



February 13, 2020

Good morning distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Brian Bonds. I am the Administrative Director of Children's Services for Easterseals of Greater Waterbury. We provide high quality preschool education and childcare services to approximately 400 children at three locations in Waterbury and one in Meriden.

I respectfully request that the legislature restore the proposed cuts to Care-4-Kids funding. Obtaining quality safe reliable childcare is a barrier to many parents throughout the state. The Care-4-kids funding allows families to enter the workforce and contribute to the economy of our state. Without the assistance provided by care-4-kids many parents would be unable to work and the children would not receive the benefits of our school readiness early childhood education programs.

A year ago Care-4-Kids was reopened after a freeze to new parents, which provided a boost to some of the neediest children in Connecticut. The proposed cuts will lead to a reduction of overall funding and as previously stated the results will be a reduction of gainfully employed individuals that contribute to the tax base of our state and children will enter the public school system unprepared.

Furthermore, Easterseals is an employer of over 200 citizens of the state of Connecticut. The escalating cost of employee benefits (we offer medical and dental coverage to our employees), the rise in the minimum wage and the day to day cost of doing business are an ongoing challenge. Any cuts in funding exacerbate those challenges. We urge you to restore the proposed cuts to Care-4-kids.

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