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Senator Toni Harp and Representative John Geragosian
Appropriation Committee Co-Chairs
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-

February 9, 2009

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian,

It is appalling that the practice of leaving out the persons, groups and communities that require the most assistance in troubled times continues. Persons from disenfranchised groups have become very cognizant of being left-out and forgotten throughout the history of The United States and our wonderful state of Connecticut. Thus, it is not surprising that the *The State of Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission (ACCC)* has been "zeroed out" of the *Governor's Proposed Budget* along with several other *Commissions* and *Offices* which advocate for the state's most disenfranchised residents. Many African-Americans have become numbed by past practices and seem ambivalent to advocate for themselves and their community; there is a feeling that their voices and stories never get heard. **The ACCC has been remarkable in gathering momentum for these significant voices and their stories and have brought them beyond being heard and into legislation; not one but several.**

Apart from accomplishing policies, the *ACCC* has been a champion in my area of work, pre-kindergarten -12 grade education. They have co-sponsored the *Know How to Go* and *College Goal Sunday (CGS)* programs for more than 15,000 middle and high school students throughout Connecticut, assisting first generation and economically disadvantaged students and their families to complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* and other initiatives. These efforts have been done to help increase access and success to higher education. Success for my students in the City of Hartford increases from these programs. If these proposed cuts materialize, the dreams and aspirations of many first generation college students will be cut along with the elimination of the *ACCC* after June, 2009.

There are many other ways the *ACCC* reaches out to people you may not hear; the ill, children and the elderly, for instance. Failure to keep the *ACCC* alive equals to failing to continue making *equity* in Connecticut achievable to all.

Sincerely,

KJE-M, MD

Kelson Ettienne-Modeste, MD