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Testimony

To: House Education Committee
From: Reeve Murphy, Deputy Commissioner
Subject: S.261: An Act Related to Mitigating Trauma and Toxic Stress During Childhood by Strengthening Child and Family Services
Date: April 19, 2018
Cc: Luciana DiRuocco, Ken Schatz, Karen Vastine, Paul Dragon, Kathy Hentcy

The Child Development Division's work is focused on promotion of optimal development and prevention of toxic stress for young children so we are pretty far upstream on trauma. One of the fundamental frameworks that guides all of our work is the Strengthening Families Framework developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy with support from the Doris Duke Foundation. Strengthening Families is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect by building protective factors in families¹. This approach and framework are infused into all of our programs and services in CDD.

That said, in an imperfect world we encounter toxic stress and the traumatic impact of adverse childhood experiences in children, in parents who have experienced their own early trauma, and, unfortunately, in the workforce that provides services to young children and their families. Addressing this is an integral component of the early childhood professional development system that we support – Northern Lights at CCV.

Professional development experiences related to trauma-informed practice are embedded in Northern Lights at CCV. The system supports training and mentoring on building protective factors in children and families (including resilience) through the Strengthening Families Approach for child care providers in all types of

¹ Five Protective Factors as defined in the Strengthening Families Framework are: Parental resilience; Social connections; Knowledge of parenting and child development; Concrete support in times of need; and Social and emotional competence of children



programs. They offer training related to the social-emotional development of children. Summer Institutes for early care and learning practitioners in public and private settings offered over the past two summers with funding from the Early Learning Challenge Grant have included a focus on the impact of trauma on young children and families and how to recognize and mitigate it. There are two trainings currently under development specifically for early care and learning practitioners at Northern Lights at CCV that will be offered statewide in 2018. Trauma-Informed Practices I and II. Each is six trainings hours offered to participants for \$15.00. We also have a number of approved on-line trainings offered by national experts in trauma-informed practice and in promoting social emotional development in children.

Similarly, Family Partnership training offered through Children's Integrated Services incorporates the lens of trauma-informed practice for home visitors and other professionals working with young children and their families.

