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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Beth Bye
Commissioner

**Testimony of Beth Bye, Commissioner
Office of Early Childhood
Before the Education Committee**

**Re: HB 7150 – An Implementing the Governor’s Recommendations Concerning Education
Friday, March 1 2019**

The Office of Early Childhood respectfully submits testimony in support of Sec. 13 of HB 7150 – An Act Implementing the Governor’s Recommendations Concerning Education.

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood advances a family-centered approach to support young children and their families. OEC provides a unified vision to support coordination and alignment between early childhood services. Through our core programs, we support infant and toddler care, preschool, home visiting, child care and youth camp licensing, home visiting, and early intervention to address developmental delays. Through this integrated strategy and collaboration with other state agencies and early childhood partners, OEC works to advance better coordinated, more cost-effective services that yield measurable results for Connecticut’s children and families.

Section 13 charges the Office of Early Childhood, within available appropriations, to conduct a study of enrollment and availability of slots in preschool programs in the state. This study would be in consultation with the Office of Policy & Management and the State Department of Education. The bill requires a report on the findings and any recommendations to be submitted to the Education Committee no later than November 1, 2019.

The Office of Early Childhood supports conducting a preschool needs and availability study. It will provide a fundamental blueprint for the future to better serve young children. This study will provide us data to better deploy our funding to meet deep pockets of need for quality, affordable preschool. We can complete this study with the agency’s available appropriations and will submit the findings and any recommendations by November 1, 2019.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am available to answer any questions from Committee members. I am committed to work together – with legislators, executive branch, providers, advocates and parents - to better serve our families with young children.