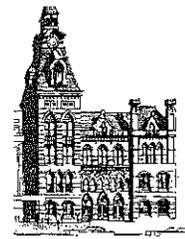




John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

CITY OF NEW HAVEN
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510
Phone (203)-946-8200, Fax (203)-946-7683



**Testimony of the City of New Haven
Before the Appropriations Committee**

Regarding
Department of Labor Funding

Submitted by
Tomi Veale, Youth Services Director and Youth@Work Coordinator
February 20, 2013

Senator Harp, Rep. Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee,

The City of New Haven is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Department of Labor Budget in support of the continued funding of the Connecticut Youth Employment Program.

The Connecticut Youth Employment Program funds youth employment throughout the State including funding for the Youth@Work Program in New Haven which is a partnership between the Workforce Alliance, the City of New Haven and private employers.

As part of the City's Youth Violence Prevention Program in New Haven the Youth@Work initiative provides the important first employment opportunity for many of our cities' youth. The Centers for Disease Control cites community poverty as one of the risk factors associated with youth violence¹. It has been shown that increased risk factors associated with serious, violent and chronic juvenile delinquency are strongly correlated with decreased socio-economic status; it therefore follows that providing youth with opportunities for economic success will help to mitigate these risk factors. In a report published by Connecticut Voices for Children unemployment has been cited as being consistently higher for the youth 16 and over, and the recession has increased the difficulty for our youngest workers just entering the labor force to find work. The City's Youth@Work program is designed to ease barriers to employment by connecting low income at risk youth with important first time job opportunities helping to build work skills, learn financial literacy and stay busy for the summer months.

For the Summer of 2012 the \$382,900 state contribution leveraged an additional \$262,664 in City and private funding to employ 657 youth and young adult supervisors (ages 14-21).

Continued funding is essential to provide at risk youth with the critical first employment opportunity to prepare them for the workforce. While increased funding would be ideal, in these difficult budget times we are pleased to see the recommended budget include flat funding of this program. Thank you for your consideration and support.

¹ *Understanding Youth Violence Fact Sheet*, Centers for Disease Control, 2010,
<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/YV-FactSheet-a.pdf>