

Governor Rell,

I felt moved to write to you because I believe you will listen.

On Wednesday, June 3 upon hearing the news of proposed cuts to community-based programs in New Haven, I immediately drove to Hartford hoping to speak with you. I felt compelled to be the voice for the many families in desperate need. That day I had the opportunity to speak with several house representatives and senators who not only shared my concerns, but also encouraged me to speak to you.

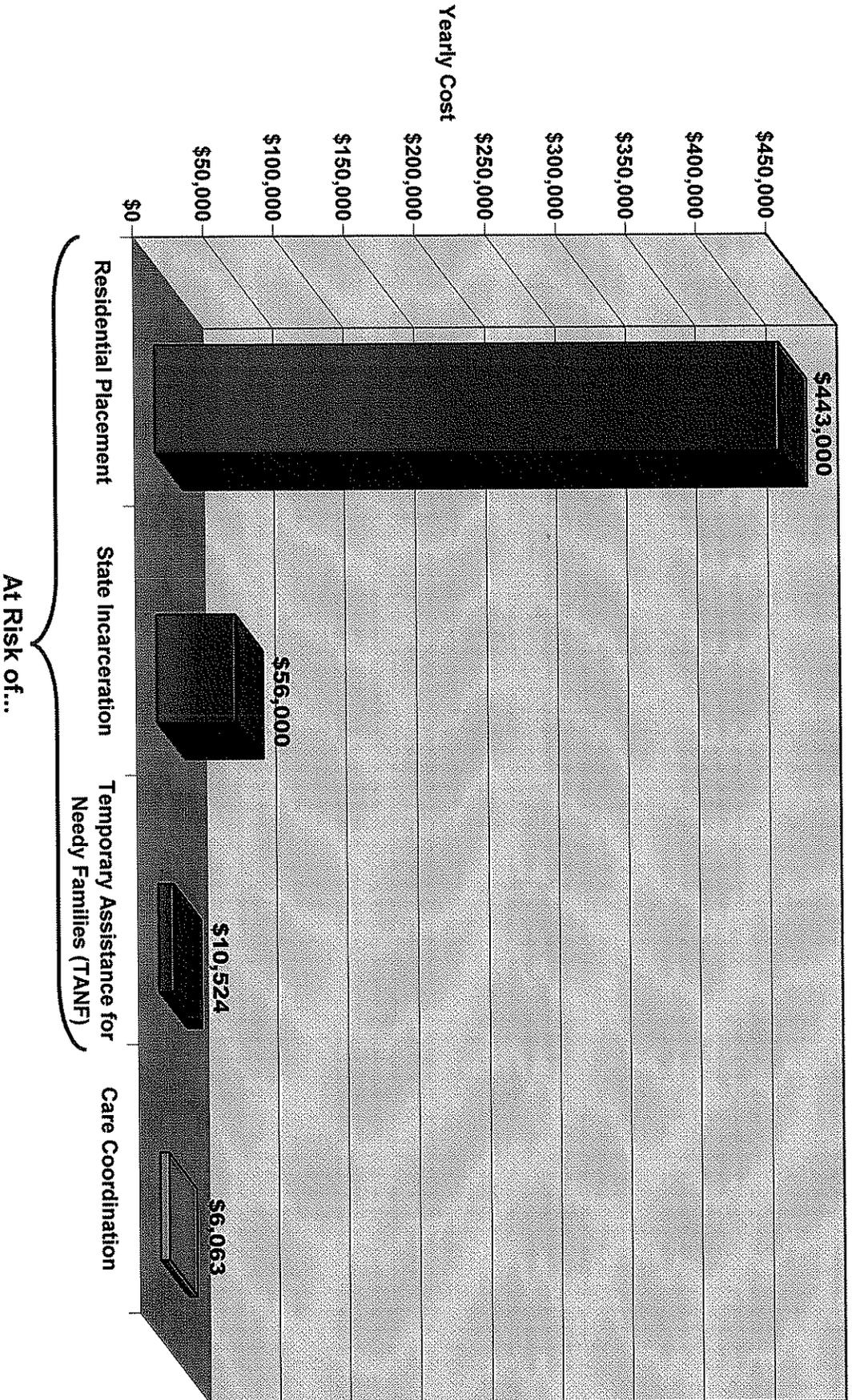
The programs in jeopardy of budgetary cuts mean the world to the families and children I work for. Many of these families have very few resources, and these programs are their only support. Not one non-profit organization is responsible for the current economic downturn leading to our state's reduced budget. However, these non-profits, with fewer resources, will likely see an increase of people in need as for-profit companies continue to lay off their workers resulting in increased depression and domestic/community violence. This directly affects all of us.

I can tell you stories of a mother with medical needs going to dialysis 3 times a week while her husband works the midnight shifts so he can care for the children during the day. At the same time, one of their children is suffering from autism and trauma while the two other siblings have Diabetes. The parents found themselves fighting with the school system to get services for their child, fighting with the medical insurance company to approve medical expenses for her dialysis and struggling to find affordable treatment. During this time the asbestos in their section 8 housing was making her sicker. She sought out non-profit agencies in her community and asked for help. A team of community providers and natural supports collaborated to get these needs met. We went to the school system, advocated and implemented services for the autistic child. We connected with our clinics to get diabetes and mental health treatments. We built a medical team to overcome obstacles for her medical treatment. We assisted the family in vacating the inhabitable housing environment with flex funding. Now, the family is receiving the services and care they need. If these providers are not there, where will families like this go and who will help them when they need it?

Stories like this one and many more were made possible not by state-run programs, but by non-profit community agencies. I believe it is a grave mistake to take from these service providers; they should not be penalized for others mistakes. During times of economic crisis supports are most needed and should not be cut. If given the opportunity, I can show you evidence that supports the cost effectiveness of community based programs. I am hopeful that you and I could discuss this matter further. I would be willing to meet with you at any time that is convenient for you. I am proud to have voted for you because I believe, as I do now, that you would listen and support the needs of your people.

Sincerely,
Paola Serrecchia
(203) 589-4300

Alternative Outcomes and Costs



**Total Available Flex Funds*
per Family
\$15,000.00**

*Flexible funding for non-DCF involved children and youth is available from the State of Connecticut. The target population for this initiative are those with serious emotional problems who are at risk of out-of-home placement. Their families have limited resources or have exhausted their resources including community-based supports or commercial insurance; and have complex needs that require multi-agency involvement.

