

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Appropriations Committee Testimony

Legislative Office Building, Room 2702

Hartford, CT 06106-1591

To whom it may concern;

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Appropriations Subcommittee for their hard work and for allowing me the opportunity to voice my opinion on such a critical budgetary decision that will affect thousands of Connecticut residents. As a graduate and now employee of the STRIVE program, I am writing to express my shock and dismay at the CT Department of Labor's proposal to cut the STRIVE program from the state budget. This cut would severely undermine our communities. The state of CT is making historic strides in transforming where people live, work, play, and the STRIVE program for more than a decade has an integral part in this change. Located in local communities and supported by the CT Department of Labor, hundreds of people across the state have already benefited by earning gainful employment through the STRIVE program.

Investing in a workforce development program does not ask legislators or the public to choose between budget cuts or spending; instead it bends the cost curve, reducing expenditures by reducing need. The STRIVE program has provided a 400% return on investment for Connecticut Tax Payers. No one loses when an individual succeeds at becoming gainfully employed. Cutting funding for workforce development will not save our struggling economy from being sunk by rising unemployment rates. With a low cost literally life transforming program such as the STRIVE program 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 that you may have.

Sincerely,



José Rendon

rendon.public@gmail.com

Hartford, CT 06105

860-335-5830