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West Hartford

Reps. Bye & Fleischmann Lead Legislature In Fight For Federal Early Childhood Education Dollars

Politics

Submitted by David Bednarz, Connecticut General Assembly, on 2010-03-11.

State Representatives Andrew Fleischmann (D-West Hartford) and Beth Bye (D-West Hartford), determined for the state to obtain available federal dollars for early childhood education, organized an informational forum at the State Capitol on Monday where they brought in national experts and commissioners to speak with the Education and Human Services Committees on the issue.

"Obtaining these grants for early childhood education is high on our priority list and something that we cannot miss out on," said Bye, who has used her expertise in the field of early childhood education to advocate for reforms that benefit the state. "States across the country are fighting for this available federal funding, and we must be proactive now to ensure that every available tool is used when the state submits its application."

Rep. Fleischmann, as house chair of the education committee, moderated the panel discussion and implored the commissioners to work together to assure that Connecticut is prepared to apply for the Early Childhood Challenge Funds, Head Start Funding and the Community Development Block Grants.

"Funding for pre-school education is a proven, cost-effective, critical way to improve educational results," said Fleischmann, who co-drafted the legislation establishing Connecticut's Early Childhood Education Cabinet. "I'm going to do everything possible to make sure that Connecticut gets the federal funding our children need and deserve."

Bye and Fleischmann arranged for Adele Robinson from the National Association for the Education of Young Children to attend the hearing. She was able to give guidance to the commissioners of the State Department of Education and Department of Social Services about how to best compete for the federal funding. Representatives from Congressman Chris Murphy's office were also in attendance to help the state continue tracking the funding at the federal level.