

To The Charter Revision Committee:

Good Evening! I Am Claudine - - -
I live in New Haven, work in
N.H. School System. I am Co-Chair
for Ward 19.

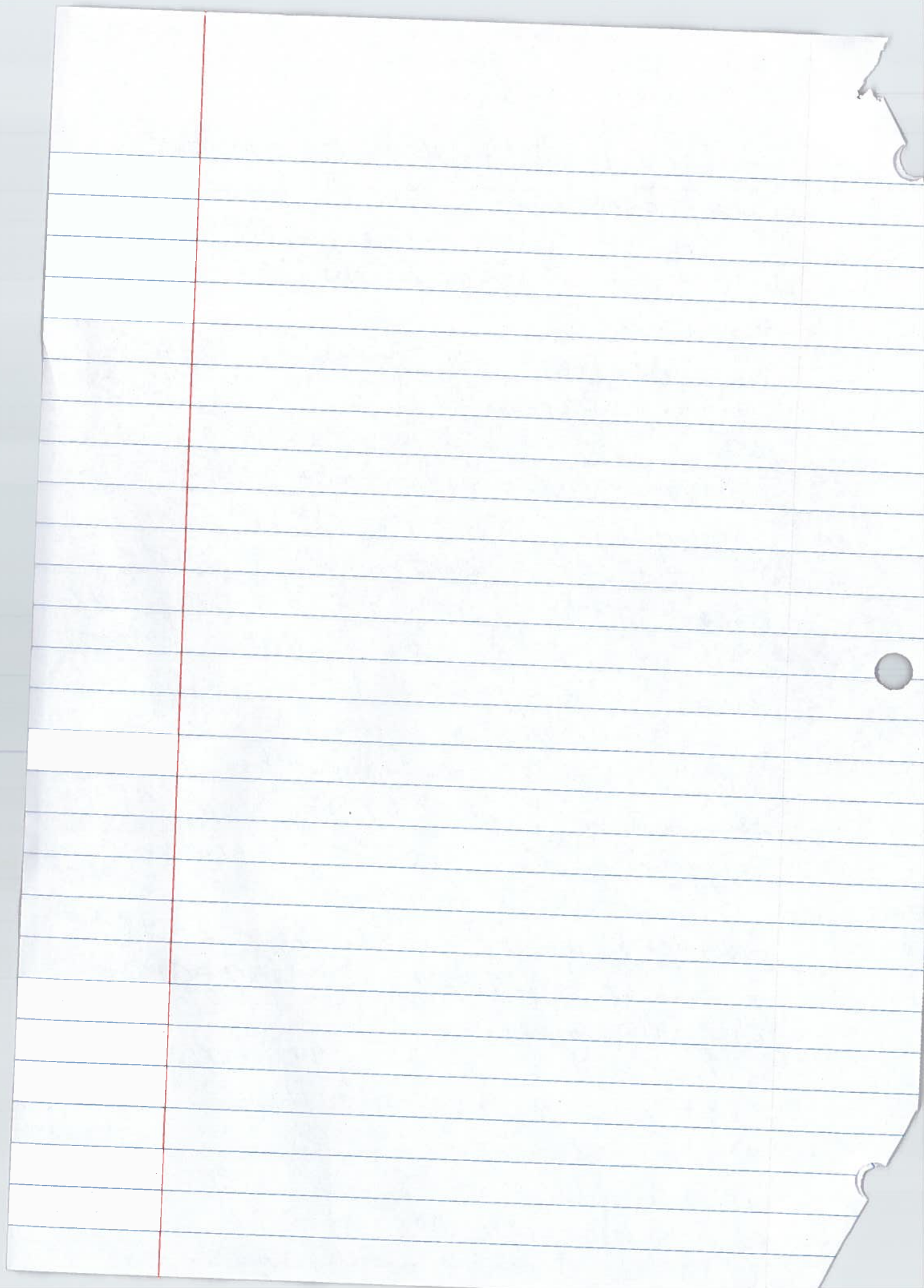
I am here to speak in support
of the perposed Representation on
N.H. Board of Education. E. Bd.

I have always felt that there
should be parent representation
on the school Board. With out
parents, there may be no one on
the board that could speak from
direct experience regarding
what kind of homework students
come home with, How the students
feel about school^{and} What kind of
support students are receiving?

I strongly support the
Charter Revision to include, at least
2- N.H.P.S. parents or Guardian
or Care giver.

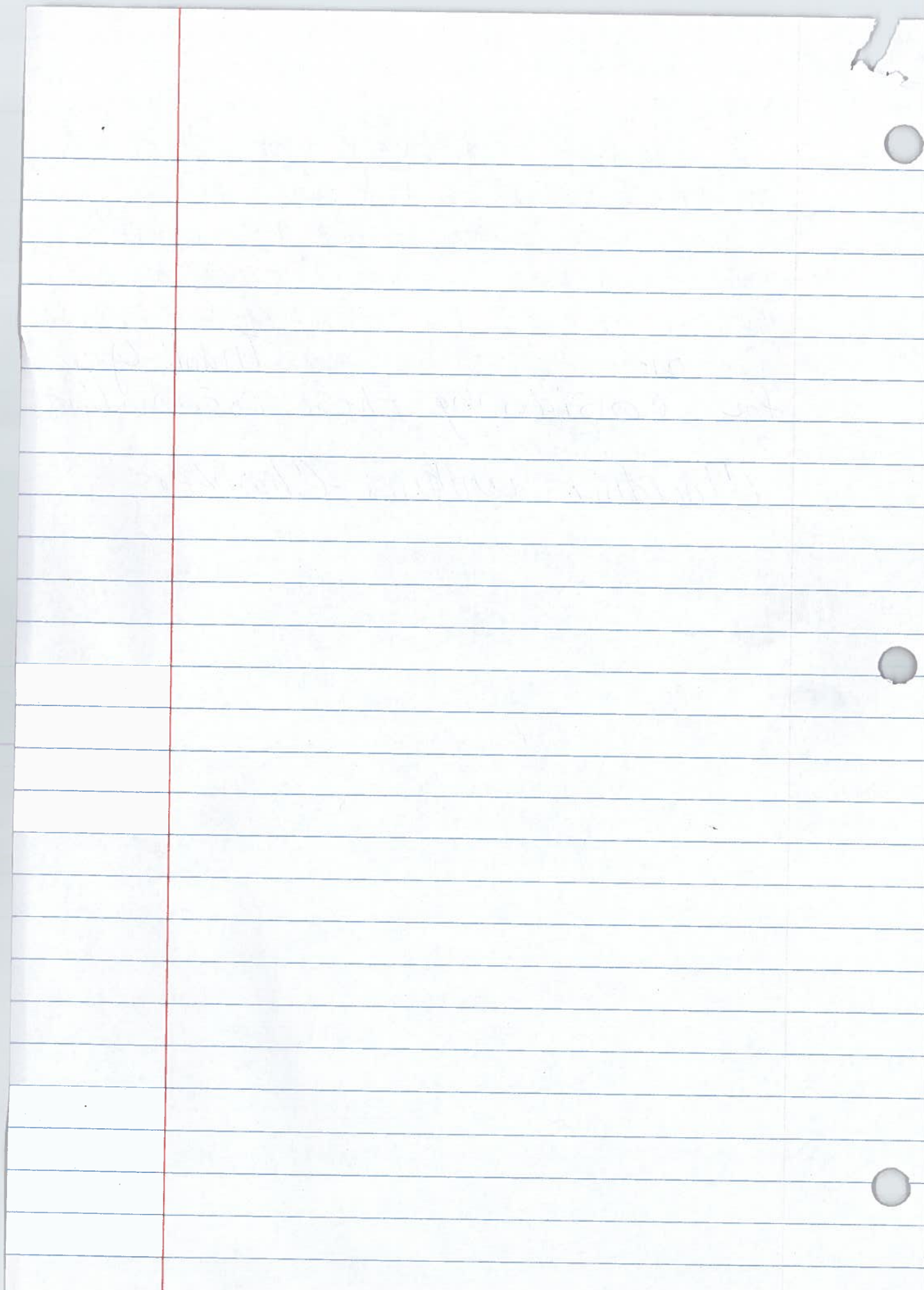
The presence of these members
would ensure that ALL SCHOOLS
are Prioritized equally.

Also Replace the Mayor's Seat with
a 5th appointed, or 3rd elected Seat.
With No offence to our Mayor.



I do not feel the mayor's Seat
on the Executive Bd does not
make the Mayor more accountable
for the school system. I feel the
Mayor would be very accountable
for our school system. Thank you
for considering these recommendations.
Thank you

Claudine Wilkins-Chambers



My name is Lisa Bassani and I am a parent of two girls at Nathan hale school. I am here to testify in favor of the proposed charter revision which would require that 2 members of the Board of Education be either parents or caregivers of students. This is an eminently reasonable proposal to ensure those directly impacted by the decisions of the Bd of Ed are at the table.

The Bd of Ed's decisions on how to allocate millions and millions of dollars, on which contractors to hire or which contracts to renew, and which person leads the system, etc affect us and our kids on a daily basis. And we parents are at ground zero – we know what's working and we know the countless things that aren't. We have networks of friends that amplify our knowledge of the overall system. I have friends with kids in Betsy Ross, Co-op, New Haven Academy, Wilbur Cross, ECA, Edgewood, and many other schools. This ground level conversation and information sharing is irreplaceable in identifying systemic issues and finding workable teams of parents and educators to fix them. The time has come to codify this requirement for parent representation through a charter revision.

I will add too that the proposal to remove the Mayor as a voting member of the Board of Ed is another whose time has come. New Haven is an outlier in this regard. The Mayor would still have a significant ability to influence the Board through his or her appointees. I urge you to bring New Haven in line with the rest of the country and support this additional change to the charter. Thanks for your time.

Good evening everyone. My name is Maritza Spell, and today I am here to suggest a change to the board's current composition of 4 appointed members, 2 elected members, and the Mayor that was established as part of the most recent charter revision ten years ago.

Parent voice is something that the board is currently missing. Since the late Daisy Gonzalez's time on the board came to an end, this unique and valuable perspective on board matters has been lacking.

While the Mayor seemingly fulfills this role as a parent on the board, the specific struggles that most of the New Haven Public School population faces are not adequately reflected by his experience.

Given that a healthy democratic governance structure centers the voices of those personally invested and Decades of research reveals many benefits of parental and caregiver involvement in schools and school systems, I suggest that the board moves to include more parental representation.

Representation from at least two current New Haven Public Schools parents or caregivers would facilitate the flow of information on current school conditions from families to the Board of Education, bring a sense of urgency to the governance process, and improve outcomes overall.

Nuestra aportación va mucho más que el consumo . Somos una comunidad que brinda cultura , artistas, ingenieros, profesores, obreros y trabajadoras del hogar, también somos voluntarios en nuestras instituciones religiosas locales, en las escuelas y en nuestras comunidades. Tenemos experiencia, conocimientos y vivencias que benefician a los consejos y comisiones de la ciudad. Y estamos dispuestos y deseosos de servir.

New Haven se proclama una ciudad santuario y un lugar que acoge a todos los migrantes. Sin embargo, no tenemos la oportunidad de hacer oír nuestra voz de forma inclusiva y que nos haga sentir realmente que formamos parte de esta democracia.

Gracias por su atención. Está en sus manos hacer un cambio que beneficiaría a toda la ciudad de New Haven.

Buenas tardes

Soy Carolina Sanchez, vivo en la 33 Lander St residente de New Haven desde hace cinco años . Soy madre de familia de 3 hijas.

Hoy doy mi testimonio como integrante de Unidad Latina en Acción. Somos una organización que lucha por los derechos de la gente migrante y trabajadora. Tenemos más de mil miembros que viven en todos los barrios de la Ciudad de New Haven.

Empecé a trabajar en el 2019 en una taquería de la ciudad todo iba bien, hasta que en el año 2022 me empezaron acosar, no me pagaban las horas extras, abusaban de mí solo por el hecho de ser mujer de color y migrante , soporte mucha humillación, me despidieron por defender mis derechos y los derechos de mis compañeros, ya cansada de tanto abuso llame a la policía e hice el reporte, ellos nunca hicieron nada, es muy triste decir que hasta la concejal del distrito está a favor del opresor, necesitamos que nos represente personas de nuestra comunidad migrante para que luche por nuestros derechos.

Vivimos en New Haven y soy una mujer trabajadora que paga impuestos ,criamos a nuestros hijos y familias aquí, por eso aportamos recursos de consumo comercial que genera recursos en la economía y crecimiento en esta ciudad.

Testimonio Sara Montero

Buenas noches.

Mi nombre es Sara Montero soy residente de New Haven desde hace 1 año. Soy madre de familia de 1 hija. Soy voluntaria con varias organizaciones y escuelas, entre ellas Unidad Latina en Acción.

Hoy doy mi testimonio como integrante de Unidad Latina en Acción. Somos una organización que lucha por los derechos de la gente migrante y trabajadora.

Solicitamos a la Junta de Concejales que cambien la Carta Constitutiva de la Ciudad de New Haven para permitir que las personas que no son ciudadanas puedan servir en las juntas y comisiones de la Ciudad.

Somos gente honrada que elegimos establecernos en New Haven por ser llamada una ciudad santuario, pero nos excluyen y en varias ocasiones violan nuestros derechos.

El año pasado inicié a trabajar en un restaurante muy conocido en New Haven como dishwasher donde me pagaban la hora a \$12 dólares, trabajaba 6 días a la semana y hacía 57 horas semanales, y no me pagaban las horas extras. Nuestras voces deben ser escuchadas y no silenciadas como ha pasado por estos años.

Nosotros aportamos de muchas maneras no solo económicamente sino también culturalmente, pagamos impuestos, trabajamos y la mayoría de nosotros tenemos dos trabajos, nuestros hijos asisten a la escuela, participamos en eventos culturales, ayudamos a establecer una economía en New Haven. Tenemos experiencia, conocimientos y vivencias que benefician a los consejos y comisiones de la ciudad. Y estamos dispuestos y deseosos de servir.

Gracias por su atención. Está en sus manos hacer un cambio que beneficiaría a toda la ciudad de New Haven.

Buenas tardes

Soy Juana Valle, residente de New Haven desde hace más de 25 años. Soy madre de familia de 4 hijos.

Hoy doy mi testimonio como integrante de Unidad Latina en Acción. Somos una organización que lucha por los derechos de la gente migrante y trabajadora. Tenemos más de mil miembros que viven en todos los barrios de la Ciudad de New Haven.

A finales del 2019, a mi esposo lo despidieron injustamente en una pizzería que trabajó por más de 20 años, posteriormente justo cuando inició la pandemia y estábamos con problemas económicos, el departamento donde vivía no contaba con las condiciones higiénicas, hice un reporte a la ciudad y en represalia me pusieron un juicio de desalojo que duró más de dos años, La Comisión de Rentas Juntas, no pudo hacer nada, nosotros como migrantes sufrimos de injusticias y esto pasa porque no tenemos representantes que cambien por leyes justas a favor de todos nosotros por tal motivo, Solicitamos a la Junta de Concejales que cambien la Carta Constitutiva de la Ciudad de New Haven para permitir que las personas que no son ciudadanas puedan servir en las juntas y comisiones de la Ciudad.

Vivimos en New Haven y somos una comunidad trabajadora que paga impuestos, creamos trabajos por medio de pequeños negocios ,criamos a nuestros hijos y familias aquí, por eso aportamos recursos de consumo comercial que genera recursos en la economía y crecimiento en esta ciudad.

Nuestra aportación va mucho más que el consumo . Somos una comunidad que brinda cultura , artistas, ingenieros, profesores, obreros y trabajadoras del hogar, también somos voluntarios en nuestras instituciones religiosas locales, en las escuelas y en nuestras comunidades. Tenemos experiencia, conocimientos y vivencias que benefician a los consejos y comisiones de la ciudad. Y estamos dispuestos y deseosos de servir.

New Haven se proclama una ciudad santuario y un lugar que acoge a todos los migrantes. Sin embargo, no tenemos la oportunidad de hacer oír nuestra voz de forma inclusiva y que nos haga sentir realmente que formamos parte de esta democracia.

Gracias por su atención. Está en sus manos hacer un cambio que beneficiaría a toda la ciudad de New Haven.

Richard Hernandez
Ward 7 resident of New Haven
32 High Street New Haven, CT

Testimony to support a more democratic Board of Education

June 20, 2023

My name is Richard Hernandez. I currently live in Ward 7 at 32 High Street. As a Yale Undergraduate, I have gathered some experience and connection with the New Haven Public Schools. Throughout my first year at Yale, I participated in a program called Big Brother, Big Sister where I was a mentor to two elementary school students at Truman School.

Coming from Los Angeles and going to public schools within one of the largest public school districts in the country my whole life, I was surprised to find that New Haven has a Board of Education with **four** appointed members, the mayor himself, and only two elected members. To me, this was unheard of since the Los Angeles Board of Ed consists of seven elected members who in turn elect the superintendent. Upon this finding, I decided to do some more research into the school districts within Connecticut.

I have not completed my research, but so far I have found the following data:

- In Norwalk Public Schools, all 9 members of the Board of Ed are elected by voters.
- In the Hartford school district, the mayor appoints five members, and voters elect four members.
- In the New Britain school district, all ten members of the Board of Education are elected, and the mayor is never on the Board of Education.
- In the Bridgeport school district as well, all nine members of the Board of Education are elected and the mayor is never on the BOE.

I also want to share some data about school boards in the rest of the country. Around the nation, 95% of school boards are elected by voters.¹ In Boston in 2021, voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum to change from an appointed school board to an elected school board. Every other city in Massachusetts – 351 municipalities – have elected school boards.

I believe the New Haven Board of Education should be more representative of the families and communities that NHPs serves. NHPs families and voters should have a real voice in the decisions that impact their children. I support the following reforms:
Four seats on the BOE should be elected by city voters and three appointed by the mayor. Immigrants should be allowed to serve on the Board of Education and on all city commissions. Two seats on the BOE should be reserved for parents/guardians of current NHPs students.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

¹ Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, "Out of Control: The Systematic Disenfranchisement of African American and Latino Communities through School Takeovers," (2015).

Good Evening. My name is Kica Matos. I live at 89 East Pearl St. I am a resident of the city of New Haven and have lived here for the last 21 years. I serve as the President of the National Immigration Law Center, better known as NILC. NILC works to defend and advance the rights and opportunities of low-income immigrants through litigation, policy advocacy, and narrative and culture change.

I am here this evening to strongly encourage the Committee of the Whole of the Board of ALDERS to recommend a charter revision so that New Haven residents who are not electors can serve on Boards and Commissions.

The charter's exclusion of immigrants, refugees and non-citizens from participating in Boards and Commissions is inconsistent with our status as a sanctuary city. All of our city residents should be able to serve - it would both benefit our city and strengthen our democracy.

As we know, immigrants, refugees and others are our neighbors and our co-workers. They pay

And in
init

other economic contributions to this city. New Haven is the place that they call home, and it is here where they have chosen to grow roots and raise their families. The vibrancy of this city has been boosted in part by these communities. Yet we reject the expertise and knowledge that they could potentially bring to City Boards and Commissions. So today, while they are directly impacted by the decisions these bodies make, they are denied the opportunity to have a voice and to serve, despite a willingness to do so.

Other jurisdictions around the country have paved the way and strengthened their own democracies by moving in this direction. In 2019, California enacted SB 714, which allows non-citizens to be appointed or elected to serve on county central committees. One year later, San Francisco became the first major city to allow non-citizens to serve on commissions and advisory boards, and Hayward, CA passed a similar ballot measure. In 2021, Santa Ana approved a law allowing non-citizens to serve on boards. Last November, Chula Vista CA voters approved a ballot initiative allowing immigrants to serve on local commissions.

Boulder CO, the only requirements to serve on city boards

and committees is that you be a city resident and 18 or older. Other jurisdictions have gone a step further on the civic engagement front by allowing noncitizens to vote in local elections. (Vermont and Maryland. NY and CA tried)

Let me wrap up by sharing a reflection. New Haven was once considered to be one of the nation's most progressive cities when it came to immigration issues. We pioneered city identification cards and were the second city in the nation whose police force declined to ask residents about their immigration status. During the Trump years, our efforts to offer sanctuary to those facing deportation were notable and lauded. Sadly, today, we are no longer seen as that beacon of light. Tonight, I encourage the leadership of this city to put us back on the map. Let us ensure that New Haven's "sanctuary city" includes giving all residents an equal opportunity to have their voices heard and to participate in our democracy.

Gabriella Fernando
Ward 7 resident of New Haven
455 Orange Street New Haven, CT 06511

Testimony to support a more democratic Board of Education

April 20, 2023

My name is Gabriella Fernando. I live in Ward 7 at 455 Orange Street, New Haven, CT 06511. As an undergraduate student at Yale University, I am an after school teacher at Yale's Peabody Museum, which serves New Haven public high school students across the city's schools.

I support a more democratic Board of Education where NHPS families and voters have a real voice in the decisions that impact our children. In particular, I want to shed light on the importance of including non-citizen immigrants on the Board of Ed and all city commissions.

As an after school teacher to NHPS students at the Peabody Museum's EVOLUTIONS program, I witness firsthand the diverse identities of this district's students as well as their passions for learning and their desires for autonomy in their own education. Secondly, as a student in Yale's Ethnicity, Race, and Migration major who has excelled in several classes within Yale's Education Studies program, my studies uphold racial and ethnic identity as a significant thread in the rich tapestry of equitable public education.

Today, NHPS students speak 70 different languages and report 52 different countries of origin. As of 2023, 21% of New Haven's 19,150 public school students are multilingual learners. A significant portion of NHPS students are either immigrants themselves or the children of immigrants. A study at Southern Connecticut State University shows that the number of multilingual learners in New Haven schools increased from 1 in 10 in 2020 to more than 1 in 5 in 2023 despite the district's overall population decrease, and these students are overwhelmingly concentrated within the same schools. Furthermore, NHPS has seen a 26% increase in the percentage of newcomer multilingual learners over the last 2 years, particularly from Guatemala, Ecuador, and Afghanistan. The Southern Connecticut State University study concludes that not only are Connecticut multilingual learners significantly less likely to graduate from high school than their peers, but they also overwhelmingly attend schools with the lowest Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE) in the state.

Research from Florida State University and UC Berkeley shows that a more racially representative school board creates more equitable school punishment as well as

significantly increased spending on facilities in schools serving majority students of color. With a substantial portion of New Haven students being immigrants or the children of immigrants, it is imperative that immigrants be allowed to serve on the Board of Education to represent this growing community within NHPS.

I believe that the Board of Education should be more democratic and representative of NHPS parents and families. I support the following reforms: Two seats on the BOE should be reserved for parents/guardians of current NHPS students. Four seats on the BOE should be elected by city voters and three appointed by the mayor. Immigrants should be allowed to serve on the Board of Education and on all city commissions.

I thank you for your time and consideration, and hope that the Board of Education can evolve to best serve and reflect the interests of all NHPS students.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Hilaria Ogando
Resident of Ward 3

Testimony in support of a more democratic Board of Education
New Haven Board of Alders
June 20, 2023

I have been a New Haven resident for over 15 years. I live in Ward 3 and I am the parent of a New Haven Public Schools student. Today I give my testimony in favor of more balance on the Board of Education and more representation by parents like me.

I express my support for two changes:

- Two members of the Board should be parents of children who are currently studying in the New Haven Public Schools.
- Four members of the Board should be elected by the voters of the city and three appointed by the mayor.

At this time, only one out of the seven members of the Board of Ed has children who are currently NHPS students. It's important to have more balance and more representation on the Board of Ed. Parents see what happens in the schools every day. We know what students and families need.

My son just graduated from Barnard School and he did well. He always got A's or A+'s. This is because I gave him opportunities to study outside of school. From kindergarten through 5th grade I took him to New Haven Reads to have extra tutoring. I know that reading is essential. Recently he has been participating in the Pathfinder program at Hopkins, a private school.

Although my son had a good time at Barnard School, other families weren't so lucky. I have seen firsthand the disruptions in education that occur when the school is understaffed and lacks consistent leadership.

During my son's time at Barnard, they changed the administration three times. There were a lot of substitute teachers, and the kids didn't respect them very much. This happens when there are few experienced teachers in the school and there are many substitute teachers: they cannot earn the respect of the students. There were many bullying problems and some families had to take their children out of the school.

I have also seen first hand that the lottery system does not work for many families. For high school, my son applied to three magnet schools, but because he received number 80, none were chosen. My son wanted to study at ESUMS school, because he wants to study engineering, science and math, but he applied twice, last year and this year, and he had no luck in the lottery. In sum, it's important to make the Board of Education more representative so that the Board understands the reality that parents and families go through.

I also agree that you should allow immigrants to serve on the Board of Education and on all city commissions. I have been a resident of this city for 15 years. I am a permanent resident, and I have not yet been able to become a US citizen. However, I am part of this city. I have a certificate in early childhood development and early childhood education. I work as a teacher's assistant for LULAC Headstart. I have knowledge to share. I want to have a voice and a vote.

It is time for more representation on the Board of Education. One in four students in the New Haven Public Schools is a multilingual student. My voice counts and the voice of my community counts.

Thank you very much for listening to my testimony.

Hilaria Ogando
Residente del Distrito 3

Soy residente de New Haven desde hace más de 15 años. Vivo en el distrito 3 de New Haven y soy madre de un estudiante de las Escuelas Públicas de New Haven.

Hoy doy mi testimonio a favor de que haya más equilibrio en la Junta de Educación y más representación por parte de los padres de familia como yo.

Estoy de acuerdo con los siguientes cambios:

- Dos miembros de la Junta deben ser padres de familia de niños que están estudiando actualmente en las Escuelas Públicas de New Haven.
- Cuatro miembros de la Junta deben ser elegidos por los votantes de la ciudad y tres designados por el alcalde.

En este momento, solo uno de los siete miembros de la Junta de Educación tiene hijos que estudian en las escuelas públicas actualmente. Es importante que haya más equilibrio y más representación en la Junta. Los padres de familia vemos lo que sucede en las escuelas todos los días. Vemos lo que los estudiantes y las familias necesitan.

Mi hijo acaba de graduarse de la escuela Barnard y le fue bien. Siempre sacaba calificaciones de A o A+. Esto se debe a que yo le di oportunidades para estudiar fuera de la escuela. Desde kinder hasta el 5 grado lo llevaba a New Haven Reads para tener ayuda adicional para la lectura. Sé que la lectura es fundamental. Recientemente él ha participado en el programa Pathfinder en la escuela privada Hopkins.

A pesar de que mi hijo se lo pasó bien en la escuela Barnard, otras familias no tuvieron tanta suerte. He visto de primera mano las interrupciones en la educación que ocurren cuando la escuela carece de personal y de liderazgo constante.

En el tiempo que mi hijo estudiaba en Barnard, cambiaron la administración tres veces. Había muchos profesores sustitutos, y los niños no les respetaban mucho. Esto sucede cuando hay pocos maestros con experiencia en la escuela y hay muchos maestros sustitutos: no pueden ganarse el respeto de los estudiantes. Hubo muchos problemas de bullying y algunas familias tuvieron que sacar a sus hijos de la escuela.

También he visto de primera mano que el sistema de la lotería no funciona para muchas familias. Para la escuela secundaria, mi hijo aplicó en tres escuelas magnet, pero por recibir el número 80, ninguno fue escogido. Mi hijo quería estudiar en la escuela ESUMS, porque quiere estudiar ingeniería, ciencias y matemáticas, pero aplicó dos veces, el año pasado y este año, y no tuvo suerte en la lotería. En conclusión, es importante hacer la Junta de Educación más representativa para que la Junta entienda la realidad que los padres y las familias vivimos.

También estoy de acuerdo que ustedes deberían permitir que los inmigrantes sirvan en la Junta de Educación y en todas las comisiones de la ciudad.

Soy residente de la ciudad desde hace 15 años. Soy residente permanente, y todavía no he podido convertirme en ciudadana norteamericana. Sin embargo, soy parte de esta ciudad. Tengo un certificado en el desarrollo de la primera infancia y la educación infantil. Trabajo como asistente de maestra para LULAC Headstart. Tengo conocimiento para compartir. Quiero tener voz y voto.

Es hora de que haya más representación en la Junta de Educación. Uno de cada cuatro estudiantes en las Escuelas Públicas de New Haven es un estudiante multilingüe. Mi voz cuenta y la voz de mi comunidad cuenta.

Muchas gracias por escuchar mi testimonio.