

Good Evening,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the appropriations committee today.

My name is Jake Colavolpe and I am a junior at The Sound School in New Haven.

I am here to talk to you tonight about how my place in my schools biotech program has been vastly important for me.

I am currently an intern at the Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station (CAES) lab working specifically on fungal pathology. While the work being done here is not only new to me, but also to the field, foundations acquired in my biotech class allowed me to begin working in the lab on the first day, something that many would not be able to do.

These foundations; lab technique, sterile procedure, and even a passion for science, would not have been acquired without the hands on experience in our school lab. From the first day, we began learning aseptic technique and pure culture. From then, our skills developed producing not only educated, but also capable students. It should be for these incredibly important career skills, if nothing else, exhibit the necessity of funding for our, and others' VoAg programs.

All of these hands-on experiences are costly. With an increased budget, these experiments to gain highly important life and career skills can be continued as well as broadened, to produce a college and work-force ready group of students.

Personally, these opportunities have prepared me for Connecticut's expanding biotech industry. Expanding our budget will in turn help us to expand our experiences and education, to keep up with the rapidly increasing job market.

I ask you, on behalf of every student, to provide funding for agri-science programs by adopting the funding recommendation into the Governor's Proposed Budget. Thank you.