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My name is Jim Boucher, from Capital Workforce Partners. I am speaking on our support for the Connecticut Commission on Children.

The Commission is a critical voice for children, youth and families in the State of Connecticut. Last year the Commission identified \$133 million in federal funds available to Connecticut through the TANF Emergency Fund. Through advocating and spreading the awareness of the availability of these funds through the research accessed by national experts, and then bringing together workforce boards, educators, foundations, youth employment agencies, and universities to review how these funds could be appropriated locally, thousands of young people and young adults were able to get subsidized employment opportunities throughout the State of Connecticut.

The Commission's work provided a level of awareness that then led to a Governor sponsored TANF ECF Task Force, which developed a substantial plan that through early action and vigilant collaboration with our Congressional delegation and state legislators, Connecticut obtained \$39 million from this fund.

For workforce boards, such as Capital Workforce Partners, the TANF ECF Fund was able to leverage the \$3.5 million in the State Youth Employment Program to leverage an additional \$10-million in TANF ECF and foundation funds to support about 7,000 youth and young adult employment participants. Over 1,000 employers provided worksites for these youths and young adults.

The need for the Commission's continued advocacy, community engagement, research, policy recommendations and public awareness is critical in today's Connecticut economy. Faced the effects of a lagging economic recovery we are finding children, young people and families particularly in distressed municipalities adversely impacted.

As one major issue facing young people in Connecticut, Capital Workforce Partners is particularly concerned that teenage youth unemployment remains at historical highs. Clearly we applaud Governor Malloy, who has joined other legislative leaders to support the Connecticut Youth Employment Program with \$3.5 million in the State Budget, which will support thousands of young people again this year with youth employment opportunities.

We thank you for your continued supported of the work of the Connecticut Commission on Children, as well as supporting opportunities for Connecticut's youths and future!