



03/08/2021

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 6439 An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, And Making Appropriations Therefor.

CI is an agency dedicated to improving the lives of individuals. We began providing services to children and families, in home, community, clinic and school based settings in 2004 and expanded to Birth to Three in 2008. Our mission is to enhance the everyday lives of children and their families, while always recognizing the individual's distinct talents. Through our contract with the Office of Early Childhood, Creative Interventions provides Birth to Three services to families in over 60 towns and cities and employs an average of 125 providers.

CI currently provides Birth to Three services to over 500 families. Through our Birth to Three program, we are able to deliver early intervention services to families. Those essential services include; diagnostic assessments, developmental evaluations, early intervention services by licensed and certified professional staff, and service coordination services such as support in transitioning to a local school district. Our highly trained providers offer Birth to Three services that focus on parent/guardian training and we follow a coaching model to encourage caregiver implementation of strategies.

I am writing today to respectfully request that you please support the proposed \$1 million increase in Birth to Three in FY23. The funding amount reflects historical levels of caseload growth. These services meet the developmental and health-related needs of infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities and their families. Increasing caseload growth will allow more children in need to receive these essential services. Every dollar invested in Birth to Three programs saves the State \$12 per year in terms of special education service needs in the future.

Birth to Three is a valuable program that made indispensable services available to 6024 eligible families across CT in FY20. Birth to Three evaluations and identification of eligible children have continued to increase over the past ten years. Additionally, Birth to Three saves the state money as the average cost of Birth to Three services per child is significantly lower than the average cost of special education services in CT. In FY20, 340

children transitioned from Birth to Three and were not eligible for special education services. That is a substantial cost savings to the state. Research has proven time and time again that early identification and intervention are crucial to the long-term outcomes for children with special needs, decreasing costly high level needs in the future.

Additional funding to the Birth to Three program will allow the Office of Early Childhood to better meet the needs of families and children across the state. Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully,

Scott Levine

Scott Levine  
CEO



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Dr. Melissa S. Saunders, Ed.D., BCBA-D, LBA  
Executive Clinical Director

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