

Founder of Families Moving Forward
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State Capitol
The Appropriations Committee
210 Capital Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

February 12, 2010

To the Appropriations Committee:

I am testifying today on behalf of the Connecticut Legal Services, and the appropriations and funding of. I watched Richard Orr, of the Connecticut Legal Services, testify on February 9, 2010. I recognized the three points he made and I want to back up and support those points. Please recognize the (3) three points that follow:

- Please keep the earmarked \$1.5 million in the budget for the services that are provided through Connecticut Legal Services
- Please preserve ALL of the allocation of filing fees
- Please keep \$1.5 million in a separate line item

In 1994 I was coming out of a very difficult time in my life. I was fresh out of a very damaging relationship that involved years of domestic violence and I was being presented with a custody battle for my then seven year old son. My ex, after years physical and emotional abuse and stalking, to terrorizing me, was fighting me for joint custody. I walked into Connecticut Legal Services for help, an organization that even back then was understaffed and overworked. I met quickly with an attorney who thank God took my case. Long story short, we won and I was presented full custody.

Just this past year, I was served with a Notice to Quit for the very first time in my entire life. I again had to retain an attorney and I again am grateful that Connecticut Legal Services took my case. I realize how busy they are and that I am amongst others who are in desperate need. As Richard Orr mentioned the most vulnerable are the affected. The low income are in great need of services and as I saw per testimony, don't always get through the process of consideration. This should not be. I am asking that you give back to an organization that has given so much to me and my family. As well as to others with

their time and effort. Why would we not afford this organization the capability that they need to do their work? It is the least we can do for those who are in the most need. Furthermore, what will happen to the individuals and families that do not get the services that are needed? Will they be the future homeless, drug addicted possible criminals of tomorrow?

Please allow the three points to be inserted and implemented by this sessions end. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Johnna Paradis
203-977-2020