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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

David Wilkinson
Commissioner

**Testimony of David Wilkinson, Commissioner
Office of Early Childhood
Before the Education Committee
Re: HB 454 – An Act Concerning School Security
Wednesday, March 14, 2018**

Good morning Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, Representative Fleischmann, Representative Lavielle and distinguished members of the Education Committee. I am David Wilkinson, Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood. I am here today to testify on HB 454 – An Act Concerning School Security.

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood advances a family-centered and results-driven approach to support young children and their families. One of our largest areas of focus is the delivery of early care and education services to children, birth to age five, in licensed child care settings.

We are in favor of Sections 4 and 5 of SB 454 because it provides important supports to licensed child care programs to strengthen their security infrastructure. This language closes the loop on the communication system that needs to be implemented to ensure that licensed child care facilities are fully informed of emergencies in their vicinity. Sec. 19a-87g of the General Statutes, as amended by language contained in the OEC proposed bill, HB 5169, establishes the infrastructure necessary to operate this notification system.

The bill also includes the representation of licensed child care within local civil preparedness advisory councils. This will help to ensure that these programs' needs and interests are known and identified within the community.

The OEC is working with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and other emergency services partners to ensure the unique infrastructure and needs of child care settings are met. It is paramount that we work, to the largest extent possible to protect the safety of our youngest children and our dedicated child care providers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.