Hello my name is Tyler Lemoine and I am the President of the Southington FFA Chapter and a student from the Carl M. Small Regional Agriculture Center and I support the increase of funding for the Agriculture Science and Technology programs throughout Connecticut.

The Agriculture Science program makes an enormous difference to students. This program offers personalized education on agriculture to prepare students for a future and career that more often than not leads them in a college bound direction. Not only does our program include education in the field of agriculture but it provides vital skills in organization, business, competition, diversity, and leadership. Because students come from different regions of CT, our program promotes diversity. Through Career Development Events, students learn important life skills, jobs and competition in anything from Ag mechanics to vet tech. Leadership above all is taught to each student by the support of our teachers and the programs FFA.

I am in this program for the opportunity it gives students like me and the future it prepares me for. I want to become a veterinarian or a politician in the future where I could help shape agricultural policy. This program provides me the opportunity to learn about veterinary medicine not only through book work but with hands on experiences. Each student must complete a Supervised Agriculture Experience requirement. With this, students like me are open to volunteering and job opportunities. For example, I was able to shadow a local vet and work at Rogers Orchard.

The Agriculture Science and Technology program provides students like me with an incredible education and vast amount of skills including hands on experience. Each of us in this room could easily remember which class taught us the most, which class had prepared us for our future and which class allowed opportunity to come knocking at our doors. For me, this is that class. This is why all these FFA members are here. We are part of the great future of our country and we want our program to thrive. Please increase funding for this program so that we may provide an opportunity for more students to explore an agricultural career.

Thank you.