

February 13th, 2013

Appropriations Committee Testimony
Legislative Office Building, Room 2702
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

To whom it may concern;

I am writing in support of keeping the STRIVE program in the Department of Labor Budget. I personally participated in the program as an intern having been introduced to it through my participation in the Maturity Works program previously administered by the Career Resources Inc., and secured a certificate for my participation therein. I can tell you firsthand that I would not be as successful as I am today in my current employment as a Career Advisor and Case Manager in a similar program, which provides financial resources to allow others the opportunity to return to and take opportunity of the employment possibilities available to assist them to provide a better quality of life for themselves and family, and to advance the general economic outlook for residents here in Connecticut, if it weren't for the assistance of STRIVE.

With an extremely lean budget, and a proven track record of success, the STRIVE program has been a staple in the community for over twelve years, and statewide has served thousands of individuals. It would be counter-productive to cut a program that yields such high results in reducing the unemployment levels in the community. I understand that many tough decisions need to be made, and I do not envy your position, but with a low cost, high impact programs such as STRIVE, I believe that cutting STRIVE funding at this critical stage of Connecticut need for highly motivated and job ready workers for the anticipated surge in economic development here in the State in the short term and mid-term, according to Gov Malloy in his budget speech, would be a step backward for our community. I strongly encourage you to fight to keep STRIVE in the budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me at the information below with any questions or concerns you might have.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Houston

Lawrence Houston
273 Black Rock Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605
203-449-8487