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Rep. Urban, Diana; Rep. Abercrombie, Catherine; Bartolomeo@senatedems.ct.gov;

Senator Harp; Rep. Walker, Toni

Cc: AppropriationTestimony

Subject: Family Empowerment, Fatherhood Initiative, and Family School Connection

Importance: High

Senators Harp and Bartolomeo, and Representatives Walker, Abercrombie and Urban,

On February 22, 2013, I was able to testify at the Public Hearing that was held at the Legislative Office Building.

I am requesting that you stop the elimination of the Family Empowerment Program, Fatherhood Initiative Program and Family School Connection Program Funding.

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist. I spent the first half of my career working with children and their families in repairing and rebuilding their lives. They needed help fixing what was already broken. This was very difficult and costly work to do. Families had many challenges trying to put their lives back together, especially the children who were often innocent victims. Five years ago I changed directions in my life. I took a job with Madonna Place in Norwich. The mission here is to strengthen families, promote health, and prevent child abuse and neglect. Working with the Fatherhood Initiative and the Family School Connection Program have opened my eyes to the prevention side of social services. For very small amounts of money, prevention programs are able to support and educate families before disaster occurs. Fathers are becoming positive role models for their children, supporting and educating them. Parents are engaging with their children and school staff regarding their school work and grades. These parents are making a difference in their children's lives!

Family Empowerment, Fatherhood Initiative and Family School Connection are making a difference! Don't eliminate them.

Thank you for your time.

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