



TO: Education Committee
FROM: Samantha Bell, CT Community Nonprofit Alliance
RE: SB 934 AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY IN THE CARE4KIDS PROGRAM TO PARENTS ENROLLED IN OTHER TYPES OF SCHOOL.

Good afternoon Representative Sanchez, Senator McCrory, Representative McCarty, Senator Berthel, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 934 AN ACT EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY IN THE CARE4KIDS PROGRAM TO PARENTS ENROLLED IN OTHER TYPES OF SCHOOL.

My name is Samantha Bell, Public Policy Intern, at the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance). The Alliance is Connecticut's statewide advocacy organization representing nonprofits, with a membership of more than 300 community organizations and associations across the state. Nonprofits deliver essential community services to more than half a million people each year and employ almost 14% of Connecticut's workforce.

SB 934 would expand eligibility of the Care4Kids program to include parents and guardians who are enrolled in school, to include higher education, adult education, ESL programs, and occupational school programs, in addition to high school, and require advance notice of expanded program eligibility. Care4Kids makes childcare affordable for low to moderate income families across Connecticut. Nonprofits provide Care4Kids services across Connecticut, and serve the children and families who are part of the Care4Kids program in many other ways.

Individuals that continue their education after high school earn more throughout their career than those with just a high school diploma. By expanding program eligibility to include more forms of education we are investing in the individual, their future and their family. The cost of childcare takes up sixteen percent of Connecticut's median family income. Expanding eligibility would allow parents and caregivers to focus on their studies, which is a long-term investment, without the added financial burden of childcare. Due to the high cost of childcare families may have to decide between paying for care or paying for other essentials like rent, food, and medication. When individuals are unable to afford childcare, they may have to watch their child instead of going to school. The cost of childcare should not place such a financial burden on families or force individuals to choose between caring for their child and their education.

We support expanding eligibility parameters for Care4Kids to include parents and guardians who are enrolled in school, in addition to high school, making affordable childcare available to more families in Connecticut. Thank you for your time and consideration.