

January 30, 2007

Testimony on SB 567
An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for Repair of a Building for
Alliance for Living, Inc., in New London

In 1998, Alliance for Living, Inc., New London County's only AIDS Service Organization, was formed through the merger of two organizations that served the HIV/AIDS population of southeastern CT since 1986: Helping Our People Endure and S.E. CT AIDS Project. The consolidation of organizations eliminated replication of services, made services more accessible for people living with HIV/AIDS and has proven cost efficient. Alliance has a three story "Living Center" located in New London and an office in the Infectious Disease Clinic located on the campus of Backus Hospital.

The population Alliance primarily serves is individuals and families who:

Live at or below the poverty level;

- Whose health condition varies from an undetectable viral load to individuals whose immune system has been totally compromised and are in their final stages of life due either to opportunistic diseases, damage the toxicity of the antiretroviral medications has had on their bodies such as organ failure, or both;
- Individuals who are homeless or live in subsidized housing,;
- 60% male, 40% female ranging in age of 13 to 72;
- 62% Hispanic and African American, 36% White and 2% unknown.

With a staff of 13, Alliance is dedicated to improving the quality of life of its members through comprehensive non-medical programs which promote health, financial and spiritual stability, to each member's capacity. Programs include case management, a food pantry, meals for support groups and members 6 times per week, a scattered site housing program, self-esteem and self-sufficiency workshops, and an educational outreach program, *Positively Speaking*, focused on HIV/AIDS/STD prevention presented to students and civic organizations.

Request for Funding: \$30,000, removal of asbestos \$70,000, new siding

The Living Center located in New London was constructed in 1932. Alliance purchased it with federal and state bonding and private contributions and has completed extensive renovations to the inside which includes reconfiguration of office and communal space, 70 new double hung

windows, handicap access and a commercial kitchen in which over 12,000 meals are prepared annually for our members. The building currently has a simulated brick façade which has begun to deteriorate and fall off the building precipitously. Behind the simulated brick is a layer of asbestos which is now exposed to the air and climate. Wind and rain are exacerbating the deterioration of the exposed asbestos. As the members Alliance serves have chronically compromised immune systems, the added exposure to asbestos further endangers their health.

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