



**Testimony of
Mary Yordon
President, Norwalk Federation of Teachers, AFT 1723**

**HB 6439 AAC the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2021,
and Making Appropriations Therefore.
Governor's Budget, ECS Funding**

March 9, 2021

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations committee. My name is Mary Yordon and I am a teacher in Norwalk Public Schools and I am a Divisional Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of more than 90 local unions representing nearly 30,000 public and private sector employees. Our members include more than 15,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses and other school personnel across the state. It is on behalf of certified educators in AFT Connecticut that I appear before you to testify today.

I am here to advocate for full funding of the ECS funds, rather than the flat funding that has been proposed. There is not an equivalency between the Federal dollars and the ECS dollars. The ECS dollars support our operating budgets in important ways that cannot be served, such as salaried employees and long-standing needs that can't be ascribed to COVID. Our districts rely on ECS funds to provide important and needed services in our districts.

Please reconsider the decision to flat fund ECS.
Thank you for your time.

Testimony of

Jane Doe, Paraprofessional

Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals, AFT Local 2221

S.B. 300 - An Act Concerning Family Medical Leave Benefits for Certain Municipal Employees

Labor and Public Employees Committee

March 4, 2010

Good afternoon members of the Labor Committee.

I am Jane Doe, Second Vice President of The Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals. I have also been a bilingual paraprofessional at the Nursing Academy at Hartford High School for a period of 11 years. I would like today to speak to you about S.B. 300 which would enable paraprofessionals to be eligible for Family and Medical Leave.

Serving as a paraprofessional for all these years, I have seen how more and more the district is depending on paraprofessionals to assist teachers on implementations of new curriculums and on behavioral tactics. Working with medically fragile students, special education students and students with behavioral disorders is quite a challenge within itself. Paraprofessionals are the least paid in the school system yet we go beyond our roles. We have done it all; educators, caregivers, nurses, parent liaison and even social workers, not only to our students but also to parents.

I am in favor of extending Family and Medical Leave because some paraprofessionals have lost their jobs due to terminal illnesses, such as cancer, because they have exhausted their own sick time. Also, paraprofessionals sometimes need to take care of elderly parents or children with chronic illnesses. Because we earn so much less than other school personnel, we cannot afford to take them into nursing or convalescent homes.

Paraprofessionals are productive workers in the school community and give a lot of themselves to students and their families, but we also need to take care of ourselves and our own families. Enacting S.B. 300 will give us peace of mind that we could all benefit from.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.