

As a voting constituent from Bridgeport I would like to ask the Appropriations Committee to reinstate funding for Children's Trust Fund, the Parent Trust Fund, and the Commission on Children. In tough economic times programs that teach advocacy and promote involvement are especially valuable.

In 2008 my wife and I completed the Parent Leadership Training Institute program in Bridgeport and our children completed the Children's Leadership Training Institute program. We use the training we received weekly if not daily. There are hundreds like us being trained each year in this state. Once the training is done we are out there working in the communities and making a difference.

The Children's Trust Fund and the Commission on Children does great work helping at risk children and promoting positive roles for children. Once children are shown that they are valued and can have a positive role in society you can change their path forever.

Funding for prevention programs are important all times but especially now when the budget is tight. Studies show that it is more cost effective to prevent problems with youth than to correct them in the future. It also sends a message to our youth and parents that they are valuable to us.

Thank you for your time.

John Wilkins

Bridgeport