



**Testimony of**

**Carrie Cassidy**

**Torrington Educator**

**Before the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Commission**

**HB 6187 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESTRUCTURING OF CERTAIN TAXES AND TAX EQUITY**

**SB 821 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REFORMATION OF CERTAIN TAXES AND TAX EQUITY**

**MARCH 15, 2021**

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara, Representative Scanlon, Senator Martin, Representative Cheeseman, and the distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. My name is Carrie Cassidy. I am a sixth grade science teacher for Torrington Public Schools and a supporter of the Recovery for All coalition. I am testifying in strong support of HB 6187 and SB 821. The past year has been incredibly difficult for many Connecticut families. The COVID pandemic has exposed the economic disparities within the state. Families, and their students, are suffering. The state of Connecticut has a responsibility to meet the needs of its residents.

Governor Lamont's budget does not meet the needs of my students, or the students in many classrooms throughout the state. This budget freezes ECS funding levels and cuts state funding, anticipating federal funds to make up the difference. The students in my district, and in all districts, deserve a fully funded public school. We need more guidance counselors and social workers to help our students process the last year of their lives, to help them make sense of their experiences of being in social isolation for so long. We need more teachers so we can have smaller class sizes and connect more easily with the students in our classes. To do this, we need more funding. The state of Connecticut needs to invest \$350 million to fully implement the new ECS formula. This new formula will allow us to address the impact of the pandemic, and the inequities it has brought to the public's attention. It will allow us to continue our work on social and racial equity, to ensure that all students reach their potential. Universal pre-K will give our youngest learners a strong foundation that will ensure academic success.

Education is obviously my top priority, but the needs of my students go beyond what I can provide in my classroom. They need access to quality health insurance, they need to know they have a home to return to after school, they need reliable internet access, and they need access to mental services.

I urge you to consider the needs of the many and pass HB 6187 and SB 821. We need to end economic and racial inequity and ensure a fair tax code.

Thank you.