI programs included support for childcare, it ultimately remained a significant barrier to employment.



The Foundation offers its support for Senate Bill 111 which seeks to allocate additional resources to the Office of Early Childhood from the General Fund to support state childcare programs and subsidies.

We appreciate the legislature's recognition of the vital role childcare plays in supporting working families and the need to support and enhance our existing childcare system to ensure that all Connecticut families have access to quality, affordable childcare.

The Foundation is eager to partner with legislators, advocates and businesses to eliminate barriers to employment for Black and Latinx residents to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to participate in the workforce and every family has access to quality affordable childcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our staff at policy@hfpg.org or 860-548-1888.