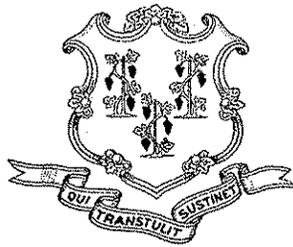


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State of Connecticut

SENATE
Sixth District

Children's Committee

Testimony Re: S.B. 17 – Bond Funding for New Britain Boys and Girls Club – February 26, 2009

Submitted by: Senator Donald J. DeFronzo, Representative Tim O'Brien, Representative Elizabeth "Betty" Boukus, Representative John Geragosian, and Representative Peter Tercyak

Senator Musto, Representative Urban,

Thank you for raising S.B. 17, An Act Authorizing Bonds for the Boys and Girls Club of New Britain.

Mr. Chairman, the Boys and Girls Club of New Britain, located in the center of New Britain serves over 2,600 young boys and girls each year. The vast majority of these children come from low income, at risk families. In its 120 years of serving New Britain, the Boys and Girls Club has provided an opportunity for thousands of young people to engage in positive activities leading to improved educational performance, increased personal responsibility and meaningful participation in the city's civic and social life.

The Boys and Girls Club facility provides recreation and educational services six days a week. It's a site for School Readiness programs, after school activities, summer camp and summer youth employment.

Primarily funded through the collection of very modest membership fees and private contributions, the Boys and Girls Club facility was last renovated in 1991. Since then membership has doubled and new programs have been added. Today, the Club is engaged in a capital campaign to raise \$1.7 million for interior renovations, new HVAC, electrical, plumbing and pool

filtration equipment, outdoor courts, fencing and asbestos removal. These improvements should address facility needs through 2030.

The bill before you today asks for state bonding support in the amount of \$1.3 million with the balance of funds, approximately \$400,000 being raised from local and private funds. As you will see from testimony, the Boys and Girls Club enjoys widespread community support and serves young people from some of the poorest neighborhoods in the state.

Mr. Chairman, I request that the Children's Committee act favorably on S.B. 17 and refer it to the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

Thank you again for your willingness to raise the bill and we are available to answer questions.