



BOYS & GIRLS
CLUBS OF AMERICA

Testify w/ Rep Tim O'Brien + Mary Wilson
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB of NEW BRITAIN, INC.

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UNITED WAY

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PRESIDENT
JUDITH K. GRECO

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TODD C. CZUPRINSKI

February 26, 2009

Joint Committee on Children
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT

Good Morning:

My name is Jason O. Gibson, Program Director of the Boys & Girls Club of New Britain. I have been in the position for fifteen years.

I am privileged to witness hundreds of kids come to our facility after school during the peak hours of 3-6 PM . The majority of our members come from extremely low to moderate income households.

Our Club is more than just a building to our members. It is a safe haven; a second home; a playground; a learning center; a place where lifetime friendships are formed and dreams are realized. It is why SB #17 is so important.

We need to upgrade our facility to continue our programs and activities. We run cost effective programs that save and change lives forever. Their membership is not just a card; it is an investment in our future. In fact, one of our prevention programs costs approximately \$20,000 a year to help 250 teens stay off the street. The entire program cost is less than incarcerating one inmate.

In addition, part of the funding we are asking is going towards a bus turnaround. Every day, approximately 25 buses pull up to the front of the Club and 250 plus kids get off. While I voluntarily monitor our members as they exit the buses and make their way into the Club, a bus turnaround will relieve the congestion of traffic , as well as make a safer path to the building.

In closing, our focus remains on our members and to keep them safe in a healthy environment. To do this we need to upgrade our facility now to continue to be a stalwart in the community for the youth of New Britain for years to come.

Gifts and Bequests to the Endowment Fund Would Greatly Aid in Strengthening the Work of the Boys & Girls Club.