

appropriations committee co chair
legislative office building room 2700
Hartford CT 06106-1591

Dear Toni Harp

My name is Rolland Rosati and I am a freshman in the Stamford Regional Agriscience and Technology Program. I live in Stamford, CT and I attend this agriscience school program because I want to become a veterinarian. When I learned of the Stamford Agriscience program I knew this was the school for me. It gives me the chance to get a head start on my future career plus it exposes me to the many other areas of agriscience like horticulture, aquiculture, food science as well as working with animals. It also so gives me a chance to learn how to run a business through our weekly Doggy Day Care program and annual plant sales. I will also have the opportunity to earn college credit and have long distance learning opportunities if I want to study something that is not offered as a class in my program. Because it is a smaller program than the large high schools in my city it has helped me make the transition from middle school to high school easier. We, agriscience students have become a close knit community supporting each other. This program has been such a positive experience for me that my sister has applied to it and will be joining me here next year. Also several younger friends hearing about my experience have decided to make this their school of choice.

I have always had pets at home but since fourth grade I have been volunteering with groups that work with animals. For four years I volunteered at the Hecksher Farm at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center. Now for my SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) hours I presently volunteer with Animal Embassy , an education and exotic rescue program. I help with educational programs and camp, give tours of the facility and answer visitors questions. On the less glamorous side but just as rewarding I feed and care for the animals housed there.

I am also a member of FFA which is teaching me leadership skills, introducing me to careers in agriculture and providing me with opportunities to contribute to my community. My experience with FFA will prepare me to be a leader in my community.

I am writing this letter to encourage you to please urge the Appropriation Committee to pledge 9 million dollars of the school choice funding increases proposed in the Governor's budget to the state's 19 regional (vo-ag) agriscience programs.

Our agriscience programs have been drastically underfunded for over 20 years as compared to the magnet schools, charter schools, vocational technical schools and other school choice funding programs. (Please see the attached flyer with details).