

WASHINGTON, DC – Representatives Joe Courtney (D-CT) and Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), along with Senators Chris Dodd (D-CT) and Joe Lieberman (ID-CT), introduced legislation this week that would authorize new partnerships between institutions of higher education and local low-income school districts to enhance teacher skills and student achievement. The Teachers Professional Development Institutes Act would provide for the establishment of eight new Teachers Professional Development Institutes each year over the next five years. These institutes would be modeled after the very successful Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, which has been in operation since 1978.

Senators Lieberman and Dodd introduced their bill in the Senate yesterday, and today Representatives DeLauro and Courtney introduced a companion bill in the House of Representatives.

“When our teachers use proven and effective classroom methods, our kids win,” said Dodd. “This bill takes the successful teacher development model created at the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute and establishes eight similar institutes throughout the country. It will help our teachers become even better, which means our children will get an even better education.”

“We know that teachers gain confidence and enthusiasm when they have a deeper understanding of the subject matter that they teach and this translates into higher expectations for their students and an increase in student achievement,” Lieberman said. “This legislation will give teachers around the country an opportunity to gain more sophisticated knowledge and a chance to develop curriculum with other colleagues that can be directly applied in their classrooms.”

“Based on the innovative Yale- New Haven Teachers Institute model, which enables teachers to focus on and build their strengths, this bill will dramatically improve the quality of our nation’s teachers—translating directly to higher student achievement. By establishing partnerships between varied learning institutions, we will ensure that generations of school children will have the opportunities they deserve to succeed,” said Congresswoman DeLauro. “Especially right now given the debate around teacher evaluations, I am very proud of the tried and true method developed in my hometown to improve our school system, and am eager to see its impact nationwide.”

“Expanding this successful program will provide teachers with the tools and resources necessary to enhance their curriculums and develop more well-rounded students,” said Rep. Courtney, a member of the House Education and Labor Committee. “I’m confident that the Yale-New Haven model can be replicated nationally, and that it will benefit low-income schools and students across the country.”

The Teachers Professional Development Institutes Act would establish Teachers Professional Development Institutes throughout the nation each year over five years. Teachers Professional Development Institutes build partnerships between institutions of higher education and local public schools with a significant number of low-income students. The goal of the Institutes is to

strengthen the present teacher workforce by giving participants the opportunity to gain more sophisticated content knowledge and a chance to develop curriculum units that can be directly applied in classrooms.

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