

Pamela J. Clark RN, MPH

15 Washington St.
Rocky Hill, Ct, 06067

State Representative
LOB Room 4049
Hartford, CT, 06106

3/10/10

Dear Representative,

The City of Hartford is one of the poorest cities in one of the richest states (2008 US Census data: CT median income at \$68,294, US median income is \$52,029. Hartford median is \$31,000. Hartford % of poverty of children is 34.9%, state average is approximately 8.1%) As the Coordinator of Health Services at the Hartford Public Schools I can attest to the affects of poverty on the families and children we serve in Hartford. Cutting the School Based Health Centers will drastically reduce the already underserved population of Hartford. We are a well established highly regarded, nationally recognized program that provides over 25,000 medical and mental health services as well as 11,000 dental services on an annual basis. We are often the families' primary care provider and have in total over 36,000-visits per year. Without an approved State budget, SBHC programs may not be able to bring these services and SBHC staff members back to their School Based Health Centers. The lack of the services offered through these clinics would be a great loss to the schools, students and families they serve. Our SBHC programs are greatly valued and needed by the families throughout Hartford, especially the, low income, undocumented and under or uninsured families found in our city of Hartford.

The School Based Clinics of the City of Hartford are a tremendous asset to students and families. They provide:

- Cost-effectiveness – minimal overhead.
- Reduction in use of Emergency room visits for Asthma and acute visits.
- Easy Access to Care and are user friendly
- Provision of Mental Health Services (Hartford is already in a critical situation for childhood and adolescent behavioral health services).
- NO Cost to students or parents.
- Parents may be present for treatment but not required
- No lost time from work for parents-No transportation problems
- Minimal lost school / learning time for students
- Ability to follow-up & complete treatment- Continuity of Care
- Safe, nurturing environment promoting trust

On behalf of School Based Health Program, I respectfully request that you reconsider the cuts being proposed for School Based Health Centers. The cuts would reduce health care access to the states most vulnerable children. If you would like to discuss this issue further, please contact me at 860-695-8760 or pclark@hartfordschools.org.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Clark, RN, MPH
Coordinator of Health Services
Hartford Public Schools