



CONNECTICUT ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION

March 4, 2011

Dear Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to urge you to reinstate the \$125,000 operating grant that the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut (BIAC) receives through the Department of Social Services. This grant was eliminated in Governor Malloy's budget under the line item "Services for Persons with Disabilities."

As President of the Connecticut Athletic Trainers' Association, I have worked closely with staff at BIAC over the past several years on issues related to concussion, including Public Act 10-62, the law that requires coaches remove athletes exhibiting signs and symptoms of concussion from activity, and that they be trained in recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

It is important for you to understand that BIAC has been contracted by the state of Connecticut since 1984 to provide essential services for brain injury survivors. These are services the state government cannot provide, and which if eliminated, will leave thousands of people without the resources they need to negotiate the system and find services they need to function on a daily basis. If the operating grant for BIAC is eliminated, there is nowhere else for survivors of brain injury to turn to, because no one else in the state does what BIAC does.

BIAC has continually provided services despite dwindling resources. Totally eliminating the operating grant will severely impact BIAC's ability to respond to the needs of survivors and their families, while costing the state far more than the \$125,000 it would save by eliminating the operating grant. The burden to provide services to survivors would be transferred to the state, which is already overburdened and has no resources in place to provide for the needs of the people that BIAC helps. The state itself is dependent upon BIAC to provide these services. No one else in the state does what BIAC does, and BIAC does it for the state. BIAC saves the state money through fewer institutionalizations, Emergency Department visits, incarcerations and by helping to reduce rates of recidivism. When these facts are considered, the \$125,000 grant is actually quite a bargain for the state.

On behalf of the Connecticut Athletic Trainers' Association, I strongly urge the Appropriations Committee to reinstate the \$125,000 operating grant to the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut to the budget.

Sincerely,

Vicky Graham, M.S., ATC
President, Connecticut Athletic Trainers' Association